



**A WELCOME START**

**REMARKS**

BY

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PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR FINANCE, ECONOMIC  
AFFAIRS, PLANNING & SOCIAL SECURITY

AT THE CHEQUE HAND-OVER OF GRANT FUNDS FROM  
THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA (TAIWAN)

TOWARDS THE  
CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2015/16  
(SECOND TRANCHE)

AND THE  
NEW CONFERENCE SYSTEM FOR PARLIAMENT  
CHAMBER

CABINET ROOM, OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER  
GREAHAM LOUISY BUILDING, WATERFRONT, CASTRIES

OCTOBER 2, 2015.

Your Excellency Ambassador Mou,  
Permanent Secretaries,  
Officials of the Embassy of the Republic of China  
(Taiwan) in Saint Lucia,  
Officials of the Ministry of Finance,  
Officials of the Parliament Office,  
Members of the Media,  
Ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

## **WELCOME TO SAINT LUCIA**

May I first take this opportunity to publicly welcome Taiwan's new Ambassador to Saint Lucia, His Excellency, Mr. Mou. His Excellency arrived in Saint Lucia a mere two days ago!

His Excellency is new to Saint Lucia, but not to this hemisphere, as he has worked in the Republic of China (Taiwan) Trade & Cultural Office in Miami.

Your Excellency, we are pleased to welcome you to the Helen of the West, “simply beautiful Saint Lucia.” We welcome you to our island home with open hearts and minds. We invite you to discover our island, its uniqueness, its delights, sheer beauty, and magnificent scenery. In time, I know you will discover who we are: a unique people, with a fascinating history, heritage and culture.

## **WASTED NO MOMENT**

I am also pleased that you have wasted no moment in taking up right where your predecessor, former Ambassador Chang, left. Ambassador Chang earned our respect, admiration and affection. He handled our affairs with honour, dignity and character. So, you do have very big shoes to fill! Your presence here today at this cheque presentation is a welcome

start to your duties, on this, your second day at work in Saint Lucia.

## **CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT**

Your Excellency, the Constituency Development Programme (CDP) is one of the foremost programmes which your Government supports in Saint Lucia. Today's cheque of over EC\$9.8 million will go towards funding the ongoing projects under the CDP.

This financial year, the Government budgeted approximately EC \$24 million for the programme, which is largely funded by the Republic of China (Taiwan).

The Constituency Development Programme continues to be an important sign of the Government's commitment to poverty alleviation, employment and local development. It is people oriented, people focussed and people driven.

Throughout each and every constituency nationwide, work is being undertaken through this programme.

Your Excellency, every Member of Parliament, whether in Government or in Opposition, has the opportunity to propose projects which are seen as critical for their respective constituencies.

Today's cheque is the second tranche of funds for the CDP 2015/16, with the first being disbursed in April this year, amounting to about EC \$8.1 million. This brings the total outlay for the year-to-date to about \$18 million.

This ceremony signifies the openness to which we have been conducting transactions with your Government, Your Excellency. Reports are submitted regularly to your Embassy highlighting the works which have been undertaken in the

various constituencies. However, I wish to suggest to members of Parliament that they should invite you to their respective constituencies, to see the projects which have been undertaken and how these projects have transformed communities islandwide. New roads, footpaths, drains and community infrastructure are everywhere to be seen.

## **CONFERENCE SYSTEM**

The second cheque being handed over today, totalling nearly EC\$54,000, will go towards a new Conference System for our country's Parliament.

Ever since Hurricane Tomas in 2010, the Parliament's conference system was damaged. Each time Parliament met subsequently, a system had to be rented. There is a phrase that talk is cheap. However, in this case, it was not cheap at all. Each time a Parliamentarian or Youth Parliamentarian had to speak, a system had to be rented for that purpose.

This cheque will thus enable the Parliament to acquire a new audio system. Invariably, this will result in savings for the Parliament Office and by extension the state.

## **TANGIBLE MANIFESTATIONS**

Your Excellency, may I, through you, thank the Government and people of the Republic of China (Taiwan) for their continued support for Saint Lucia, as we strive along our path for development. We are ever grateful for your commitment and willingness to come to our aid.

In the coming weeks, additional projects announced in the 2015/16 Budget will also commence, thanks to funding committed by the Government of the Republic of China (Taiwan).

We are ready to proceed with the re-development of the Soufriere Square, the completion of the Gros Islet

Human Resource Centre, all to be financed by the generous support of your Government and people.

The continued cooperation between Saint Lucia and the Republic of China is made ever stronger through such tangible manifestations.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you.