CARIBBEAN COUNCIL FOR THE BLIND & VISUALLY IMPAIRED

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Speaking with CCB Media, following conclusion of the 28th Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference in Antigua, Mr. Anthony Avril OBE, First Vice President of CCB, said he was delighted by the high level of commitment which the heads gave, to the need for, improved vision care and inclusion of people living with vision loss and other disabilities.

Tony Avril, who is also Executive Director of St. Lucia Blind Welfare Association and Eye Care St. Lucia, is urging CARICOM Governments, to include vision care services at all levels of their health systems.

The CCB Vice President wants CARICOM Governments and leaders of civil society, to expand inclusion of people living with vision loss and other disabilities, in all aspects of national development.

Mr Avril cautioned that the pledge of 1.3 billion US dollars, will certainly not solve all the eye health needs of the developing Commonwealth. However, he believes the commitment by Commonwealth heads, shows expanding international acceptance of eye health as a human right.

Mr. Avril (who was born blind) believes the 28th Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference, will be remembered for placing a spotlight on, the urgent need to improve eye health and inclusion of people living with blindness and other disabilities.

He told CCB Media, that the wider commitments by Commonwealth Heads, to: Human rights; a sustainable environment; economic prosperity and discussion of post-slavery reparatory justice, is a fitting cradle for the organization's eye health and disability services agenda.

The CCB Vice President and St. Lucia's 1999 recipient of the OBE (Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) expressed appreciation to PM Gaston Browne, the wider Government and people of Antigua-Barbuda, for hosting a landmark 28th Commonwealth Heads of Government conference.

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