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PRESS RELEASE

Saint Lucia Participates as Speaker at Special Meeting of the Committee on Hemispheric Security – Special Focus on Security Issues of CARICOM



July 9, 2020, Washington, DC – On June 25, 2020, the Organization of American States – Committee on Hemispheric Security (CHS) held the meeting of the Special Security Concerns of the Small Island and Low-Lying Coastal Developing States of the Caribbean, under the theme “The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the persistent multidimensional security vulnerabilities of the small island and low-lying coastal developing states of the Caribbean”. This Special Meeting of the CHS is held annually with the aim of addressing the security issues of importance to the member states of CARICOM.

Presenters at the meeting included Assistant Superintendent of Police Lucius Lake who addressed Saint Lucia’s experiences with managing border security during COVID-19 and explored possible future challenges in this area. Some of the challenges Mr. Lake highlighted include porous borders thus allowing undocumented and illegal entry; limited resources and staff to patrol remote areas; inability to quarantine persons who enter illegally thus possibly exposing the population to COVID-19. He also explained that COVID-19 has resulted in the delayed procurement of a Border Management System and the delayed establishment of the new Border Management Agency.

In his remarks to the meeting, H.E. Anton Edmunds provided an overview of COVID-19 cases in Saint Lucia and the preemptive measures the Government has taken to mitigate against importation and spread of the virus. He noted that among the many security challenges being faced due to COVID-19, is the delayed implementation of previously budgeted initiatives to strengthen the security apparatus. Ambassador Edmunds called for a collective approach to successfully address the region’s persistent multidimensional security vulnerabilities.

Other presenters included representatives from the Regional Security System (RSS) - Captain (N) Errington Shurland Executive Director; the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) - Ms. Elizabeth Riley, Executive Director (Ag); Chair of the CARIOCOC Council for National Security and Law Enforcement (CONSLE) - Senator the Honourable Winston Garraway, Office of the Prime Minister of Grenada and the OAS Secretariat for Multidimensional Security – Farah Urrutia, Secretary.