



**OECS Secretariat, Castries, St. Lucia, Monday November 8<sup>th</sup> 2010.** The Heads of Government of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) met in emergency session on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November via video conference to receive reports from the two Member States that had been impacted by the passage of Hurricane Tomas.

The OECS Authority extended its profound sympathy to the people of Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines who were and continue to be so severely affected by Hurricane Tomas. The Authority was particularly saddened by the loss of life in Saint Lucia and wished to express sincere condolences to the families of those who perished in this disaster.

The Authority recognised that this disaster has struck the region during an already challenging period, given the significant toll that the global financial crisis has taken on OECS Member States, with regional GDP having contracted by 7.9% last year and projected to contract by an additional 3% this year. The Authority also noted the significant impact of Hurricane Tomas on two of the major pillars of the regional economy - tourism and agriculture. The overall impact on the regional economy this year, will exacerbate an already depressed period. In order to assist in expediting recovery, the OECS Authority mandated the OECS Secretariat to engage immediately with the international development partner community to mobilize all available resources in support of efforts already underway in the two Member States, and the OECS Heads of Government pledged to provide whatever support possible to the governments and people of Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines during this very difficult and traumatic period.

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