



## 59<sup>th</sup> FIFA Congress Concludes Successfully In Bahamas

The 59<sup>th</sup> FIFA Congress concluded on Wednesday, June 3, 2009 on a high, with all of the delegates and staff of FIFA ending the affair at the Royal Deck of the Atlantis Hotel on Paradise Island. The music of Visage resonated in the evening air and drew many of the delegates to "shaking a leg" after a series of meetings of Confederations and the FIFA Congress. The Opening Ceremony on Tuesday, June 2, 2009 was highlighted by addresses from the FIFA President Joseph Blatter, BFA President Anton Sealey and the Bahamian Prime Minister the Right Honorable Hubert Ingraham. The Royal Bahamas Police Force Band gave a stunning rendition of the FIFA anthem which saw 208 young children from the Bahamas display soccer balls with the participating countries flags on them. The entertainment for the evening featured a variety of performances from renowned Broadway shows such as Hair, Cabaret, Dreamgirls, Chicago and others, and ended with a rousing performance by the Valley Boys Junkanoo group which got many of the delegates to their feet dancing.

An elaborate dinner followed this event and saw more Bahamian culture and performances on display. Veteran singer Pat Rolle set the mood with a variety of songs made famous by Nat King Cole and others, and was followed by the National Youth Choir.

Many of the delegates however did find time to visit other places, and many could be seen down Bay Street shopping, easily identified by their Congress badges. The event was a resounding success and all of the comments heard by delegates afterwards were positive and complementary. FIFA President Joseph Blatter (*being welcomed to Nassau above left*), in a final meeting with BFA President Anton Sealey (*right*) and General Secretary Lionel Haven thanked them for the collaboration with FIFA on the event, and remarked that the event was one of the most successful congresses in recent memory.

This comment said a lot for the work put in to make the event a success, and was a complement to the many agencies and government offices that supported the BFA and the Atlantis in the hosting of this event. In his remarks to the delegates Bahamian Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham remarked that an old saying in the Bahamas, "once is not enough", is something that he hoped many of the delegates would take to heart and return to our shores.

