

(Castries, Tuesday 20 November 2012) The United States Ambassador to Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, His Excellency, Mr. Larry L. Palmer, presented Letters to the Director General of the OECS, Her Excellency Dr. Len Ishmael, accrediting him as the US Envoy to the OECS at a ceremony which took place at the OECS Secretariat in Saint Lucia on the 20th of November, 2012.

In welcoming Ambassador Palmer, the Director General underlined that, “The United States of America has long enjoyed the friendship of the OECS.

This friendship between our countries and peoples is rooted in history and geography, and has been rendered even stronger by our commitment to shared values and ideals, and by our genuine desire to engage in meaningful dialogue on matters of concern at all levels.”



The Director General pointed alluded to the contemporary security challenges faced by the region, especially with respect to illicit drug trafficking, and added that the OECS, “...counts on ...the United States to work with us in improving...the stability of this region and the sustainability of our plans for the development of this space.”

In his response, the US Ambassador opined that the United States of America and the Member Countries of the OECS share a strong and mutually beneficial relationship.

He praised the Member States of the OECS for their decision to deepen their integration through the establishment of the OECS Economic Union, and commended the vision of the OECS leaders in this regard. In placing the decision to establish the Economic Union within the context of to the global economic crisis he noted that “it is during difficult times that we need more solidarity, not less...The United States supports the progressive objectives of the OECS to promote regional integration and cooperation among its membership.”

In addition, Ambassador Palmer reiterated the United States’ commitment towards the solving of common challenges in priority areas ranging from climate change to citizen security, amongst others.



He discussed his country's willingness to work with OECS Member States in efforts to address the issue of Climate Change, and further communicated that in July 2012, USAID (the United States Agency for International Development) launched a US\$10.5 million climate change adaptation project to build the capacity of independent Member States to respond to the adverse effects of Climate Change.

In addition, he remarked that USAID had also recently signed an agreement for a three-year project to strengthen juvenile justice systems in the sub-region, which would involve legal reform, capacity building and modern detention/rehabilitation processes, and would serve to enhance and improve the social fabric of the OECS.

In closing, the American Ambassador expressed enthusiasm about the OECS sub-region, and pledged to increase cooperation and strengthen the existing productive relationship between the OECS and the United States of America.