

**Conferment of Japanese National Decoration upon Mr. Horace Walters,  
International Whaling Commissioner (IWC) for Saint Lucia on October 25, 2024**

On October 25, 2024, the Japanese National Decoration, the “Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon”, was conferred upon Mr. Horace Walters, Commissioner of Saint Lucia in the International Whaling Commission (IWC), at a cocktail reception hosted by His Excellency Yutaka Matsubara, Ambassador of Japan, at the Bay Gardens Resort. This is the first time that such a prestigious Japanese decoration is being awarded to a citizen of Saint Lucia.

The “Order of the Rising Sun” is conferred on Japanese and foreign nationals who have made significant contributions to advancing relations between Japan and its international partners.

Present at the reception were the Honourable Claudius Francis, Speaker of the House; the Honourable Alfred Prospere, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Rural Development; Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Senior Government Officials; and the family and friends of Mr. Walters. In his welcome address, Ambassador Matsubara highlighted Mr. Walters’s significant contributions to fisheries and sustainable development of marine resources, regionally and internationally which assisted in the development of the strong ties between Japan and Saint Lucia. Minister Prospere, who also spoke on behalf of the Government of Saint Lucia, lauded Mr. Walters’ accomplishments as the Chief Fisheries Officer for Saint Lucia, and his representation as the International Whaling Commissioner where he has contributed to the development of Saint Lucia’s fishing industry and strengthened ties with Japan. Minister Prospere also stated that Japan has supported the development of Saint Lucia’s fishing industry, not only by providing facilities and equipment, but also by providing guidance through the efforts of many experts and volunteers.

In his remarks, Mr. Walters indicated that he has been involved in the fishing industry for the past 50 years, and has highlighted the current state of the fishing industry in small island nations at international conferences, such as the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species* (CITES). He said that many Japanese experts have assisted with the promotion of the fisheries industry in Saint Lucia. He further stated that he was honored to receive

the award and expressed his gratitude to all those involved.

Ambassador Daven Joseph, IWC Commissioner for Antigua and Barbuda, said, "Mr. Walters has been a comrade for many years, advocating for the position regarding the use of marine living resources by small island nations at international conferences such as the IWC and CITES. He has continued to appeal to the world about the vulnerability of small island nations. Japan shares this view. I would like to congratulate Mr. Walters on receiving this award from Japan."



H.E. Yutaka Matsubara, Ambassador of Japan, greets the Honourable Alfred Prospere, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Rural Development.



H.E. Yutaka Matsubara, Ambassador of Japan, gives remarks.



H.E. Yutaka Matsubara, Ambassador of Japan, pins the "Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon" to Mr. Horace Walters.



H.E. Yutaka Matsubara, Ambassador of Japan, presents the certificate for the "Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon" to Mr. Horace Walters.



Mr. Horace Walters gives remarks.



The Honourable Alfred Prospere, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Rural Development, gives remarks.



From left to right: Mrs. Matsubara, Mr. Horace Walters, Mrs. Walters, H.E. Yutaka Matsubara, Ambassador of Japan, and The Honourable Alfred Prospere, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Rural Development.