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COMMUNIQUÉ

Fifty-Second Meeting of the OECS Authority
Special Retreat of the Heads

Calivigny Island, St. George's
Grenada

24 -25 January, 2011

INTRODUCTION

At the Fifty-Second Meeting of the OECS Authority convened on January 24th 2011 on Calvigny Island, St. George's, OECS leaders focused on a new agenda and a new beginning for the OECS region. Importantly, this Meeting was held on the heels of a defining moment in the region's history with the official coming into force of the Revised Treaty of Basseterre Establishing the OECS Economic Union on January 21, 2011 with ratification by 5 Member States.

This Meeting of the OECS Authority was held in the form of a retreat. Heads of Government discussed in detail and agreed on critical issues of governance of the region that will set the agenda and chart the way forward to successfully achieve the mandate of the Economic Union.

FINANCING OF THE COMMISSON

The Meeting reviewed the significant financial indicators associated with its budget between 2005 - 2010 and discussed in detail matters relating to the financing of the Commission as required under the Revised Treaty of Basseterre.

FINANCING OF THE ECONOMIC UNION WORK PROGRAMME

The Meeting received an update on the financing of the Economic Union Work Programme. Specific mention was made of the Development Partners who continue to provide support to OECS Economic Union's work programme in priorty areas relating to market integration; trade development and competition; sector development and policy harmonization; public education; establishment of the OECS Network of Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality Education; operation of the governance structures; and development of the legislative, administrative and institutional framework.

RULES OF PROCEDURE: OECS GOVERNANCE ORGANS

Heads of Government considered the Draft Rules of Procedure which will govern the five Organs of the Organisation: Authority, Assembly, Council of Ministers, Economic Affairs Council and OECS Commission. The Meeting endorsed the Draft Rules subject to minor amendments.

THE REVISED TREATY IN DOMESTIC LAW

Heads of Government agreed that all domestic legislation required to give effect to the Revised Treaty would be enacted no later than June 18th 2011.

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FREE MOVEMENT OF PERSONS

Heads of Government acknowledged the pivotal role of free movement of people in the OECS Economic Union as a single financial and economic space and agreed that all actions necessary to give full effect to the free movement regime would be completed by August 1st, 2011 at the very latest.

They also agreed that by January 2012 a driver's licence issued in one OECS country would be accepted for use in another for short term visits.

Heads of Government recognized that security is important in supporting freedom of movement and agreed that there was need for greater information sharing among Member States officials and for effective operation and engagement of regional security agencies.

STRATEGIC RESPOSITIONING OF THE OECS SECRETARIAT

The Authority noted the tremendous progress made by the Secretariat in reviewing and developing an appropriate and viable Work Force Plan that will enable the Commission to achieve its mandate; operate efficiently; and ensure the necessary competencies, resources, and training requirements are in place to support the new paradigm of an Economic Union within a changing global economy. The Authority commended the Secretariat for the analytical and evidence-based approach adopted in developing a suitably phased strategic process of transition for implementation of the Work Force plan. The Meeting agreed to allot more time to review and study the details of the Plan with a view to reconvening via video conference within one (1) month to provide specific direction on the recommendations and the roll out of the Work Force Plan.

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REVIEW OF THE RESOURCES DEPLOYED IN REPRESENTATIONAL ACTIVITIES AT THE NATIONAL & REGIONAL LEVELS

The Meeting reviewed a Report on the resources already deployed and the resources required in the future for supporting the Overseas Missions as national and regional entities. OECS Heads agreed to engage in more detailed discussions on the matter in the near future.

OECS REGIONAL SECURITY MATTERS

The Authority recognized that the threats to security could imperil the sustainable development of the region. Consequently, it was agreed that the OECS Task Force on Security, under the Chairmanship of the Minister for National Security of Saint Lucia, would spearhead the implementation of an Action Plan that was presented to and agreed by the Authority.

ANGUILLA

The Meeting was updated by Chief Minister, Honourable Hubert Hughes on the situation with respect to the national budget of Anguilla. Heads of Government agreed that a delegation of OECS Prime Ministers would visit Anguilla for further consultation. Heads of Government also agreed that technical support would be provided to the Government of Anguilla in preparation for its further engagement with the Government of the United Kingdom on its national budget.

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