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**2014 INDEPENDENCE MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER**  
**The Honourable Gaston A. Browne**

*During my recent official visits to New York, Toronto and Miami, I came away with the distinct impression that the Antiguan and Barbudans living in the Diaspora are no less interested in the well-being of their homeland than those of us who live at home. Therefore, as the relatively youthful state celebrates its **33<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of Independence**, I send warm greetings and congratulations to all who live abroad.*

*On November 1<sup>st</sup> 1981, the 57<sup>th</sup> Member State of the United Nations took its rightful place among the family of nations. Though Antigua and Barbuda was the smallest state then to declare its sovereignty, its people thought of independence as a task at which failure was not an option. Failure is never an option among the bold, the courageous, the fearless, the optimistic Antiguan and Barbudans who chose to establish their sovereign state. Despite an appreciation for their country's small size, those who chose to live abroad took with them the spirit of the inevitability of success. We practiced a culture of success and excellence.*

*Those of us who remained behind, pledged to build a nation in which each would endeavour to succeed, and all would achieve success. That twin pledge of endeavouring and achieving, with success as our creed, has permeated the cultural and economic life of our very small country. Yet, we also practiced a culture of democracy, replacing governing parties when there was an inclination that change was necessary. The theme of this 33<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of Independence reflects the unrelenting yearning of the people of our nation:*

**Rebuilding our Nation with Togetherness, Commitment and Perseverance**

*As we set out upon this renewed path, with the unrelenting spirit of oneness dedicated to success, the people of the Antigua and Barbuda Diaspora yearn to play a useful role. Mechanisms have been created to ensure that those of us living abroad may participate in national life with reducing hindrances. Registration for voting, liaising with government officials, forming national groups based on village, school, sporting or academic interests, have become easier because government policies have been adopted to achieve these ends.*

*The new government is encouraging multiple annual visits by nationals living abroad; the purchase of properties back home for holidaying and investment purposes; the joy of refilling the spiritual emptiness that migrants can sometimes feel. We await you with open arms as we improve on healthcare, strengthen our offshore financial services, train more youthful citizens than ever before, and set aside land for housing that the Diaspora members can enjoy.*

*Best wishes for a successful 33<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary celebration in your adopted country, state, city, province or Borough. Best wishes for many successful years to come. May the God of our forebears continue to guide your steps to a future that will turn our small country into an economic powerhouse of the Caribbean, with your help. God bless you all.*

Honourable Gaston Browne  
Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda  
Independence Day 2014