



**ORGANISATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES**

## **ACCREDITATION CEREMONY**

**H. E. Dr. Ernst MARTENS,  
Ambassador of The Federal Republic Of Germany**

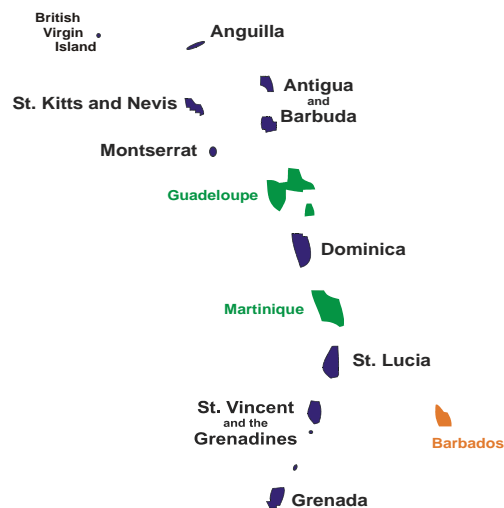
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**REMARKS BY  
DR LEN ISHMAEL  
DIRECTOR GENERAL**

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**OECS Secretariat  
Saint Lucia**

**19 April 2010**



Excellencies, Colleagues,

I take great pleasure in welcoming you to the Secretariat of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States on what is for us a most happy occasion, that is, the presentation of Letters from the Government of Germany accrediting that country's Ambassador to the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States.

For us, this presentation ceremony is full of significance and symbolism. First, it confirms the continued growth of interest in our Organisation by Third Countries. Germany has now joined the growing list of countries that are so impressed with the OECS and its achievements, that they feel it necessary and in their interest, to enter into a closer and more formal relationship with the Organisation.

In recent times, Spain, Mexico and Brazil have all established a formal relationship with the OECS at Ambassadorial/Permanent Representative level. Others within our hemisphere, such as Venezuela, have appointed Special Ambassadorial Envoys to the Organisation. There are even countries far removed from the geographical scope of the Eastern Caribbean which are indicating an interest in becoming members of the Organisation. The Secretariat expects to receive in the near future, credentials from soon-to-be-appointed Permanent Representatives of France and Finland, while yet other countries in Europe are giving serious consideration to the formalization of relations with the OECS at a similar level.

Secondly, this is only the second time that a European Union Member Country has established diplomatic relations with the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States. It will be recalled that just over a year ago, (in January 2009 to be exact), Spain became the first European Union member, indeed the very first country to establish diplomatic relations with the OECS. This act represented for us an incredible vote of confidence, and served to provide a major boost to our self esteem and self confidence.

Today, in a similar manner, our self confidence is boosted by the decision of the country which represents the fourth largest economy in the world and

the largest economy in the Europe, to establish diplomatic relations with our Organisation.

Germany's economic success has allowed it a great measure of influence within the European Union, and it has been able to use that influence to great effect. The European Union owes much of its economic success to the fact that Germany has been able to use its own economic and political strength to leverage stability within the Union. Interestingly however, there are suggestions that Germany may be undergoing a reevaluation of the goals and means of European integration policy. The thinking being that the new, post cold war reality is forcing a shift in policy that may be more German-centered.

This notwithstanding, the country representing the largest economy, in the world's largest integration grouping has found it fitting to establish diplomatic relations with the smallest regional integration grouping in the world! There can be no escaping the symbolism in such a situation

But one should not be surprised by Germany's decision. The OECS and its Member States have long enjoyed excellent relations with Germany, and have benefitted tremendously from programmes of cooperation which have been pursued at the bilateral as well as the regional level, via the country's development agency, the GTZ..

By way of illustration, the Secretariat's Environment and Sustainable Development Unit - ESDU - is an evolutionary product of a GTZ funded project that was initiated within the institution many years ago. The success of this support was such that the Secretariat found it necessary to elevate the status of the project on its conclusion, to that of a Technical Unit, and in 1986, the Natural Resources Management Unit was established. Today, in its new and more appropriate configuration as ESDU, the Unit continues to expand its portfolio of programmes in response to national, regional and international imperatives.

In the past 8 years the GTZ has re-engaged with OECS Member States, among others, through the "Caribbean Renewable Energy Development Project (CREDP)" implemented at the wider Caricom level. The 2008 estimate of total expenditures of the GTZ in the OECS is Euro almost

400,000, of which approximately Euro 50,000 served as a direct contribution to the Secretariat's Energy Programme. Over the five-year period 2003 to 2008, the total investment by the GTZ in the OECS region is estimated at approximately 1 million Euro.

More specifically, from 2004, the GTZ has supported the development of a Regional Energy Policy; has participated in meetings of both the Secretariat's Technical Advisory Committee on Environment, and the Environment Policy Committee; has supported and coordinated study tours to Germany and the Azores on renewable energy for OECS Member States Utilities and Governments; has conducted several workshops and seminars on renewable energy and energy efficiency; and in 2006/2007 launched the Caribbean Wind Energy Initiative (CAWEI), which focuses on bundling of wind parks in two OECS Member States and Barbados.

The Government of Germany has clearly demonstrated its commitment to the advancement of sustainable development initiatives in the OECS, and the Member States continue to express their satisfaction, and their confidence that these initiatives will be continued well into the foreseeable future.

I wish to take this opportunity to express, on behalf of the Member States of the OECS, sincere thanks to the German Government for the invaluable assistance which it has provided to this region over the years.

I wish to request respectfully, Excellency, that you please convey those sentiments to your Government.

Excellency, you are presenting your credentials at a most remarkable and exciting time in the history of the OECS. This year is a very important one for our Organisation, as we continue to work with great eagerness toward the establishment of the OECS Economic Union. I look forward to engaging you Excellency, in discussions on the OECS Economic Union, and in particular to explore ways in which your country can contribute to its successful realization, given its own experiences in the European context.

Permit me the opportunity, Ambassador, to assure you of my full support as you assume this important assignment. I look forward to working closely with

you to ensure the continued enhancement of the relations between *Germany* and the *OECS* in the interest of our respective *Governments* and people.

I thank you.