



H.E AMBASSADOR DEO SARAN

**CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE ON THE 45TH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE FOUNDING OF THE ORGANISATION FOR THE AFRICAN
CARRIBEAN AND PACIFIC GROUP OF STATES**

04 June 2020

Your Excellencies,

It gives me great pleasure to join you in celebrating the 45th anniversary of the founding of the Organisation for the African Caribbean and Pacific States.

Spanning more than 4 decades, Fiji's relationship with this Group has never waned, growing in solidarity with ember States and our development partners and bonded by the common recognition of the value of multilateralism. And borne out this partnership is a family that brings together 79 nations as equals on the diplomatic world stage.

As a member of this family, Fiji takes great pride in celebrating not just this Group's founding but equally, its success in the development of our nations and harnessing the potential of our peoples. Through this Group, we have made progress in developing our nations in the fields of agriculture, trade, culture, education, gender and youth empowerment, security and many other areas. We've made progress, because we've remained true to our principles of unity and solidarity. Those principles are this group's very foundation, a foundation to which we must hold fast if we are to secure our best possible future in a changing world. We need to look to the future and the potential of this Group in improving the lives of the one-billion people who look to us to provide them with empowerment and opportunity. And as we work on the blueprint to take our partnership with the EU beyond 2020, let us never forget that our ultimate responsibility is to our people.

As we celebrate this anniversary, we should remain cognisant of the global challenges that confront us all. Fiji, like other OACP States remain vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. And smaller islands States including Fiji looks to the strength of this

Group in collectively addressing the drastic impacts that climate change has on the future of our economies and the wellbeing of our people.

Excellencies, now more than ever, our strength will be tested and we must remain resolved in our unity to remain true to the values of the OACPS.

The OACPS will always help chart our collective future, and I pledge, once again on behalf of the Government and people of Fiji, our full support to the Group's vision, objectives and activities at all levels.

I warmly congratulate once again the OACPS and celebrate the many more years to come.

Thank you, Vinaka Vakalevu and Dhanyavad