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SVG CALLS FOR GREATER COOPERATION IN TACKLING ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSITY CHALLENGES

Pro Tempore President of the Community of Latin American and the Caribbean States (CELAC), **St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG)**, has called for closer cooperation in providing practicable and actionable outcomes in averting the global climate crisis.

The country's Minister of Sustainable Development, Honourable Carlos James made the call at the recently held European Union (EU) – Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) ministerial meeting on environment and climate change held in San Jose, Costa Rica on May 4, 2023.

Ministers from the EU and CELAC committed to stepping up cooperation to tackle the triple planetary crisis of: climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss. They agreed to promote a transition towards low carbon, circular and clean economies where nature is protected and restored.

“What is simply required is action beyond the pledges and the EU-CELAC partnership must take the conversation beyond dialogue towards actionable

outcomes that are solutions-based, realistic and meaningful in the fight against climate change,” Minister James shared during the plenary meeting.

During the plenary meeting, Minister James expressed the view that action beyond pledges is required in scaling up climate change action. He added that the EU-CELAC partnership must advance the conversation from dialogue to actionable outcomes that are solutions-based, realistic and meaningful in the fight against climate change.

According to Minister James the upcoming EU-CELAC summit, which will be held in Brussels on 17 and 18 July, presents a tremendous opportunity to redefine the region’s position on the way forwards with developmental partners, such as the European Union. He further notes that SVG’s pro Tempore Presidency of CELAC is about strengthening the collaboration on matters of mutual interest, including climate change.

Fourteen ministers and 65 representatives from LAC and the EU attended the ministerial meeting on environment and climate change. They discussed opportunities for closer cooperation on the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of biodiversity in line with the new Kunming – Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including the fight against deforestation and forest degradation and the promotion of deforestation-free supply chains.

They also discussed policies and best practices to make their economies more circular and less carbon-intensive and polluting, including accelerating the transition to a circular economy and cooperating towards an ambitious global agreement to tackle plastics pollution.

The meeting of ministers highlighted the key points of convergence around regional priorities and interregional cooperation, which will be used as input for the EU-CELAC Summit.

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About the EU-LAC Ministerial Meeting:

The Ministerial Meeting on Environment and Climate Change between the Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and the European Union (EU) provided an opportunity to strengthen collaboration between both regions, considering the results of UNEA5, UNFCCC COP 27, CBD COP 15, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on plastic pollution (INC-2) and other relevant international processes.