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Brussels 11 April 2019/ACP: The African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States welcomed two new arrivals to their midst at the 919th Meeting of the ACP Committee of Ambassadors, H.E. Mrs. Sena Siaw-Boateng, Ambassador of the Republic of Ghana and H.E. Ms. Maria O'Brien, Ambassador of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.

H.E. Siaw-Boateng is a career diplomat who has served her country remarkably for over 20 years, both at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as in diplomatic missions in South Africa, Cuba, Spain and the UK, where she had the honour of being the first female to hold the post of Head of Chancery at the Ghana High Commission in the United Kingdom. Prior to being appointed to Brussels as Ambassador of Ghana to the Kingdom of Belgium, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and Head of Mission to the European Union, she served as Chef de Cabinet in the Office of the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of the Republic of Ghana. Ambassador Boateng is also a barrister of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Ghana.



Observing, at the start of her maiden address to the Committee, that she was “joining the ranks of this august Assembly at a very defining and pivotal moment in global politics,” Ambassador Siaw-Boateng cited the profound changes expected globally and within the ACP Group in the immediate future. Speaking on the on-going negotiations for the successor agreement, she said: “In the midst of all these, never has there been a sustained challenge to the rules-based and liberal order underpinning international cooperation and multilateralism than now.” She continued that in order to make sense of these global complexities, “... we should engage in frequent dialogue, share experiences, exchange ideas and draw on our collective wisdom to tactically navigate our respective countries to safe harbor. In this context, I am happy to know that the ACP Group has already taken the initiative towards re-inventing and re-positioning itself as a fit-for-purpose, dynamic and truly global organization with broad influence and the capacity to secure the interests and aspirations of its members.”

The new Ambassador for Ghana applauded the Secretariat on the establishment of the ACP Information Centre for South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Equatorial Guinea and saluted Equatorial Guinea for graciously providing the initial infrastructure and logistics to kickstart the operations. On the topic of finances she asserted that Ghana has consistently met their membership contributions to the ACP Group and urged her colleagues to meet their financial obligations to the Secretariat and diversify their incomes away from the over reliance on access contribution to more innovative avenues. In this regard, she commended the ACP Group's quest to establish an Endowment and Trust Fund.



H.E. O'Brien brings with her 27 years of experience in the financial industry and has held various posts in her country's largest banking and financial institutions. Before being appointed as Ambassador of the Commonwealth of Bahamas to Brussels, she held the post of Associate Director of Integrated Fiduciary Controls at the Bank of Nova Scotia Trust Company Limited, where she began her career as a Senior Client Service Administrator. Ambassador O'Brien is a member of the Board of Directors of the Nassau Airport Development Company and of the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners, which is a global professional association of practitioners specialized in inheritance and succession planning.

In her remarks to the Committee, Ambassador O'Brien asserted her country's unwavering commitment to Belgium, the European Union and more specifically, the ACP Group of States and was pleased to announce that the Bahamas had identified its first physical Embassy in Brussels, which would be operational in a few weeks. Speaking of her country's commitment to the shared core objectives of the ACP Group of States, particularly in the area of sustainable development, Ambassador O'Brien cited several projects including examples of collaborative efforts with the public and private sector and ongoing activities at the highest level with respect to climate change, such as the launch of a programme to ban the use of single-use plastics and Styrofoam by 2020. On the topic of the ongoing negotiations for a post 2020 Agreement, the Ambassador asserted, "The Bahamas is steadfast in ensuring that the multilateral relations of all 79 member states of the ACP is strengthened. As we move towards strengthening our position as one body on the global platform, let us determine to be equitable and fair towards one another through our shared values and common goals." In closing, Ambassador Siaw-Boateng pledged the cooperation of her delegation and gave her assurances "that we will be active and constructive in the subcommittee's working groups, technical negotiation teams, the central negotiating group as well as plenary of the committee of ambassadors."

The current dean of the Committee of Ambassadors H.E. Mr. Daniel Evina Abe'e of Cameroon and the Secretary-General H.E. Dr. Patrick Gomes also took the floor to pledge their support to the two Ambassadors during their tenures in Brussels, while looking forward to their valuable contributions to the work of the ACP Group.

(Photos from top: Left to Right: ACP Secretary General Dr. Patrick Gomes; Ambassador of Ghana H.E. Mrs. Sena Siaw-Boateng; Ambassador of Namibia and Chair of the ACP Committee of Ambassadors H.E. Dr. Kaire M. Mbuende; Ambassador for the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, H.E. Ms. Maria O'Brien)

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