



**PERMANENT MISSION OF SAINT LUCIA TO THE
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS)**

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**STATEMENT BY H.E. ANTON EDMUNDS AT THE MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL:
COMMEMORATION OF THE DAY OF THE WOMEN OF THE AMERICAS**

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2021



Chair - Thank you for noting our country's recent 42nd Anniversary of Independence. My delegation is pleased to have joined with the delegations of Panama, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Jamaica and Peru in presenting this item on the agenda of today's meeting of the Permanent Council. We welcome and take note of the messages delivered by the Ministers of Foreign affairs as well as that of the Executive Secretary of the CIM.

Saint Lucia has a long history of women participating in the most senior positions of government. In fact, currently women represent one third of our Cabinet of Ministers, including Minister Sarah Flood-Beaubrun who you just heard from.

In addition to our Minister and others within the cabinet, our President of the Senate is a woman as is our Ambassador to Cuba and our Consul Generals in Toronto, Martinique, and Miami. The list of women leaders includes our Ambassador to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and to the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), and our Ambassador for Diaspora Affairs. As was noted we had until recently, a female Governor General who served in this position with distinction for 20 years.

We are proud of the legacy of our women in shaping national policy and influencing our interests in the international area. We have only just begun.

Chair - The Government of Saint Lucia is committed to creating an enabling environment for women's economic empowerment, parity in leadership and ensuring a gender-responsive development agenda.

To this end, the government is in the final stages of developing the National Gender Equity Policy Statement and Strategy. While COVID-19 has exacerbated gender specific issues that we have long been working to address, our Department of Gender Relations has done tremendous work over the past year in tracking the impact of the pandemic on women in Saint Lucia. The Government has instituted a number of specific programs in the Economic Recovery and Resilience Plan that specifically benefit women during this most difficult time.

Chair - As we commemorate this Day of the Women of the Americas, we recognize and applaud the contribution of women throughout the Hemisphere and encourage their continued empowerment.

Thank you