

May 7, 2021

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Ground Breaking and Commencement of the Project for Reconstruction of Bridges in Cul-De-Sac Basin, Saint Lucia**

The Ground Breaking and Commencement Ceremony for the Project for Reconstruction of Bridges in Cul-De-Sac Basin, Saint Lucia was held at 3:00 pm on May 5, 2021 in Cul-De-Sac Saint Lucia. This reconstruction project is supported by a grant of 1.53 billion Japanese Yen (approximately 14 million US dollars) from the Government of Japan, and once completed, will strengthen vital transport infrastructure at the community and national levels.

Among the representatives of the Government of Saint Lucia were the Honourable Andy Daniel, Speaker of the House of Assembly, representing the Prime Minister, the Honourable Guy E. Joseph, Minister for Economic Development, Housing, Urban Renewal, Transport and Civil Aviation; the Honourable Stephenson King, Minister for Infrastructure, Ports, Energy and Labour, as well as Mr. Ivor Daniel, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Infrastructure, Ports, Energy and Labour. Representing the Government of Japan were Tatsuo Hirayama, Ambassador of Japan to Saint Lucia— who attended virtually from Port of Spain, Trinidad— and Mr. Hiroyasu Tonokawa, Chief Representative, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) St. Lucia office.

During his remarks, Ambassador Hirayama took the opportunity to reiterate Japan's solidarity with the Caribbean given the ongoing impact caused by the eruption of La Soufriere Volcano in St. Vincent. He then thanked the Government of Saint Lucia for assisting JICA with its efforts to ship emergency items to Saint Vincent. Ambassador Hirayama went on to highlight the value of the reconstruction project in improving Saint Lucia's preparedness and resilience to natural disasters. He reiterated that the two countries enjoy a strong and excellent partnership based on shared values and announced that Japan had decided to provide further grant assistance for the procurement of medical equipment.

Minister Joseph used the occasion to recognize the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of JICA in Saint Lucia and saluted the agency's sterling contributions to bilateral cooperation between Japan and Saint Lucia. In his capacity as Parliamentary Representative for the area, Minister Joseph expressed special thanks and appreciation to the Government and people of Japan for financing the project, and highlighted the positive impact it is expected to have on the lives of residents.

For his part, Minister King underscored Japan's multifaceted cooperation with Saint Lucia. He described Japan as a true and trusted friend to Saint Lucia whenever the occasion arises, and in this vein, referred to Japan's technical cooperation following the passage of Tropical Storm Tomas in 2010. Minister King conveyed his Ministry's appreciation for the assistance offered by the Government and people of Japan. He noted that this project will support the transformation of Cul-De-Sac and stimulate economic opportunity, and also alleviate flooding. Minister King pledged his Ministry's support to JICA's efforts to deliver the project on time.

The Government of Japan will continue to offer its support in the areas of disaster prevention, environment, energy, waste management and fisheries in order to promote friendly relations and mutual understanding with Caribbean countries, and to overcome the vulnerabilities inherent to small island countries.

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Ambassador Hirayama delivers remarks



Mr. Hiroyasu Tonokawa delivers remarks

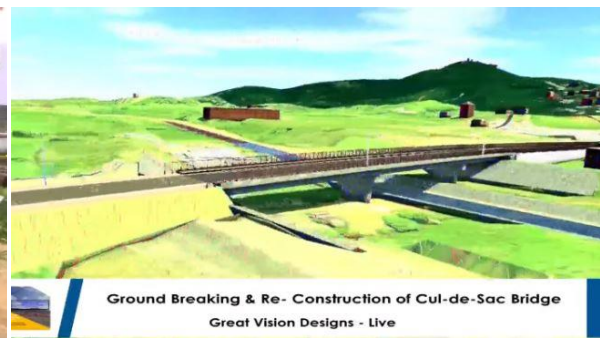


Ground Breaking & Re- Construction of Cul-de-Sac Bridge  
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The Honourable Guy E. Joseph and The Honourable Stephenson King address the audience.



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(L-R) Mr. Ivor Daniel, Mr. Hiroyasu Tonokawa, Honourable Stephenson King and Honourable Guy E. Joseph break the ground and celebrate the official commencement of the Project.