

Castries, Friday August 3, 2012, The Inaugural Session of the OECS Assembly is to take place at the Parliament Building of Antigua and Barbuda on Friday August 10th

2012.

This milestone event will include such highlights as the inspection of the Guard of Honour and the election of the first Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the OECS Assembly.

The Inaugural Session of the OECS Assembly will also feature addresses by Host Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer of Antigua and Barbuda, Chairman of the OECS Prime Minister Hon Ralph Gonsalves of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Hon. Reuben Meade, Premier of Montserrat who will address the ceremony on behalf of the Non Independent Member States and an address by a representative of the Political Opposition in the OECS.

The OECS Assembly will comprise 5 members of the Parliament of each independent Member State and 3 members from the Legislature of each non-independent Member State, with representation from both the ruling administration and the political opposition.

Antigua and Barbuda will serve as the headquarters of the OECS Assembly. However, the OECS Assembly may hold meetings in other Member States.

The OECS Assembly, which will meet at least twice per year, is one of 5 principal Organs established by the *Revised Treaty of Basseterre Establishing the OECS Economic Union*, and is one of the new Organs of the OECS.

The OECS Authority can request the OECS Assembly, which is a deliberative body, to consider and report on any area of interest to the Organization.

However, there are, eight specific areas for which the Revised Treaty allows the OECS to develop legislation. The areas are the common market, monetary policy, trade policy, maritime

jurisdiction and boundaries, civil aviation, commercial policy, environmental policy and immigration policy. These areas are critical in advancing the progress of OECS integration, and therefore it is important for OECS parliamentarians to have a common forum to debate these issues.