

## **PSOJ Economic Forum to Feature Colombian Economist**

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The Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica (PSOJ) will on Friday hold its Annual Economic Forum, featuring a keynote address by highly regarded Colombian economist Virgilio Barco.

The theme of the forum is "Beyond Crime and Corruption To Growth: Practical Lessons From Colombia".

Barco is executive director of Invest in Bogota, an investment promotion agency for the city of Bogota in Colombia. Barco spearheaded the overseas investment initiative which resulted in a dramatic turnaround in the Colombian economy and the PSOJ said it believed it was an opportune time for him to give an address in Jamaica, giving that the island faces a similar crime problem to that faced by the South American country and there is some amount of similarity between the two nations' economies.

Barco grew up in Bogota. He attended Harvard, where he earned a BA in Government in 1988. Later, he attended the MIT Sloan School of Management where he earned an MS in business administration in 2002. Finally, he attended New York University, where he obtained an MA in Economics in 1999.

Barco has had a career in the private sector and public sector with broad international exposure. He started his career at Citibank in Madrid, Spain, where he was a member of the European M&A team. After graduating from MIT, he was an associate at Booz Allen Hamilton in Sao Paulo, Brazil, where he worked in utilities (gas and cable) and consumer products. From 1994 to 1996, he headed the privatization group at the Ministry of Finance in Bogota, where he was responsible for the largest electric generation divestiture program to date in Colombia (over 10 MW). From 1998 to 2001 he was VP at FondElec, a private equity group located in Stamford, Connecticut, focused on infrastructure development in emerging markets. From 2002 to 2006, he was an independent consultant, working mainly on local economic development issues for the City Government in Bogotá. In 2006, he was appointed executive director of Bogotá's newly created investment promotion agency -- Invest in Bogota, a private-public partnership between the Bogota City Government and the Bogota Chamber of Commerce.

The PSOJ's Annual Economic Forum has, over the years, provided an important opportunity for key decision makers in the private sector including Chairpersons,

Chief Executive Officers and other senior management personnel in the business community to analyse and discuss the Jamaican economy, the impact on business operations here in Jamaica and in the wider global marketplace, and the way forward for growth.

Jamaica Money Market Brokers is the lead sponsor for this year's forum.

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