

February 23, 2017

PRESS RELEASE

**Visit by Japanese Ambassador to Saint Lucia:
Signing Ceremony for Japan's Development Assistance to Saint Lucia**

The signing ceremony for Japan's development assistance entitled the "Economic and Social Development Programme (Provision of Japanese Disaster Reduction Equipment)" and the two Grant Assistance for the Grass-roots Human Security Projects, entitled "Project for the Procurement of Medical Equipment to Victoria Hospital" and "Project for the Procurement of an Ambulance for St. Jude Hospital", took place at 9:00 a.m. on February 23, 2017, at the Office of the Prime Minister in Castries, Saint Lucia.

The Government of Saint Lucia received a grant of approximately one million, seven hundred thousand US dollars (US\$1,700,000) from the Government of Japan in order to support the promotion of economic and social development by utilising disaster reduction related products of Japanese enterprises. The grant is also aimed at contributing to the improvement of the capacity of Saint Lucia to adapt to climate change. In addition, two hospitals in Saint Lucia, Victoria Hospital and St. Jude Hospital, will receive a sum of up to one hundred and sixty-one thousand, six hundred and seventy-nine US dollars (US\$161,679) for the respective procurement of medical equipment and an ambulance in order to further enhance their medical services.

The ceremony was attended by His Excellency Mitsuhiro Okada, Ambassador of Japan, the Honourable Allen Chastanet, Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Economic Growth, Job Creation, External Affairs and Public Service of Saint Lucia, the Honourable Sarah Flood-Beaubrun, Minister, Department of External Affairs, Ms. Verena Calderon, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Department of Health and Wellness, Ms. Janet Barnard, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Department of Economic Development, Transport and Civil Aviation, Mrs. Jeanette In Louis-Hughes, Executive Director of Victoria Hospital and Dr. Ulric Mondesir, Chairman of the Board of Directors of St. Jude Hospital, along with invited guests and media representatives.

In his speech, Ambassador Okada stated that the areas of climate change adaptation and mitigation, including natural disaster preparedness, have been the recent focus of Japanese grant aid assistance in the Caribbean region, and emphasized the importance of support for the small-island developing states (SIDS) in this area.

In reply, Prime Minister, the Honourable Allen Chastanet, extended his appreciation for the Japan's continued economic assistance in diverse areas and technical cooperation, putting emphasis on cooperation in the areas of fisheries and climate change adaptation. It was also mentioned that the country welcomes Japan's leading role in bringing attention to the adaptation and actively supporting and embracing SIDS, not only the Pacific but also in the Caribbean to embark on long journey of building infrastructure to adopt the recent changes to climate and looks forward to continued relationship and working together with the government.

For further information, please contact:

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In regards to the two Grant Assistance for Grass-roots and Human Security Projects, which were also signed on the same occasion, Ms. Verena Calderon, the Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Wellness, expressed gratitude to the People of Japan, and assured that the new neo-natal equipment and patient monitors at Victoria Hospital and the ambulance at St. Jude Hospital will be well served and benefit the patients taking medical services at the two important general hospitals.

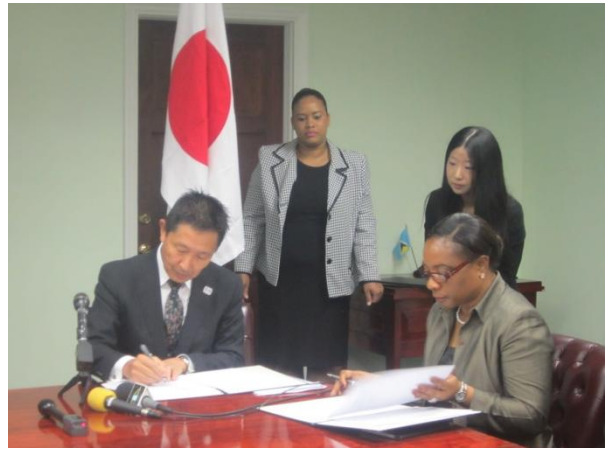
The Government of Japan is committed to advancing the sustainable development of Saint Lucia through continued cooperation.

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Ambassador Mitsuhiro Okada (left) and the Honourable Allen Chastanet sign the Exchange of Notes for disaster reduction grant aid



Ambassador Mitsuhiro Okada, and Mrs. Jeanette Jn Louis-Hughes sign the grant contracts for Victoria Hospital



Ambassador Mitsuhiro Okada and Dr. Ulric Mondesir shake hands after signing the grant contracts for St. Jude Hospital



L- R: Ms. Verena Calderon, Ms. Janet Barnard, the Honourable Sarah Flood-Beaubrun, the Honourable Allen Chastanet, Ambassador Mitsuhiro Okada, Mrs. Jeanette Jn Louis-Hughes, and Dr. Ulric Mondesir

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