



Any reply or subsequent reference to this communication should be addressed to the **Chairman** and the following reference quoted:-

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**OFFICE OF THE CONTRACTOR-GENERAL**

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**JAMAICA, W.I.**

February 13, 2007

The Editor  
Jamaica Observer  
40-42 ½ Beechwood Ave.  
Kingston

The Editor, Sir:

I write in reference to an article entitled: 'Prove it, Mr. Christie' which appeared in the Daily Observer dated February 13, 2007 on pages 4 and 5.

The OCG wishes to challenge PETCOM's Chairperson, Barbara Clarke, to produce, for public scrutiny, the contract which was allegedly settled by tender between PETCOM and Elegant Traders Limited, in 1998. This is the alleged contract on which the arguments of both Ms. Clarke, and her attorneys, are substantially based.

In the referenced article, Ms. Clarke reportedly challenged the Contractor General to show evidence of a conflict of interest. The OCG's Report, which highlighted significant breaches of the Government's procurement procedures and guidelines at PETCOM stated that, "Ms. Clarke was, at all material times, the majority shareholder, Principal and Managing Director of Elegant Traders Ltd., and that a conflict of interest existed wherein Ms. Clarke, in her position as the Chairperson of PETCOM, had the capacity to influence

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and, from all appearances, may have influenced, the award of contracts to her business interest, Elegant Traders Ltd.”

In a Press Release which was issued by the OCG on January 18, 2007 - no part of which, unfortunately, was carried by the Observer – the media and the public were advised that “PETCOM and Ms. Clarke’s attorneys have been afforded with ample opportunity to substantiate the challenges which they have made to the OCG’s Report, but have failed to credibly do so.” To date, neither Ms. Clarke nor her attorneys, has produced the 1998 contract.

The article also alleges that Ms. Clarke was never interviewed by the OCG’s Investigator. The OCG categorically denies this claim. The OCG’s Investigator did, in fact, ask questions of Ms. Clarke and met with her, on December 7, 2006, in the presence of the General Manager of PETCOM, for more than 30 minutes. It is also instructive to note that a follow-up call was made on December 12, 2006, by the same OCG Investigator, to Ms. Clarke, with regard to her purported Declaration of Interest, to which she had referred during the interview.

The OCG has noted a distinct trend in efforts made to discredit the findings and Reports published by the Office. In order to be apprised of the full picture, and to be able to arrive at informed conclusions, the public is being reminded that it may avail itself of a copy of the Report, as well as a copy of the Contractor General’s January 18 statement, from the OCG’s website [www.ocg.gov.jm](http://www.ocg.gov.jm).

Respectfully yours,

Claudia Williams (Signed)

Claudia Williams

Communications Officer