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PRESS RELEASE

Handover Ceremony for the Launch of the CARICOM Component of the Project for the Introduction of Renewable Energy and the Improvement of Power System, CARICOM Secretariat

The Handover Ceremony for the Launch of the CARICOM Component of the Project for the Introduction of Renewable Energy and the Improvement of Power System was held on Tuesday January 11, 2022 at the CARICOM Secretariat, Georgetown, Guyana. The Ceremony saw the handover of over the Solar Photovoltaic Power Generation Plant with Battery and Building Energy Management Systems. The said project was carried out following a US\$17.8M grant agreement between the Governments of Guyana and Japan, US\$7M of which was earmarked for the project.

Dignitaries in attendance included His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, Hon. Brigadier-General (Ret'd) Mark A. Phillips, MSS MP, Prime Minister; H.E. Dr. Carla Barnett, CARICOM Secretary-General; H.E. Armstrong Alexis, DBE, Deputy Secretary General; Tatsuo Hirayama, Ambassador of Japan and Mr. Hiroyasu Tonokawa, Chief Representative of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to the Caribbean.

For his part, Ambassador Hirayama underscored the values of partnership and challenges which Japan shared with CARICOM members, and reiterated the Government of Japan's commitment to responding to ongoing pressing global challenges, such as disaster risk management, climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. Ambassador Hirayama then extended his appreciation for the commitment of those responsible for realizing the project in spite of the challenging circumstances. With Japanese technologies and expertise utilization in this project, he emphasized this will become a much more significant symbol of Japan-CARICOM partnership.

In concluding his remarks, Ambassador Hirayama expressed his appreciation to everyone who assisted with his work as he is leaving the Caribbean upon completion of the assignment in the middle of February.

The Honourable Prime Minister underscored that the project supported the Government of Guyana's transition of its electricity sector away from fossil fuels to a low carbon path. He expressed his hope that the project will serve as a catalyst to enhance awareness of renewable energy and energy management among local businesses as well as other member countries, and other regions. Prime Minister Phillips explained that given the capacity building component of the project, the operation will continue to be operated and maintained to maximize benefits. He then conveyed his gratitude to the Government and people of Japan.

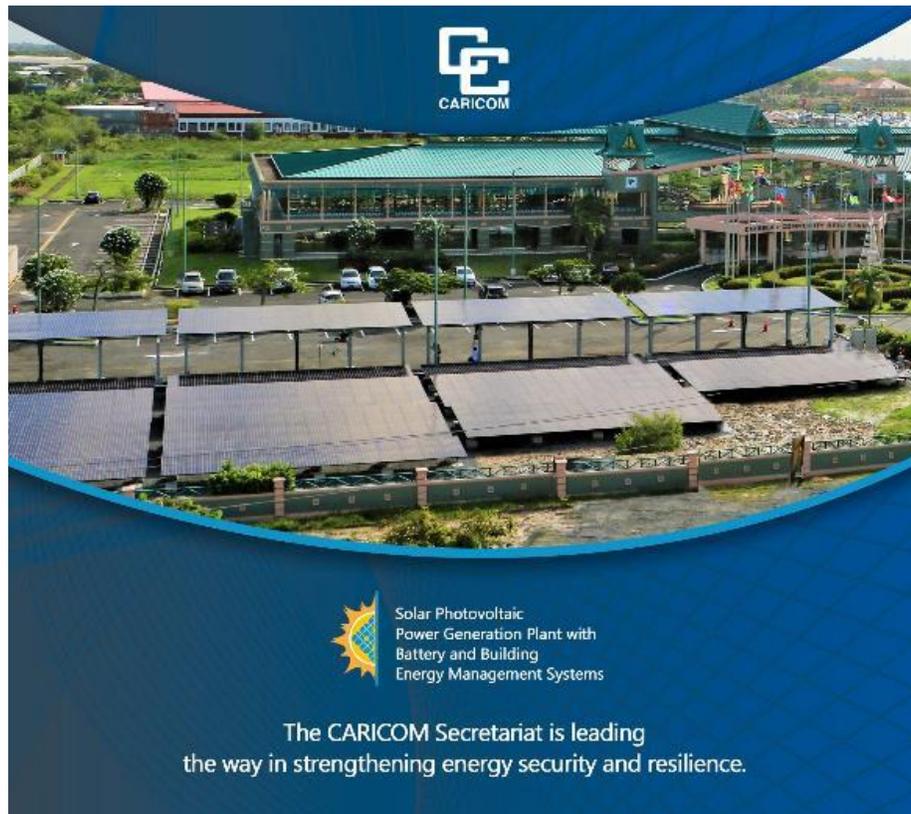
His Excellency President Ali acknowledged the value of this project in the areas of partnership, innovation and efficiency, and further, that it was a demonstration of the region's seriousness and commitment to renewable energy. The president then expressed Guyana's readiness to carry out work in the region in the area of renewable energy opportunities. President Ali underscored the Caribbean region's distinct vulnerability to the impact of climate change, and urged a more aggressive deployment of resources from partners in order to advance the region's technologies to support climate mitigation and adaptation. President Ali availed himself of the opportunity to thank Ambassador Hirayama for his service in the Caribbean, and extended his appreciation to all responsible for the implementation of the project, especially given the very difficult circumstances.

The ceremony was livestreamed on CARICOM YouTube and Facebook and was viewed by an audience of thousands.

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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Overview of the installation



Overview of the installation of Solar Photovoltaic Panels

<https://www.facebook.com/caricom.org/photos/a.563198893792354/467106608633892/>

Pictures from the ceremony



Dr. Carla Barnett, CARICOM Secretary-General



Mr. Hiroyasu Tonokawa, Chief Representative of JICA to the Caribbean.



Ambassador Tatsuo Hirayama



Hon. Mark A. Phillips, Prime Minister



Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana



Unveiling of the Commemorative Plaque by President Dr. Ali and Ambassador Hirayama



Installed solar panels



Explanation of the facility by Japanese experts