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PRESS RELEASE

SAINT LUCIA PART OF EMPOWERING WOMEN AND PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH FOREIGN POLICY SESSION OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION OF WOMEN (CIM)



Washington D.C - December 6 – Saint Lucia was a featured speaker on the issue of migration during the recent OAS’ Inter-American Commission of Women event. Saint Lucia’s Permanent Representative to the OAS, Ambassador Edmunds, joined representatives from Barbados, Costa Rica, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Panama and Trinidad & Tobago to discuss gender, migration and climate change. A special presentation on the Impact of Women’s Leadership on Foreign Affairs in the Americas was delivered by Her Excellency, Sandra Honore, Former Ambassador of Trinidad and Tobago to Costa Rica, Guatemala, Panama and United Nations Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

Saint Lucia’s intervention focused on certain misconceptions associated with migration within the Hemisphere – notably that it is mostly men who are migrating. Ambassador Edmunds reported that the wider hemispheric numbers show only a slight majority of men versus women migrating and further, that women send the same percentage of money back as men. Specific to the Caribbean, he highlighted that over half of migrants are women. A specific reference was made to the loss of nurses within the Caribbean and the fact that the lack of an enabling environment and burdensome bureaucracy must be addressed to stem this flow. Fundamentally, push dynamics that encourage migration continue to be crime, violence and economic issues which has been exacerbated by COVID-19. Stiffening of border requirements and growing anti-immigrant sentiment in traditional host countries it was reported, do not seem to be slowing regular and irregular migration – highlighting local societal pressures.

On the issue of dangers of migration, Ambassador Edmunds highlighted the specific dangers that women face, and that the tendency of women to move with their children, makes them even more vulnerable to bad actors. He also noted the lack of clarity in terms of migration policy within the region, and the fact that many countries do not have robust mechanisms to protect migrants and those who are victims of individuals involved in trafficking in persons. The event can be found [here](#).