



# PARLIAMENT OF ST. LUCIA

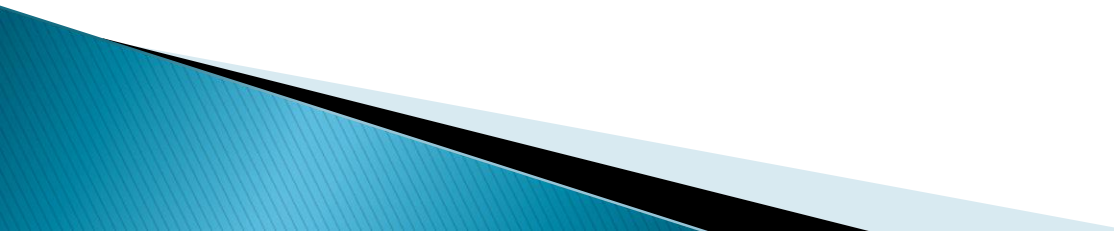
Presented by: Senator Mauricia Thomas-Francis

# INITIATIVE

Public engagement and sensitization relative to the business of Parliament.

# PURPOSE

The main purpose of this initiative is for members of Parliament to foster strong citizen engagement, to raise awareness on the role of parliament and parliamentarians; and generally to promote greater citizen participation in legislative decision making; through ongoing education and sensitization.



# SPECIFIC GOALS

## **Public Education and Participation**

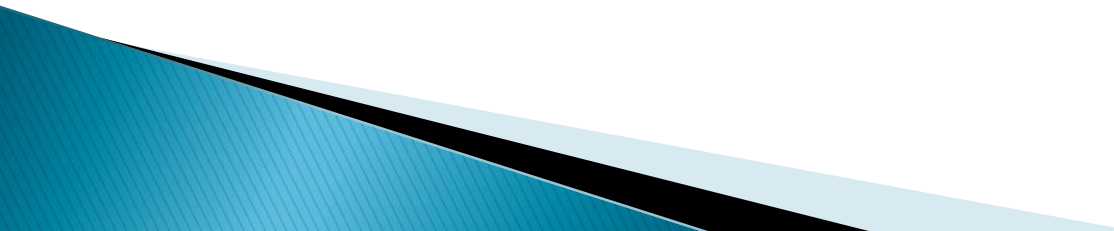
- Educate and sensitize on the Constitution and Parliamentary Standing Orders.
- Explain the Legislative Process and Legislation tabled before Parliament to ensure understanding and implications.
- Encourage openness in providing respectful feedback especially on matters of concern.
- Solicit proposals, Petitions, recommendations, input on new legislation or legislative changes which they would like to be considered by Parliament.
- Sensitize on duty to Monitor Parliamentary debates and Performance .

# SPECIFIC GOALS CONT

## Team and Community Relations

- Connect on a more visual and significant level with the citizenry.
- Repair our reputation with civil society.
- Support worthwhile causes across St. Lucia through volunteerism, sponsorships and donations.
- Seek to "own" the causes we donate to, and as far as possible not to select activities that compete with others in the chosen sphere of activity.
- Initiate and participate in social activities to fellowship and develop greater camaraderie and team spirit amongst members of parliament.
- Where possible, support all community relations activities with significant PR/publicity.

# KEY ENABLERS

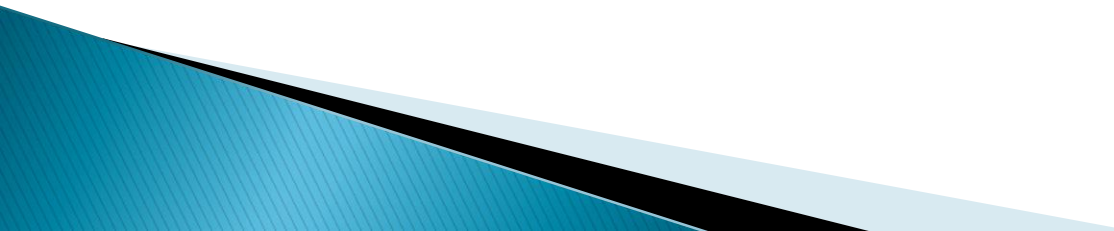
- ❑ Media
  - ❑ Private Sector Organizations – sponsorship, co-facilitators (subject matter experts)
  - ❑ Education Sector
  - ❑ Executive – budget
  - ❑ Staff of Parliament
  - ❑ Parliamentarians
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# OUTCOME

- **Annual youth parliament** (over the past 15 years, Youth Parliament has been a major part of the calendar of events in the collaboration between the Ministry of Youth & Sports and the National Youth Council in the annual observation of April as Youth Month.) The Office of the Parliament offers the requisite training in parliamentary practices and procedures to the young aspiring parliamentarians;
- The Ministry of Youth & Sports and the Office of the Parliament are currently engaged in dialogue to formulate a more structured system of training in order build a cadre of fully trained youth parliamentarian from which the members of Youth Parliament may be selected.
- **Invitation extended to Secondary School students to attend Parliamentary sittings** – Ongoing for many years now
- **Panel discussions on Constitutional Reform** (Panelists: House Speaker, Former President of the Senate, Director of Legislative Drafting)
- **Participation in Annual Reading Month** (Constitution and Standing Orders) – Ongoing

**ALL THESE INITIATIVES HAVE HAD POSITIVE IMPACT BASED ON FEEDBACK**

# Other Planned Initiatives

- ▶ Essay or debating Competition
  - ▶ Adopt –a–School
  - ▶ Fun Walk – Walk with your Parliamentarian
  - ▶ Partnership with the local Calypso Associations Association through the Presentation of a rotating Trophy for the song which most aptly and significantly promotes Democracy.
  - ▶ Outreach Programme to include Secondary School Road Show
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# CHALLENGES

- ▶ **Resource constraints**
  - Financial – No budgetary allocation
  - Human Resource – Support from Parliament Secretariat, conflicting Priorities of Parliament staff and Parliamentarians

# Overcoming the Challenges

- ▶ Seeking funding from donor organisations / Agencies which promote the independence of the Parliamentary system and Democracy in general  
UNDP; EU; etc.

**THANK YOU**

**QUESTIONS?  
COMMENTS?**

