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PRESS STATEMENT



MSG Representatives Meets with the MSG Ambassadors in Brussels to Discuss ACP and EU related development programs and support

The Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) Secretariat paid a courtesy visit to H.E. Ambassador Roy Mickey Joy, Vanuatu Embassy based in Brussels on Tuesday 7th July. As part of their consultation meetings, the MSG Secretariat team represented by Mr. Peni Sikivou, Director Programs and Mr. John Licht, Program Manager Trade & Investment met Ambassador Roy Mickey and other MSG Ambassadors to discuss the outcomes of the MSG Leaders' Summit and to discuss ways in which MSG Ambassadors

can contribute towards advancing MSG's "2038 Prosperity for All Plan" and its Implementation Framework and related work program activities.

In receiving the MSG delegation, Ambassador Roy Mickey Joy thanked and commended the MSG Secretariat for the visit and timing of this mission to meet and share with the Ambassadors some of the updates on MSG's trade, economic development, governance and sustainable development issues, given their relevance and synergy with the Intra-ACP facility and COP 21 on Climate Change and related issues. Ambassador Joy, said, "For Vanuatu and the entire MSG Ambassadors here in Europe, this mission is quite important for us as it helps us Ambassadors see how we can fit into the scope of activities as mandated by the MSG Leaders on trade, economic development and climate change, a number of which we could effectively make an influence on as MSG Ambassadors here in Brussels where the EU headquarter is located". Ambassador Joy underscored the importance of engaging with the MSG Ambassadors in Europe, New York and other Development Partner countries in advancing the region's pursuit for increased economic integration and further strengthening the positive relationship that the Pacific has developed with the EU and ACP region since Vanuatu's Chairmanship of the ACP.

At the luncheon hosted by the Vanuatu Ambassador, the MSG team briefed the MSG Ambassadors on the key outcomes of the recent MSG Leaders' Summit held in Honiara Solomon Islands on 26 June 2015. "On this occasion, we have had some fruitful discussion with the MSG Ambassadors on areas which they can play a significant part in advancing the implementation of our Leaders mandate. We were able to also secure their support ahead of our deliberations planned for the subsequent meetings with the ACP and EU officials on a number of key long term activities to enhance our economic integration through the new MSG Trade Agreement including implementation of our Private Sector Development Strategy, both of which will be considered by our Trade Ministers in November this year", Mr Sikivou said.

The MSG team also had meetings with the Secretary General of the ACP Secretariat Dr. Patrick Gomes and his officials followed by a meeting with the European Commission where they discussed the state of play of negotiations on the Economic Partnership Arrangement (EPA) with the MSG member States.

In conclusion, the MSG Secretariat wishes to sincerely thank the Vanuatu Ambassador and other MSG Ambassadors in Brussels for facilitating their meetings held in Brussels and Luxembourg from 7-10 July.

For further details on this press release, please contact Mr. John Licht, Program Manager Trade and Investment at the MSG Secretariat on: j.licht@msg.int

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