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Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to Host 10th OECS Council of Ministers on Human and Social Development

“Advancing Social Protection in the OECS: Policy, Practice and Learning”

KINGSTOWN, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines — Saint Vincent and the Grenadines will host the 10th Meeting of the OECS Council of Ministers on Human and Social Development from 7–8 October 2026 at the Holiday Inn Express & Suites, Diamond, bringing together Ministers and senior officials from across the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) to advance regional cooperation on social protection, social inclusion and human development.

The Meeting will be held under the theme, “Advancing Social Protection in the OECS: Policy, Practice and Learning,” and will provide an important platform for Member States to examine priority social development issues, share national experiences and good practices, and strengthen collective approaches to building more responsive, inclusive and resilient social protection systems across the Region.

The OECS Council of Ministers on Human and Social Development provides a forum for Ministers responsible for human and social development to deliberate on issues that directly affect the well-being and quality of life of people across the Eastern Caribbean. The Council also facilitates collaboration among Member States, regional institutions and development partners to address emerging social challenges and strengthen systems that support vulnerable populations.

The 10th Meeting is particularly significant for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, as the country currently serves as incoming Chair of the OECS Council of Ministers on Human and Social Development and will host the Meeting for the first time.

The hosting of the Meeting provides an opportunity for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to contribute to shaping the regional human and social development agenda while sharing its national

experiences and initiatives in areas including social protection, community development, social inclusion and resilience-building.

The Meeting also comes at an important time as OECS Member States continue to strengthen their capacity to respond to economic and social vulnerabilities, natural hazards and other shocks affecting households and communities.

Over the two-day Meeting, Ministers and senior officials will consider a range of priority areas aimed at strengthening social protection and social inclusion throughout the OECS.

Discussions will include disability inclusion, including the needs of children with disabilities; financing of care systems; regional child policy; adaptive and shock-responsive social protection; disaster risk financing; and resilience-building.

The Meeting will also review progress under the Social Inclusion and Social Protection Strategic Action Plan 2023–2030, while providing space for Member States to share innovations, lessons learned and practical approaches that can strengthen social protection delivery across the Region.

A key focus will be strengthening partnerships and regional collaboration to ensure social protection systems are increasingly responsive, integrated, adaptive, and capable of supporting people and communities before, during, and after shocks.

The 10th Meeting builds on the outcomes of the 9th Meeting of the OECS Council of Ministers on Human and Social Development, held in St. Kitts and Nevis on 10 September 2024 under the theme, *“Regional Development and Sustainability through Quality Education and Social Empowerment.”*

The 9th Meeting addressed several important areas, including strengthening social protection and social inclusion across the OECS, advancing the Social Inclusion and Social Protection Action Plan 2023–2030, promoting peer learning among Member States, strengthening collaboration with regional agencies and development partners, and advancing work towards an OECS Regional Child Policy, Strategic Plan and Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

The Meeting also considered issues including mental health, digital safety, climate resilience and adaptation, as well as national experiences and good practices in social assistance and social protection.

The 10th Meeting will build on these areas of collaboration while placing particular emphasis on translating regional policy priorities into practical approaches that can improve outcomes for individuals, families and communities.

The Meeting will officially commence with an Opening Ceremony on Wednesday, 7 October 2026, at 9:00 a.m. at the Holiday Inn Express & Suites, Diamond.

The Ceremony will bring together the Honourable Prime Minister, local Ministers, OECS Ministers, senior government officials, development partners and other distinguished guests.

The Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines looks forward to welcoming Ministers, senior officials, development partners and other stakeholders from across the OECS as the Region continues to work together towards stronger social protection systems and a more inclusive, resilient and sustainable Eastern Caribbean.

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