

Remarks presented by  
Mr. Mikael Barfod, Head of Delegation  
Delegation of the European Union to Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean  
at the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2014 French National Day Celebration in Saint Lucia

**Potential Protocol**

Governor's office, PM's Office,  
Ministers, PS, Reps Chief Justice, Police Commissioner,  
Ambassadors, Reps International Donors  
French Armed Forces  
Media  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
les enfants de la patrie,

As a European Union citizen, I feel particularly honoured to take part in the celebrations of this landmark event for both the European and world history. The events of the 14<sup>th</sup> of July 1789 in France always resonates a historical echo in the hearts and minds, of anybody who wants to talk about democratic and social progress.

As a European Union diplomat, I would like to share some thoughts on how 1789 is still relevant for the European Union's international cooperation and solidarity vision, for Saint Lucia and the Eastern Caribbean.

Over the last years, the European Union alongside the rest of the world had to deal with the complexity and the critical consequences of the **global economic crisis**, both at home and abroad, as well as crises in the immediate neighbourhood.

During all this period, the European Union maintained a **key role in global affairs** in support of its firm belief that a process of improved global welfare, social protection, social justice, safety and security, good governance and rule of law are the necessary conditions for global, collective and equitable, economic growth.

It is not very surprising that the EU cheers on the OECS and its Member States in their endeavour to further advance economic and monetary union. We identify and actively support such vision, a vision that guides us on a daily basis in the European Union; a vision that we are convinced brings stability and prosperity, a vision of

cohesion and convergence, a vision of continuous political dialogue and economic cooperation. In short the EU understands St Lucia and the Eastern Caribbean very well.

With four French 'outermost regions' and twelve 'overseas territories', five British, six Dutch and one French in the Caribbean sea, Europe is directly interested in assisting the OECS region to better manage these challenges and continue uninterrupted into its integration pathways.

The recently finalized National Indicative Programmes for the 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund, the on-going negotiations for the regional EDF component, as well as on-going programmes from the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF, Sugar and Banana protocols, other bilateral programmes from EU Member States, provide a solid partnership base and we are all obliged to ensure the utmost degree of efficiency and effectiveness in their implementation and the promotion of an Economic Partnership Agreement. All this must have tangible benefits for the OECS socio-economic space. One particularly obvious benefit is the new National Hospital, which the PM and I walked through this morning to ensure that the 130 million EC Dollars building is almost ready.

The point that I am trying to make here, is that, the depth and scope of engagement of the European Union and its Member States with our partner countries in the region try to remain **holistic and comprehensive**, be it in the health or the education sectors, in reinforcing public financial management, in introducing new value chains in agriculture, in more dynamic trade integration, in improved disaster preparedness, in promoting renewable energy, moving with climate change adaptation, essential infrastructure rehabilitation, collective and citizen based safety and security.

Over the last months, programming discussions in the framework of the next **INTERREG** programme between OECS, and the the Regional Councils of **Gouadeloupe** and **Martinique** are opening new opportunities for expanding the scope of collaboration already initiated in previous INTERREG programmes. Meanwhile, the presence of the **European Investment Bank** in the region and the mobilisation of more resources through the Caribbean Investment Fund, point to the fact, that we need to work closer on a daily basis in order to ensure that none of these opportunities are left untapped.

The presence of the **French Embassy in Saint Lucia** clearly helps to reinforce the European Union's aspiration for a seamless dialogue and collaboration with Saint Lucia and the OECS. In the EU delegation in Barbados we are extremely happy with our cooperation with the French Ambassador H.E. Eric de la Moussaye and his

crew here in St. Lucia. I wouldn't like to forget acknowledging his spouse Martine, who, like my own wife, is fully involved in many events.

Finally allow me to say a few words of congratulations to France and the French present today, *les enfants de la Patrie*. I wish you a world of freedom, equality and fraternity as your forefathers cried out 225 years ago.

*Et en français : On a eu 225 ans pour mettre en œuvre cette vision de liberté, égalité et fraternité. On a fait énormément de progrès depuis 1789 mais il-y a toujours pas mal de chose à faire en France, En Europe et dans le monde entier. En effet dans une sens on a souvent besoin de prendre la Bastille virtuelle même si le bâtiment n'existe plus à Paris. Bonne fête*

Thank you very much