

COMMUNIQUE

Fifty-Fifth Meeting of the OECS Authority

Buccament Bay Resort

St. Vincent and the Grenadines

June 10-12, 2012

INTRODUCTION

The Fifty-fifth Meeting of the OECS Authority was convened at Buccament Bay Resort in St Vincent and the Grenadines over the period June 10-12, 2012 under the Chairmanship of Dr. the Hon. Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of St Vincent and the Grenadines. All Member States

were in attendance with the exception of Anguilla, and were represented at the level of Head of Government. Also in attendance was the Secretary General of the Caribbean Community.

The Meeting focused in the main on:

1. Matters relating to the operationalisation of the Organs of the OECS, including the Economic Affairs Committee and the OECS Assembly;
2. Work Plan, budget and manpower plan for the Commission
3. Financing of the OECS Secretariat;
4. Matters relating to the operations of the OECS Pharmaceutical Procurement Service;
5. Matters relating to the operationalisation of the Economic Union, including the free circulation of goods;
6. OECS relations with third countries, including the matter of the proposal for associate membership of Martinique and Guadeloupe in the OECS;
7. Matters relating to the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, including the appointment of a Chief Justice;
8. Matters relating to the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority, including the appointment of a Director General; and
9. A proposal for institutionalized engagements between the Authority and OECS Leaders of Parliamentary Opposition.

REPORT OF THE OECS COMMISSION

Heads of Government received and noted the Report of the OECS Commission on the status of implementation of the OECS Economic Union at both the regional and national levels.

OECS PHARMACEUTICAL PROCUREMENT SERVICE (PPS)

Heads of Government reviewed the operations and financing of the OECS pharmaceutical Procurement Service (PPS) and reiterated the vital role played by the PPS in the health of the citizens of the OECS. The Heads also considered a range of issues concerning public health, including wastage and the inefficient use of medicines within the public sector.

Heads of Government committed Member States to liquidating their current debt to the PPS within the next three months. In addition, it was agreed that the OECS Secretariat would provide technical assistance to Member States to assess the use and misuse of prescribed medicines, to develop a policy framework for managing the use of medical supplies and health institutions by medical doctors and other practitioners, and to pursue the adoption of an electronic management information system for inventory control of medicines and for tracking prescription use.

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

Heads of Government considered the composition and operationalisation of the Economic Affairs Council (EAC) and agreed that the powers ascribed to the Council by the Treaty should guide its composition and operation. The Heads agreed that the OECS Commission should give further attention to this issue, and report back to the Authority with recommendations by November 2012.

OECS ASSEMBLY

Heads of Government considered a range of issues relating to the inauguration of the Assembly, and agreed that all arrangements should be put in place commensurate with the historical importance of the occasion. The Heads agreed that a panel comprising Heads of Government and Leaders of Parliamentary Opposition would meet to review nominations and select a Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Assembly. The date and venue for the inauguration of the OECS Assembly were set for August 10, 2012 in St John's, Antigua and Barbuda.

The Heads also agreed that the Assembly would normally meet at its Headquarters in St John's Antigua and Barbuda, but would hold special meetings in Member States as may be necessary.

OECS WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET 2012-2013, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF WORK-FORCE PLAN

Heads of Government endorsed the recommendations of the Commission and approved the OECS Work Programme and Budget for 2012-2013, and noted the progress made in the implementation of the OECS Work Force plan which gave particular focus to the human resource deployment required by the OECS Secretariat/Commission to carry out its work.

The Heads also established a committee of senior finance officials to review and report to the Authority on options to secure the sustainable financing of the OECS Secretariat.

FREE CIRCULATION OF GOODS

Heads of Government received an update on plans for the free circulation of goods as provided for in the Revised Treaty of Basseterre, and approved activities leading to the commencement of the regime for free circulation by the scheduled date of July 01, 2013.

APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF JUSTICE

Heads of Government commenced the necessary administrative procedures leading to the appointment of a new Chief Justice to assume office following the retirement of current Chief Justice the Honourable Sir Hugh Anthony Rawlins.

The Heads thanked and commended the Chief Justice for his invaluable service to the region, and wished him and his family well in their future endeavours.

OECS-DOM's RELATIONS

Heads of Government received the Report which had been commissioned by the Authority on the matter of the proposed associate membership of Martinique and Guadeloupe in the OECS. The Heads issued a Declaration which expresses the continued high interest of the Authority in pursuing the matter of closer cooperation.□□□□

ENGAGEMENT WITH LEADERS OF THE OPPOSITION

Heads of Government received a report on a meeting of Leaders of Parliamentary Opposition which had been convened on May 04, 2012 at the instance of the Prime Minister of Saint Lucia Dr the Honourable Kenny Anthony in his capacity (then) as Chair of the OECS, and agreed to an annual meeting between themselves and Leaders of the Parliamentary Opposition of Member States.

APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR GENERAL OF ECCAA

Heads of Government considered matters relating to the operation of the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority and appointed a Director General of the Authority.

56TH MEETING OF OECS AUTHORITY

The 56th Meeting of the Authority will be convened on November 22-23, 2012 in Dominica under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves.

St Vincent and the Grenadines

June 12, 2012.