



Agency for Public Information

P.O. Box 608, Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Tel. (784) 456-1600, Fax (784) 456-2430,
Email: apisvg2014@gmail.com

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Press release

OECS Stronger Together Hands Over Monies for SVG Relief

The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission through its Stronger Together Campaign has handed over a cheque for EC \$355, 536.78 to St.Vincent and the Grenadines to assist with rehabilitation and recovery efforts after the eruption of the La Soufriere volcano in April of this year.

Director General of the Commission, Dr. Didacus Jules in making his remarks at the ceremony streamed via YouTube and face book said the “Stronger Together” campaign was launched on the onset of the eruption of the volcano; and is an expression of the spirit of the OECS as a grouping, understanding that we are always stronger together.

He said the virtual ceremony was held to affirm the coordinated efforts of the OECS commission to raise awareness of the plight of the people of St.Vincent and the Grenadines following the eruption, adding that through resource mobilization strategy, the commission leveraged its partnership network to gain assistance for St.Vincent and the Grenadines, through a multilayered approach.

According to him, the formation of the coalition for SVG and the stronger together; we are a global family campaign executed alongside the O2N Foundation, along with the Brussels and Geneva missions; designed and

implemented an aggressive social media campaign directed at bringing visibility at the situation in SVG with the aim of getting Caribbean nationals and the Diaspora to contribute towards the effort.

Donations, he said, have come from private citizens and the business sector and organizations within the region and beyond.

SVG will also benefit from an additional EC 1.5 million in project funding that will be executed by the Commissions Environmental Sustainability division. The Director General also gave his assurance to St. Vincent and the Grenadines' Finance Minister, Camillo Gonsalves that the commission stands with his country as it continues the rehabilitation and recovery efforts.

Accepting the cheque on behalf of the government and people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Minister Gonsalves thanked the OECS Commission, in particular Dr Didacus Jules for the extraordinary support it has lent to St. Vincent and the Grenadines during its most trying time.

Minister Gonsalves said “From the very moment that the la Soufriere volcano began erupting and it erupted 32 times on 32 different occasions causing tremendous devastation across the country, Dr Jules and the OECS responded immediately to the trying challenges that we were facing and continue to face.”

He said this response was from an organizational and humanitarian standpoint, as well as from the perspective of raising awareness and resources to assist the government and people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Minister Gonsalves said in addition to reaching out to their own partners and allies and leveraging their own diplomatic talents to raise awareness and raise resources; the OECS held the stronger together campaign which was a multimedia bonanza, bringing together talents from all over the Caribbean to raise awareness and solicit contributions for St. Vincent and the Grenadines

He said: “Through the efforts of the OECS almost 5 million dollars have been raised; some of it in cash, some in kind, some of it through various projects that will be funded by friends and allies of St, Vincent and the Grenadines and the Eastern Caribbean.”

Minister Gonsalves expressed his personal gratitude as well as that of the people of his country for the tireless effort of Dr Jules and the OECS and also the people of the Eastern Caribbean for their generosity of spirit, solidarity and commitment to being “your brother’s keeper.

“We couldn’t do it without you, we are grateful for what we have received so far, I know we have not exhausted your generosity and solidarity and as we emerge from this stronger together as a region, we know we can continue to count on Dr Jules, the OECS and the peoples of the Eastern Caribbean in striving higher, building back better and achieving great things together.

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