

COMMUNIQUE

Special Meeting of the OECS Authority

Cabinet Room

Office of the Prime Minister

St. John's, Antigua

March 18, 2011

INTRODUCTION

The OECS Authority met on March 18th 2011 in Special Session at the Cabinet Room, Office of the Prime Minister, St. John's, Antigua, to consider several critical matters related to advancing the implementation of the OECS Economic Union and operationalisation of the OECS Secretariat as the OECS Commission. In keeping with recent landmarks established for adopting the Treaty into domestic law and for realizing the movement of OECS citizens, the discussions of the Special Meeting focused on:

1. The future Staff and Skills Requirements of the OECS Commission.
2. The resources Deployed in Overseas Mission.
3. The financing of the Economic Union Organs.

Additionally, the meeting considered the setting up of the Eastern Caribbean Energy Regulatory Authority (ECERA) among those Member States that wished to participate in the initiative.

FUTURE STAFF AND SKILL REQUIREMENTS OF THE OECS COMMISSION

The Meeting received a presentation on the recommendations arising from a Consultancy that undertook a strategic review of the Organization and considered "the workforce needs and a related workforce plan" for the Organization now that the Secretariat has reconfigured into a Commission. The Meeting considered the immediate priorities facing the Organization with regard to the structure and staffing required to give effect to the Economic Union, the key issues

now that Secretariat has become a Commission, and the approach and arrangements that would support this process.

In that context, Heads of government approved major elements for a new structure for the OECS Commission (Secretariat) contained in a Manpower and Workforce Plan designed to ensure the capability of the Commission to discharge its various mandates under the Revised Treaty of Basseterre for the Establishment of an OECS Economic Union.

The OECS Authority agreed to fill key high priority vacant posts and authorized the Commission to take steps to fill these vacant positions without any further delay. The Meeting further agreed on the re-designation of senior positions of the Commission (inclusive of Director General to Secretary General, Directors to Assistant Secretaries General and Legal Counsel to General Counsel) in keeping with general international convention.

The Meeting agreed to a process of Review of the Workforce Plan to allow for its operationalisation.

The Heads of Government recommended that Member States that have not yet appointed Commissioners should do so without delay and notify the Secretariat accordingly, so that the Commission could be fully activated.

RESOURCES DEPLOYED IN OVERSEAS MISSION

The Meeting considered a Report which presented options in the operations and geographic spread of joint and national Overseas Representation.

The Meeting considered how greater efficiencies could be attained in individual national representation in common locations. In this regard, particular attention was given to the potential for sharing common premises and common administrative and operational services in various parts of the world. The Heads of Government instructed the Secretariat to prepare and submit in time for the upcoming Authority Meeting in May a detailed proposal on the recommended arrangements.

FINANCING OF THE OCES ECONOMIC UNION ORGANS

The Meeting reviewed the main issues and the attendant elements relating to financing of the Economic Union Organs. In considering the need to ensure cost-effectiveness in the operation of the Organs, the Meeting was pointed to the tremendous cost-savings which have already accrued through the Commission's increased utilization of Video Conferencing facilities and other electronic means of communicating.

The Meeting agreed to the need to review the cost-sharing formula among Member States in light of any additional activities envisaged under the new arrangements for the Economic Union process, as well as the need to focus the Organisation's budget to priorities directed to implementing the OECS Economic Union.

EASTERN CARIBBEAN ENERGY REGULATORY AUTHORITY (ECERA)

At the request of the Government of Saint Lucia, Heads of Government considered the establishment and participation of Member States in the East Caribbean Energy Regulatory Authority, which is a World Bank financed initiative. The Meeting gave its "no objection" for the OECS Secretariat to act as Implementing Agency on behalf of Saint Lucia, Grenada and Antigua and Barbuda. The Meeting noted that the implementation arrangements for ECERA are flexible to accommodate the participation of other Member States in the future should they so desire.

St. John's, Antigua, March 18th, 2011