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**Statement on Diplomatic Relations with the State of Palestine
by H.E. Menissa Rambally
Permanent Representative of Saint Lucia to the United Nations**

This is a most significant occasion for the Government and people of Saint Lucia as we embark on the establishment of diplomatic relations with the State of Palestine.

Saint Lucia has consistently expressed its support for international recognition of the State of Palestine in various international fora. We have been consistent in our endorsement of the myriad General Assembly resolutions in furtherance of the Palestinian people's right to self determination, right of return and right to independence.

Saint Lucia joined an overwhelming number of member states, in 2012 to support the UN decision to upgrade the Palestinian Authority's status at the United Nations from Observer Entity to Observer State.

Today, we join with CARICOM member states who have established relations with the State of Palestine, as our own testament of solidarity.

Most recently, Saint Lucia joined with the overwhelming majority of the international community in supporting the General Assembly resolution to fly the flags of non-member states of the United Nations. We look forward to seeing the Palestinian flag flying proudly alongside the rest of the nations of the world, and look forward to the day when the observer state status is transformed to full membership in the General Assembly.

Our action today is a clear reaffirmation of our longstanding commitment to the formal establishment of a viable Palestinian State based on the 1967 borders according to the prevailing Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

It is interesting that the General Assembly today has taken action on the most important issue of Security Council reform after much negotiation and deliberation. We have taken an important step in what has been a long process, as we seek some degree of re-balancing the power within the United Nations to reflect the membership of the 21 st century.

Within this process, we must also endeavor to examine the implementation of key resolutions, and in particular, those resolutions related to the State of Palestine.

The formal instrument establishing diplomatic relations which we are signing today establishes our mutual commitment to deepen our already close relations, and to further establish our solidarity with the Palestinian people.

It is a testament to our commitment to stand with you today, and into the future.