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UNFORTUNATE AND FALSE

“My attention has been drawn to the following statement made by Prime Minister Allen Chastanet during a recent Press Conference and aired on Choice News in its news broadcast on or about January 17, 2017, in connection with the investigation into the murder of Oliver Gobat:

“Unfortunately the former Government had promised to send a letter to the British Government saying we would not pursue the death penalty and we were told repeatedly that that letter had been sent. That was a lie.”

The ‘former government’ of which I served as Prime Minister, NEVER EVER gave the British Government any undertaking whether expressly or impliedly that it would not pursue the death penalty for anyone convicted of the murder of Oliver Gobat. On the contrary, I advised the British Government that the question of whether the death penalty was applicable was a matter for the Director of Public Prosecution and for the Court. Indeed, it was made patently clear that any such attempt to direct the Director of Public Prosecution and the Court to forego the death penalty would be unconstitutional. It is for the Courts to determine whether an act of murder is a ‘Capital Offence’ or a ‘Non- capital Offence.’ The political directorate has no authority in such a matter. Likewise, Allen Chastanet has NO authority to promise that the death penalty would not apply to a convicted murderer.

Further, to give an undertaking that the accused in the murder of Oliver Gobat would be spared the death penalty is inherently discriminatory against other accused persons facing trial for murder.

The position of the ‘former government’ was conveyed by me to the Gobat family.

It saddens me that Allen Chastanet has chosen to not only politicize this matter by his statements to Choice News but additionally, with untrue statements. I believe that the Gobats can do without the undue and unwarranted politicization of the investigation of the murder of their son. They have suffered enough.

It is also passing strange that Prime Minister Chastanet could say that the absence of the comfort letter to the British Government compromised assistance from the British Government when an officer from the Royal Saint Lucia Police Force travelled to the United Kingdom to brief Police

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Officers there. I am also aware of exchanges between the High Command of the Saint Lucia Police Force and the Surrey Police.

Finally, Mr. Chastanet must know that unlike him who tramples on our Constitution with impunity, I believe in honoring and respecting the Constitution of Saint Lucia to the best of my ability whether in or out of government.”

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