

January 17, 2020

PRESS RELEASE

**Handover Ceremony for Disaster Reduction Equipment procured through
Japanese Grant Aid to Saint Lucia
(Economic and Social Development Programme FY2015
(procurement of disaster reduction equipment))**

On the morning of January 17, 2020, the handover ceremony for disaster reduction equipment procured through Japanese Grant Aid was held at the Gros Islet Fire Station, Saint Lucia. In attendance were Ambassador Tatsuo Hirayama; Senator the Honourable Hermangild Francis, Minister for Home Affairs, Justice and National Security; the Honourable Lenard Montoute, Minister for Equity, Social Justice, Local Government and Empowerment (Gros Islet district elected member); Mr. George Victorin, Acting Chief Fire Officer; a member of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Saint Lucia Office, and a member of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs), among others.

During the ceremony, Ambassador Hirayama paid tribute to firefighters and rescue workers for the harsh duties they perform, and noted that as vulnerable island nations, Japan and Saint Lucia needed to be more resilient to disasters. Ambassador Hirayama expressed his hope that the equipment will help firefighters and rescue workers perform their mission more efficiently and safely.

Ministers Francis and Montoute thanked the Government of Japan for its irreplaceable cooperation with Saint Lucia. The Ministers also mentioned the importance of a system to support rapid responses in cases of emergency, and extended their appreciation for the equipment procured.

Ambassador Hirayama delivered the keys to the rescue vehicle and the ladder to Minister Francis. Following this, Ministers Francis and Montoute boarded the lifter and were raised to 30 meters.

The Government of Japan will continue to provide support in the areas of disaster prevention, the environment, energy, waste disposal, and fisheries in order to promote friendly relations and mutual understanding with the Caribbean, and overcome the vulnerabilities unique to small island states.

For further information, please contact:
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At left, Ambassador Hirayama delivers his remarks, and right, Senator the Honourable Hermangild Francis addresses guests.



Ambassador Hirayama presents Minister Francis with a key to the disaster reduction equipment.



At left, an image of turntable ladder, and right, Minister Francis tours disaster reduction equipment.