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Republic of Zambia

**CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE ON THE OCCASION OF THE 45TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE OACPS BY HER EXCELLENCY PROF.
ESTHER MUNALULA NKANDU, AMBASSADOR OF ZAMBIA AND
COORDINATOR OF THE OACPS SOUTHERN AFRICA REGION**

Embassy of the Republic of Zambia, Brussels

BELGIUM

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Dear Colleagues,

June 6 remains a significant day among OACPS member states. It is a day we take stock and are reminded of the remarkable achievements, successes as well as the challenges that we have had since the formation of the organisation 45 years ago. The entry into force of the revised George Town Agreement this April gives us all renewed impetus and solidarity to propel our organisation to even greater heights as an influential global player. This year's theme "OACPS 3.0 – The Power of Change" is therefore most fitting.

Colleagues, I wish to echo the sentiments expressed by my President His Excellency President Edgar Chagwa Lungu in his remarks during the just ended 1st Extraordinary Inter-Sessional Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), that we stand in solidarity with each other during this uncertain period and that there is an urgent need to establish a virtual platform to share best practices in the fight against COVID-19, in order to combat the pandemic effectively in our countries.

The relationship between our OACP countries and the European Union remains important in the organisation's external relations. Therefore, as negotiations on the future agreement with the EU are still under way, I wish to urge all of us to remain steadfast and negotiate for an agreement that will change the lives of our people.

A hearty congratulations to us all!