

May 28, 2021

PRESS RELEASE

**Signing Ceremony for Japan's Development Assistance to Saint Lucia
(Procurement of Medical Equipment)**

The Signing Ceremony for the Exchange of Notes for Japanese Grant Aid provided to Saint Lucia under the Economic and Social Development Programme was held on May 28 at 11:00 am at the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations in New York. This Grant Aid is valued at two hundred million Japanese Yen (¥ 200,000,000), and is intended to contribute to the improvement of Saint Lucia's healthcare systems and infectious disease control through the provision of medical equipment.

The Exchange of Notes was signed by His Excellency Kimihiro Ishikane, Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations and His Excellency Cosmos Richardson, Permanent Representative of Saint Lucia to the United Nations. His Excellency Tatsuo Hirayama, Ambassador of Japan to Saint Lucia attended virtually from Trinidad, as well as Mr. Claudius Emmanuel, Permanent Secretary, Department of Economic Development, Trade and Civil Aviation; Mr. Benson Emile, Acting Permanent Secretary, Department of Health and Wellness and Mr. Guillaume Simon, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Department of External Affairs— all of whom attended virtually from Saint Lucia.

In his remarks, Ambassador Ishikane referred to the shared values which underscore the strong and long-standing partnership between Japan and Saint Lucia. Ambassador Ishikane also referred to the challenges shared between Japan and CARICOM countries, such as natural disasters and climate change. In this vein, Ambassador Ishikane described the COVID-19 pandemic as the biggest crisis facing the global community, and noted the support offered by Japan to CARICOM countries through CARPHA (Caribbean Public Health Agency) and the COVAX Facility. Ambassador Ishikane then described this grant assistance as another testament to Japan's commitment to enhancing the bonds of friendship with Saint Lucia, and expressed his hope that the equipment will be used effectively and efficiently.

During his remarks, Ambassador Richardson likewise highlighted the friendly relations which were developed and strengthened since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1980. Ambassador Richardson specifically mentioned the robust bilateral cooperation both countries enjoyed through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV). Ambassador Richardson noted the unprecedented global challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and commended the Government of Japan for its support to CARICOM countries through CARPHA and the COVAX Facility. Ambassador Richardson expressed his thanks to the Government of Japan on behalf of the Government of Saint Lucia for the assistance provided on this occasion, and stated that this support will usher in a new phase of collaboration between Japan and Saint Lucia.

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.

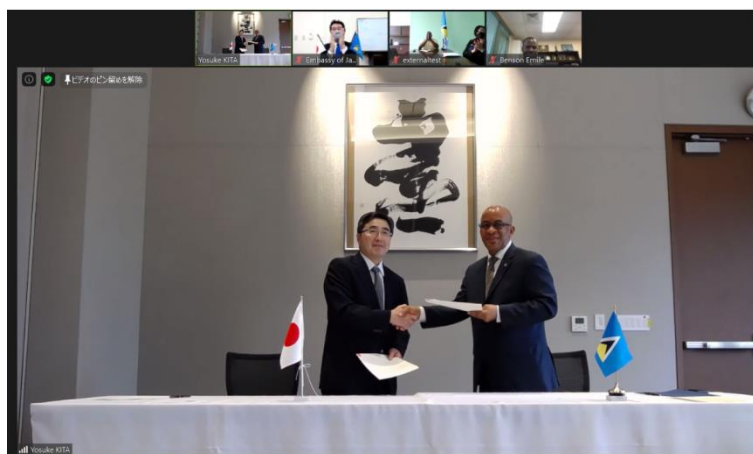
For further information, please contact:
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Clockwise: Ambassador Kimihiro Ishikane and Ambassador Cosmos Richardson shake hands after signing the Exchange of Notes; Ambassador Tatsuo Hirayama observes the ceremony from the Embassy of Japan in Trinidad and Tobago; Mr. Benson Emile, Acting Permanent Secretary, Department of Health and Wellness observes the ceremony; Mr. Guillaume Simon, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Department of External Affairs and Ms. Shantelle Polius, Desk Officer for Japan, Department of External Affairs observe the ceremony



Ambassador Kimihiro Ishikane and Ambassador Cosmos Richardson sign the Exchange of Notes



Ambassador Kimihiro Ishikane and Ambassador Cosmos Richardson shake hands after signing the Exchange of Notes