



## EUROPEAN UNION

DELEGATION TO BARBADOS  
AND THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN

The Head of Delegation

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### PRESS RELEASE

#### **EU Development Commissioner Mimica confirms EUR 135M to Caribbean OCTs**

The European Union has agreed to allocate 40 million Euro (US\$44.8 million) to finance Energy Efficiency and Biodiversity projects in Caribbean Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs). This was one of the decisions coming out of the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual OCT-EU Regional Conference held in the British Virgin Islands (BVI) on 26 February. In addition the EU provides a total of 95 million Euro (US\$107M) to the nine Caribbean OCTs as territorial allocations.

The conference was attended by the new European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Mr. Neven Mimica, in his first visit to the Caribbean three months after he took office. The new EU Development Commissioner stated: "I am committed to ensuring that the EU upholds its role as a global champion of sustainable development, on the basis of partnership based on mutual interests". He further highlighted 2015 as the European Year for Development.

The 130 participants held in-depth dialogue on topics of mutual interest such as a more effective integration of the territories in their respective regions and on sustainable use of natural resources. The trilateral meetings proved to be very useful to facilitate the exchange of views on the programming process and a deeper partnership. They underlined their special relationship, their belonging to the same European family and common objectives, values and principles. The partners agreed that innovation, competitiveness and blue and green growth are key factors in the sustainable development of the OCTs and the diversification of their economies.

Following the Ministerial Conference, the 13th Overseas Countries and Territories-EU Forum was opened on 27th of February, 2015 by Premier of the BVI, Honourable, Dr. Orlando Smith and Commissioner Mimica.

Those attending the Forum include Premiers and Chief Ministers of the 25 Overseas Countries and Territories; representatives of Denmark, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom; the EU Outermost regions and Members of the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Investment Bank.

OCTs are countries that depend constitutionally on four of the EU Member States: Denmark, France, The Netherlands and The United Kingdom. They do not form part of EU territory, are not subject to EU law, but they benefit from associate status conferred on them by the Treaty of Lisbon.

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