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PRESS RELEASE

CASTRIES, Saint Lucia
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Immediate Release

EXPORT SAINT LUCIA ADDRESSES PUBLIC CONCERNS OVER EXPO DUBAI 2020

Following a media engagement on Tuesday September 7th to launch Saint Lucia's participation at Expo Dubai 2020, Export Saint Lucia wishes to address some of the concerns being raised by members of the public.

One of the questions being raised is about the **cost** associated with attending Expo Dubai 2020. In 2019 XCD\$1.5 million (USD\$537,485) was estimated for participation in the Expo. This estimated amount is funded through the Citizenship Investment Programme (CIP). Cognizant of the current financial challenges, Export Saint Lucia will be continuously monitoring the budget to identify areas of cost savings, which will then be remitted to the Government of Saint Lucia. Some possible areas for cost reduction include shared accommodation for staff, utilization of interns, use of electronic promotional material and a reduction in the size of delegation attending Expo 2020.

The initial funding allocated will cover areas related to:

- design and construction of Saint Lucia's pavilion (physical exhibition) at Expo Dubai 2020
- promotional material including brochures, videos and photography for all sectors exhibiting
- performance fees of Saint Lucian creatives
- taxes in Dubai for our local products which have already been shipped to Dubai. This includes royalties, sales tax and import duties which must be covered by the country of origin. This means that a mark-up will not be placed on the local products which will be sold in Dubai on behalf of manufacturers and creatives.

90% of the cost associated with Saint Lucia's participation in Expo 2020 is borne by the host country, Dubai. These include;

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- travel and accommodation for local artistes and creatives
- shared accommodation constructed on the Expo site for staff working in the pavilion
- in- country volunteers
- meals
- venue for hosting of special meetings
- travel and accommodation for high level ministerial officials. Therefore, the travel and accommodation cost of **ministerial participation is at the expense of host country, United Arab Emirates (UAE).**

Given the levels of commitment made by both the Governments of the UAE and Saint Lucia, as well as our manufacturers and creatives, a **withdrawal at this time would be ill-advised** as this will not augur well for further trade relations and confidence of our domestic partners. It should be noted that our preparatory work along with other CARICOM member states began in 2019. Consistent with that level of preparation, a 40- foot container of retail goods of Saint Lucian manufacturers and creatives was shipped in April to Dubai for sale at our retail location during the Expo. **All proceeds from the sale of those goods in Dubai will go directly to our manufacturers and creatives at home.**

Members of Saint Lucia’s entertainment industry will also benefit from our participation in Expo Dubai. For close to two years, most local artistes finances have been adversely affected due to challenges created by the pandemic. To assist that sector, 12 creatives will travel to Dubai in February for a grand ‘Saint Lucia Day presentation’. This will grant them an opportunity to gain international exposure and make global connections.

The decision to attend Expo Dubai 2020 was strategic. Notwithstanding the challenges of the pandemic, **we cannot afford to stop our work.** We at Export Saint Lucia believe that the economy is at a crucial point which requires fortification and participation in Expo Dubai 2020 can assist in that regard. It should be noted that other state agencies such Invest Saint Lucia, CIP and SLTA will also be participating. Invest Saint Lucia and CIP will target countries and individuals who can invest in our economic sectors (manufacturing, services, tourism, and creatives), while SLTA will showcase our country to new clientele in a market which we have been unable to break into to date.

Whilst there is concern about the size of the delegation, the public is invited to note that only a skeleton staff will be fielded from the four participating agencies. A combined three staff members from the participating agencies will be in Dubai for the duration of the Expo. These workers shall maintain a presence at Saint Lucia’s pavilion throughout the operating hours of the Expo (**7am to 2am the following day, 6 days a week**). These core staff will be joined by

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other members of the participating agencies for short periods of time, at different intervals of the Expo. Each agency has set targets that their staff must achieve and will report progress on these monthly.

Saint Lucia will join other Caribbean countries participating in Expo Dubai which includes all OECS countries, Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Haiti and Cuba. Leading economies like the USA, Germany and Japan are experiencing improved growth prospects in their economic sectors. It is now time for Saint Lucia to take advantage of every opportunity afforded to us towards improving our own economic recovery. Moreover, **over 25 million people from across the globe (190 countries)** are expected to visit and participate in Expo Dubai.

Export Saint Lucia will continue to provide the public with scheduled updates on the success of the Expo.

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[Please see attached files and links for additional content and information.](#)

About Export Saint Lucia

Export Saint Lucia is the Saint Lucian Government's National Trade Export and Promotion Agency and is the lead agency mandated to spearhead the island's National Export Development Effort. The overall objective is to increase the aggregate volume and value of exports from Saint Lucia.

Export Saint Lucia works to promote and expand business in export markets around the world. We aspire to increase local exports to assist local companies in improving profitability and long-term sustainability, thus making a direct and valuable contribution to the Saint Lucian economy.

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