



## **COMMUNIQUÉ**

### **Special Meeting of the OECS Authority for Accession of Guadeloupe to Associate Membership of the OECS**

**La Créole Beach Hôtel, Gosier and the Mémorial ACTe Museum,  
Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe**

**March 14-15, 2019**

A Special Meeting of the OECS Authority was held on March 14th and 15th 2019 at La Créole Beach Hôtel, Gosier and the Mémorial ACTe Museum, Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe, under the Chairmanship of Dr. the Honourable Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Heads of Government and Representatives of Government in attendance included:

- Honourable Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda;
  - Dr. the Honourable Roosevelt Skerrit, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Dominica;
  - Honourable Oliver Joseph, Minister of Trade, Grenada (representing Prime Minister of Grenada, Dr. the Right Honourable Keith Mitchell);
  - Honourable Vance Amory, Minister of Labour, St. Kitts and Nevis (representing Prime Minister of St. Kitts and Nevis, Dr. the Honourable Timothy Harris);
  - Honourable Allen Chastanet, Prime Minister of Saint Lucia;
  - Dr. the Honourable Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines;
  - Honourable Andrew Fahie, Premier of the British Virgin Islands;
  - Honourable Evans Rogers, Minister of Health, Anguilla (representing Chief Minister of Anguilla, Honourable Victor Banks);
  - His Excellency Alfred Marie-Jeanne, President of the Territorial Authority of Martinique;
- and

- His Excellency Ary Chalus, President of the Regional Council of Guadeloupe.

Dr. Didacus Jules, Director General of the OECS, and the following Commissioners were also in attendance:

- Ambassador Colin Murdoch, Commissioner to the OECS for Antigua and Barbuda;
- Ambassador Felix Gregoire, Commissioner to the OECS for the Commonwealth of Dominica;
- Ms. Cathisha Williams, Commissioner to the OECS for Grenada;
- Ambassador Lionel Sydney Osborne, Commissioner to the OECS for St. Kitts and Nevis;
- Ambassador Elma Gene Isaac, Commissioner to the OECS for Saint Lucia;
- Ambassador Alan Alexander, Commissioner to the OECS for St. Vincent and the Grenadines; and
- Ms. Najan Christopher, Commissioner to the OECS for the British Virgin Islands.

The OECS Member State of Montserrat was not represented.

Other Heads of Delegation in attendance were:

- Mr. Omar Morales, Policy Advisor for International Relations and Cooperation, Saint Martin (representing His Excellency Daniel Gibbs, President of the Territorial Council of Saint Martin); and
- Mr. Timothy Antoine, Governor of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank.

In the main, the Meeting focused on, inter alia:

(a) Joint Strategic Diplomatic Representation

(b) Major International Developments with implications for the OECS

(c) Security Enhancement

(d) De-risking of Financial Services

(e) Membership

## **(A) JOINT STRATEGIC DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION**

The OECS Heads of Government advanced discussions of strategic representation on the African Continent and took further decisions on the appointment of non-resident ambassadors in the countries of Nigeria; South Africa; Ghana; Algeria; and the establishment of a permanent resident mission in Ethiopia, at the African Union in Addis Ababa. The Meeting also agreed on the appointment of an ambassador and officers to staff the permanent resident mission in the Kingdom of Morocco.

The Authority confirmed the full incorporation of the OECS Member State of Antigua and Barbuda into the Overseas Mission in Brussels, Belgium.

Heads further advanced discussions on joint diplomatic representation in Ottawa, Canada and mandated the OECS Commission to continue exploring the shared interests of Barbados in this venture.

## **(B) MAJOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR THE OECS**

The Authority received a comprehensive report from OECS Ambassador-designate to Brussels, Sharlene Shillingford-McKlmon, on the most recent blacklisting of Member States by the European Union as non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes.

Heads of Government deliberated considerably on this matter and fully endorsed a united approach in response to the pressure being placed on the economies of the OECS by the European Union. Heads further noted the need to implement a strategy that allows for a duality of cooperation and creative resistance.

The Authority also considered the latest attempts by the United States to impose further sanctions on the island nation of Cuba and agreed on a joint statement deploring the increased strangulation of Cuba through the Helms-Burton Act.

OECS Heads of Government expressed shared grief and abhorrence at the recent terrorist attack in Christchurch, New Zealand and collectively issued a statement conveying deep solidarity with the Government and people of New Zealand.

### **(C) SECURITY ENHANCEMENT**

Heads of Government discussed current matters of regional security and proposed recommendations for increased collaboration with the Regional Security System (RSS) as well as the CARICOM Implementing Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS).

### **(D) DE-RISKING OF FINANCIAL SERVICES**

The Authority received an update from the Governor of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB), Timothy Antoine, on the status of the Bank's initiative to bring indigenous (national) banks together in respect of shared services for risk and compliance. The Governor further called for a consolidation of arrangements with respect to the sub region's Citizenship by Investment (CBI) Programmes noting the need for harmonisation of the due diligence arrangements, agreement to common standards and common application protocols, and the sharing of information across countries and with the Joint Regional Communications Centre (JRCC).

The OECS Heads fully endorsed these initiatives and mandated the OECS Commission and the ECCB to coordinate regional collaboration with the Association of CIP/CBI Heads of Unit and the JRCC. Heads also agreed to identify a priority list of interventions for deeper functional cooperation and sourcing of common services by the OECS/ECCB consultative body.

### **(E) MEMBERSHIP**

The Heads of Government welcomed a report from Saint Martin on the status of the island's recovery and agreed that accession discussions should remain on hold as the nation continues with the rebuilding process post Hurricane Irma.

## **NEXT AUTHORITY MEETING**

The 67<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Authority would be held on June 18-19, 2019 in Antigua and Barbuda.

All Heads expressed their profound appreciation and thanks to the Government and people of Guadeloupe for the magnificent arrangements made to ensure the comfort and care of the delegates during the accession proceedings.