

# *CARICOM to send observers to elections in St. Lucia*

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Castries, July 20 (RHC)-- The Community of Caribbean States (CARICOM) responded positively this Sunday to the invitation of the Government of Saint Lucia to accompany the general elections to be held in the nation next July 26.

Through a document, CARICOM announced that a group of observers will arrive in the Caribbean nation between Tuesday, July 20 and Thursday, July 22. The mission will be led by Mrs. Fern Narcis-Scope, Director of Elections of Trinidad and Tobago. Among Caricom's proposals is to conduct a series of meetings with St. Lucian electoral officials, political party leaders and other stakeholders.

It will also monitor the election campaign environment and the voting process, including the opening of the polls, the casting of ballots, the closing of the polls and the counting of votes, the statement said.

Saint Lucia, which is an island of 178,000 inhabitants and with an area of 600 square kilometers, will elect on July 26th its new Government, as well as the members of the Legislative Assembly, after having nominated its candidates on July 16th.

The current Prime Minister, Allen Chastanet, will seek re-election at the head of the United Workers Party (UWP), for his second consecutive election. Meanwhile, the other political formation is the Saint Lucia Labor Party (SLP), under the leadership of former Deputy Prime Minister Phillip Pierre.

Saint Lucia is an independent country, although it maintains the monarch of the United Kingdom as head of state, who appoints a governor general. Two of its main economic sectors are tourism and banana cultivation.

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