



## **Report**

# **Grenada Diaspora Founding Conference**

Grenada Trade Center  
Grand Anse

August 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>. 2011

Theme:

**“The Grenadian Diaspora - Partnering in Nation - Building”**

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## Executive Summary

The Diaspora Founding Conference was celebrated on August 2 and 3, 2011 under the theme “The Grenadian Diaspora-Partnering in Nation Building”. Present were representatives of the respective Diaspora Consultative Committees (DCC), Diaspora Youth Groups, and Groups representing the interests of Returning Nationals. These representatives were welcomed by local members of Government, permanent secretaries, heads of government agencies, technical officers and other local stakeholders.

Some of the following topics came up for discussion during the conference:

- appreciation for Grenadians in the Diaspora;
- reducing the transaction costs involved in remitting funds to Grenada;
- the need to improve quality of health care, education and tourism services;
- attracting investors to Grenada;
- developing and promoting certain aspects of Grenadian culture at home and abroad;
- representation and participation of Grenadians in the Diaspora;
- facilitating the transfer of skills between Grenadians abroad and those at home;
- incentives and concessions and the “fair” application of customs duties.

The event was a resounding success and served as a think tank to map Diaspora-Grenada relations for the future. A direct outcome of the Conference was the declaration adopted at its conclusion, which responds to the stated theme: **“The Grenadian Diaspora - Partnering in Nation Building.”** An outline for the “Homecoming” Conference in 2012 has already been drafted and this event promises to be an event on a much larger scale.

## **DAY 1**

**Opening Ceremony - Chairperson – Mr Michael Bascombe, Attaché, NY**

### **Remarks: Hon. Karl Hood (Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Environment, Foreign Trade & Export Development)**

#### **Key points:**

- Grenadians residing abroad can make significant contributions to the social and economic development of the country. Remittances account for 10% of GDP.
- The Office of Diaspora Affairs was created in 2009.
- Plans to create a Diaspora Office to be run by an Ambassador to be named.
  - Among other things, that office would collaborate with the relevant ministries to deal with the issues of double taxation and dual citizenship.

### **Declaration of Conference Opening: His Excellency Sir Carlyle A. Glean (Governor General)**

#### **Key points:**

- The importance of recognizing that change management is a partnership between “those who are initiating the change and those who are accepting and welcoming the change”.
- Complimented the current administration/Government for accepting the challenge to bring the Diaspora Initiative to fruition.

### **Presentation: “Diaspora Perspective”- Roy Mc Ewen**

#### **(Diaspora Consultative Committee-UK)**

#### **Key points:**

- Eight (8) areas that exemplify the Diaspora perspective:
  - (1) The overwhelming desire to return home to own homes, businesses, and contribute to Grenada’s development.  
“Within the Diaspora in the UK, there is a confidence, live Grenada, eat Grenada”. This translates into what can be described as a perfect opportunity to pursue the Diaspora founding initiative.
  - (2) The transfer of skills between the Diaspora and locals: the importance of “Change Management” skills to ensure that Grenadians at home are able to embrace change for the development of the Country.
  - (3) The need to reduce transaction costs associated with sending monies home.
  - (4) The issue of Citizenship and the need for Grenadians abroad to embrace and understand their citizenship status.

- (5) The contribution of returning nationals to the construction booms of the 90s and 2000s and the need to promote home ownership among second generation Grenadians, many of whom are professionals on above average salaries.
- (6) Diaspora involvement in Governance: “The Diaspora is active in the political life of this Country, through indirect participation. We observe the elections and cannot participate without overcoming obstacles.”
- (7) The Diaspora bond as a way to turn remittances into investment to counter the problem of dependency on remittances.
- (8) Health: “The level of care, which is not finance dependent, has to be addressed as a priority”. Progress has been made, but there is still a long way to go.

**Discussion/Recommendations:**

- Reduce transaction costs associated with sending remittances.
- The creation of an entity similar to the Grenada Industrial Development Corporation (GIDC), to filter proposals for aid before they go out to the Diaspora.
- Representation and participation of Grenadians in the Diaspora.

**Day 1: Presentations – Chairperson: HE Ruth Elizabeth Rouse  
High Commissioner, London**

**Presentation: Tourism, Business and Investment-Kieron Lewis**

**(Diaspora Consultative Committee-Canada)**

**Key Points:**

- The Diaspora is a significant tourism - market
- The Diaspora is a critically important pool of untapped financial and human resources.
- “Niche tourism” -developing a well-defined product that is specially tailored to answer to the specific needs of a tightly drawn market segment. New initiatives in this category include wedding and culinary tourism.

**Discussion/recommendations:**

- **Tourism Ambassador Program (TAP)**
  - The major aim of the TAP is to market Grenada as a safe, affordable and unique travel destination. Through the TAP, ambassadors would attempt to sell Grenada to their friends, neighbours, co-workers and everyone they come into contact with. The TAP will essentially be driven by “the

power of word-of mouth, advertisements and the integrity of the individual ambassadors.

- **Food (Culinary) Tourism**
  - The importance of Food Tourism to the visitor who is in pursuit of unique culinary and gastronomic delights and experiences.
  - Grenada's reputation as the "Isle of Spice" can be made to work for the country.
  - Reference was made to the importance of a tour of Grenada's culinary experience with the rituals and symbolisms that is attached to certain local food events, including Saracca (Salacca) and the Parents' Plate- *the latter is typically offered up to ancestors on the occasion of a boat launching or a tombstone feast in Carriacou.*
- **Grenada as a Conference Destination**
  - The revenue- generating ability of conferences as also having great potential as a foreign exchange earner.
  - Concerted marketing programmes need to be developed to reach the event planners and industry leaders to encourage them to choose Grenada to host their conferences.
- **Summer Eco-Camp**
  - From the Diaspora to the Bush: Bringing Diaspora Kids Home for Summer-"***We are the World***" - an environmental camp for children between the ages of eight (8) and seventeen (17).
  - This is an opportunity for the young campers from the Diaspora to sow the seeds of a life-long engagement with Grenada.
- **Diaspora Volunteer Youth Corps (DVYC)**
  - The DVYC encourages young Grenadians around the world to come home to Grenada to actively participate in the growth and development of the Country, that is at the core of their personal identities. Members of the corps will become involved in a variety of community-building and tourism-related projects throughout Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. By partnering with the Ministries of Youth and Education in Grenada and educational institutions within the Diaspora, the volunteer time can be applied towards secondary and post-secondary diplomas.
- **Roots and Branches**
  - The importance of family history research in bracing spiritual exercise which puts the researcher in touch with their ancestors; it can mend broken circles, fortify individual identities and show up group solidarity.
- **Business and Investment**
  - The Grenadian Diaspora plays a significant role in Grenada's economy. Studies by the World Bank have placed Grenada high up on the list of remittance-receiving countries.
  - The need for investments to succeed where remittances fail, as remittances have a fairly low developmental impact.

- **Institute for the Study of the Grenadian Diaspora (ISGD)**
  - The main objective of the Institute for the Study of the Grenadian Diaspora's (ISGD) will be to conduct in-depth research on the Grenadian Diaspora and to liaise with Policymakers and other stakeholders in order to help government to devise policy aimed at promoting and effecting sustainable partnerships with the Diaspora.
- **Retirement Housing**
  - Grenada is the ideal retirement destination and during the past 20 years or so, many Grenadians have returned home to retire. Many more will follow suit if retirement housing, offering a good range of personalized support services are provided.
- **Export of Grenadian Fruits, Vegetables, Ground Provisions**
  - Caribbean cuisines are gaining greater visibility in North America and elsewhere in the Diaspora, and this is helping to drive demand for Caribbean fruits, vegetables and ground provisions. At home and in the Diaspora there is an urgent need to look at the investment possibilities that are opening in this area. The prospects for steady growth in this area appear solid, especially as Caribbean cuisine is expected to grow together with the improved self-confidence of the Caribbean communities in the Diaspora.
- **Partnerships with Major Department Stores, Apparel Outlets and Organizations**
  - Partnerships could result in Grenada and things Grenadian being featured in store catalogues etcetera.
- **Affordable and Reliable Energy Supplies**
  - Affordable and reliable energy supplies are crucial for the Country's social and economic growth and development. Therefore, Grenada needs to forge partnerships to pursue alternative sources of energy, including geo-thermal.
- **Adoption of Historic Site/Landmark Program**
  - This program will see members of the Diaspora adopt cultural/historic landmarks, like the museum, Lake Antoine, etc. for a period of 3-5 years. The adopting organization (individual/family) will then devise and fund a strategic and operational plan to develop, drive and improve the economic capabilities of such tourist attractions. The program will provide direct investment by the Diaspora and generate jobs locally.

**Discussion/recommendations:**

- The Eco-camp initiative would be ready for implementation in as little as a year due to the skills of members of the Toronto DCC.
- Summer camps should not only focus on children in the Diaspora, but also on children here in Grenada, as this may be a partnership which may result in the much needed transfer of knowledge and culture crucial to the Diaspora as a sustainable entity.
- Also discussed was the possibility of "testing" the camps locally prior to extending an invitation to youth in the Diaspora.
- A project aiming to encourage persons in the Diaspora to select and invest in small projects such as the renovation of park space, park benches etcetera, giving due recognition to contributors.

- Concern over the lack of tourism infrastructure in areas outside of St. George's, particularly a lack of facilities for children.
- Mrs. Sonia Roden, (General Manager -Grenada Industrial Development Corporation) endorsed the idea of "niche tourism", and identified Wellness Tourism, spas and treatment centres as areas of opportunity for the development of the tourism sector.
- Mrs. Roden explained that the GIDC had started to develop "opportunity profiles" to attract potential investors.
- Concern was expressed regarding the associated costs of trying to attract investors to Grenada: *"every dollar must go a long way"*.
- Merle Clarke of the Diaspora Consultative Committee in New York underscored the need to teach Grenadian History to second generation Grenadians.
- John Cruickshank, former Honorary Consul in Montreal spoke of the importance of languages and regretted having to use out-dated French language brochures out of his basement. He also attested to the nuances of travel from Montreal to Grenada.

### **Presentation: "Returning Nationals"- Jude Cameron (UCFOG-Returning Nationals)**

#### **Key Points:**

The United Caribbean Friendly Organization of Grenada represents returnees from the UK and the USA. The speaker explained the reasons for differences in the waves of migration. Post War Migrants were able to impact on the economic life of Grenada in the following ways:

- Through remittances which supported their families, some repaid loans, paid for schooling and established savings.
- Home building which has continued to impact the infrastructural development of the country.
- Pension savings
- Transfer of knowledge and expertise: doctors and lawyers, nurses and teachers, farmers and businessmen, technicians and politicians.

### **Presentation: "Returning Nationals"- Darnley Charles (PRO- Returning Nationals Committee)**

#### **Key Points:**

- Mr Charles spoke on the need for a review of the policy on taxes of goods and personal effects of returning nationals.
- Concern that in some cases, spouses of returning nationals were given limited time to stay in Grenada.
- The issue of pensions and the difficulties facing returning nationals after years of service and pension fund contributions- the lack of a reciprocal arrangement, resulting in pensions being "frozen" from the date a national leaves the United Kingdom.

#### **Discussion/Recommendations:**

- Information is available at the Ministry of Finance and at Missions abroad outlining what returning nationals are entitled to as regards concessions and other incentives.
- Concern expressed over cultural development and the role of the media to educate and inform.

- Training for media workers.
- Declining quality of music.
- The present quality of care at retirement homes in Grenada for returning nationals is less than impressive. Communal housing should be considered as a means of encouraging retired Grenadians abroad to return home. Also, the housing facilities should be regulated and have training in hospitality services for staff.
- Information and assistance in the area of pensions, finance, port, security and health necessary.
- It was recommended that Grenadians in the Diaspora plan extensively prior to reintegrating into Grenadian society.

### **Presentation: “Diaspora Bank”-Mr. Richard Duncan (Managing Director- Grenada Co-operative Bank Ltd.)**

#### **Key Points:**

- The bank as one of fortitude, committed to guaranteeing a safe environment for depositors’ money since 1932.
- The importance of the Diaspora to the Grenada Cooperative Bank. From the sale of 17.5 million ordinary shares, 8% of the purchases came from Grenadians in the Diaspora.
- The launch of Diaspora desks at the St. George’s and Grand Anse branches of the bank, taking the banking needs of the Diaspora into account.

### **Presentation: “Culture”-Dr. Merle Collins (Grenadian Diaspora- Washington DC. Metropolitan Area)**

#### **Key Points:**

- Preservation of artifacts, archives, archaeology, Amerindian heritage sites.
- Research on customs and traditions: rituals involved in weddings, saracca/salacca, Indian culture and other cultural traditions
- Proper research and preservation of archaeological sites
- Designation of sites in Grenada, Carriacou as cultural sites – Carriacou is an island of tremendous interest – big drum nation (cultural and historical significance), tomb stone festivals, wedding celebrations
- Research on boat building traditions in Carriacou and Petite Martinique
- The Grenadian vernacular and influences from Western Africa (preservation of Creole, patois)
- Identification of artefacts such as slave pens and other historical sites throughout the tri-island state
- Research, documentation, location and proper identification of artefacts related to the history of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique – for example, the mausoleum of Louis la grenade at Morne Jaloux, artifacts related to the Fedon rebellion, at Gouyave and/or other locations

## Discussion/Recommendations:

- **Preservation of Archives** – To reconstruct the Grenadian history and better understand the colonial and post-colonial periods.
- **Designation of Cultural Heritage Sites:**
  - **Carriacou** – An island of tremendous interest with cultural practices and traditions that are still maintained to date.
  - **St. George’s Market Square**- An historical site which should be considered the centrality of our culture – research, document. Churches – Anglican church in Sauteurs, Presbyterian (Indian documentation)
  - **Buildings**- to be identified as cultural and historical interests – old wooden houses in Carriacou and Petite Martinique, sedan chair portico building on Church street
  - Other sites: **Slave Pen** – Hermitage (some sites are on private land – urge proper legal procedures for easy access as cultural heritage sites)
- **Research and Recording:**
  - Traditional wedding
  - Need for preservation in print and digitally - story of Limlear and Mt Pleasant Maroons (Carriacou)
- **Placement of plaques at historical sites**
- **Establishment of a museum in Carriacou – Creighton/Blair Park**

To achieve these goals, it was suggested that Grenada seek training in archiving and data management, and explore the possibility of presenting projects to UNESCO Heritage Committee, OAS and/or other similar international organizations; work with the St. George’s Heritage Society and Carriacou Historical Society

## Presentation: “Sports”-Hon. Patrick Simmons (Minister for Youth Empowerment and Sports)

### Key Points:

- Completion of Sports Policy in 2010-new impetus and direction for sports in Grenada
- National Sports Council
  - Setting direction of development of sports
  - Comprised of councils of all parishes (for ex. individual parish council will inform National Council of their needs)- each parish would have representation on the National Council

- Each parish has one vote. (Diaspora can liaise directly with their parish and make a contribution to the National Council through their Parish Council)
- The Jamaican model to Diaspora support for Jamaican athletes, after consultation with the Olympics Committee can be emulated by Grenadians.

**Discussion/recommendations:**

- Five athletes to represent Grenada at the 2012 Olympics in London:
  - Kirani James, Joel Redhead and Rondell Bartholomew (400m)
  - Janelle Redhead (200m)
  - Randy Lewis (triple jump)
- Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Youth Empowerment and Sports, Veda Bruno-Victor, indicated that the Olympic Committee is looking for moral as well as financial support for athletes.
- Diaspora can give support through various avenues, including through fundraisers in the Diaspora.

**Presentation: “Youth”-Raedonna Griffith (Diaspora Youth Forum-UK)**

**Key Points:**

- A youth forum was convened in London through the organization of the Grenada High Commission in London which led to the development of the Diaspora Youth Forum (DYF).
- The role of the DYF is to provide an opportunity for young people of Grenadian descent to:
  - Understand and work toward promoting their Grenadian heritage.
  - Understand and promote Grenadian culture by collaborating with Grenadians both at home and abroad.
  - Express views through various forums and take steps toward making a positive and effective contribution to Grenada’s youth agenda.

**Discussion/recommendations:**

- The use of social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.) to promote and preserve Grenadian heritage.
- Education through film – “Fire in Babylon”
- Cultural/custom exhibition – Heritage Day
- Grenadian and U.K students - skills and experience exchanges
- Creation of a forum for students to provide feedback on areas in which they believe development is needed.
- Establishing technical and trade skills for young Grenadians to be outlined and supported by a private-public sector collaborative ventures
- Help to develop youth interest in struggling sectors such as agriculture by, possibly, introducing after school projects throughout different schools
- Use the 2012 London Olympics as a unique opportunity to explore our cultural and sporting heritage

## **Presentation: “Youth”- Noreen Wall, Marissa Mitchell & Reva Lewis (Grenadian-American Young Women Association-New York)**

### **Key Points:**

- Greater emphasis on early childhood education
- Early detection of learning disabilities and challenges – focus on mental health
- Improve quality of teaching and learning – have summer school/classes and have persons abroad come during this period to lend expertise and skills
- Socially prepare students to be productive members of society
- Curriculum refocus
- Uplifting standards of schools – through the implementation of technological equipment to improve technology capacity
- Career training – career day projects to prepare students for the world of work - address lack of technical skills and vocational training among our people
- Sex & substance abuse education – to boost self-esteem and protect future generations
- Importance of health – good nutrition and exercise
- Youth and sports – database for athletes; in-depth training; athlete endorsements (use athletes for advertisements and commercials, as role models)
- Youth and culture – bridge the gap between generations, implement a national heroes day
- Youth and social responsibility – spirituality and religion, environmental initiatives (beach cleaning projects), re-introduce youth groups – brownies, girl guides, rainbows, rangers

## **Presentation: “Youth”- Trisha Mitchell & Tesfa Peterson (Spice Youth Toronto Community Initiative-Canada)**

### **Key Points:**

- The Spice Youth Toronto Community Initiative (SYTCI), in collaboration with the Spice Promotion Youth Cultural Organization (SPYCO), decided to approach the Diaspora initiative in three (3) segments as follows:
  - Naming the skills that youth in the Diaspora have learned and gained from experiences living abroad
  - Identifying the country’s needs as outlined in the summary report of the draft proposal of the Diaspora initiative and;
  - How the skills can be matched with the needs identified to create recommendations and focused outcomes.
- Youth empowerment programmes – with focus on multi-lingual capacities
- Communication and maintaining connectivity in the Diaspora
- Inclusion of NGOS as part of the Diaspora initiative
- Making Diaspora centers and affiliate organizations the first stop for travelling nationals
- Establishing greater partnerships with cultural groups in Grenada

- The group re-emphasized the need to utilize social networks such as Facebook, twitter, Google plus, etc, to engage Grenada's youths throughout the world for the future development of our homeland.

#### **Discussion/recommendations:**

- linking NGOS with youths – environmental initiative in July (climate change)
- anger management – communication skills – drug & alcohol abuse prevention
- cultural exchange
- “Failure to invest in youth is a false economy – Ban Ki Moon”
- Implementation of a National Heroes’ Day – teaching the youth about the national heroes who worked to advance their countries and designated land marks to celebrate these heroes.
- Seeking members of the Diaspora to become “friends of the Programme for Adolescent Mothers (PAM)” to enhance the programme. PAM recently opened a restaurant as a cooking school.

## **DAY 2**

### **Presentation: “Finance”- Curlan Gilchrist (Ministry of Finance) Chairperson – HE Marcelle Gairy, Ambassador, Beijing**

#### **Key Points:**

- The Government of Grenada is challenged by the amount of concessions currently granted.
- Sixty percent (60%) of every dollar passing through customs would have had some form of concession applied.
- Fiscal incentives are not the only issue, the competitiveness of the labour force as well as the need to attract investments considering the capabilities of the labour force are also important.
- Mr. Gilchrist alluded to the newly passed Investment Promotion Act and an Investment Strategy.
- If tourism was defined as encompassing only the activities of hotels and restaurant, its contribution to GDP would be 7%. If however, that definition was extended to include auxiliary activities, the figure would rise to 20%.
- He also explained that the St. George's University accounts for 15% of GDP.
- The benefits of the newly adopted Automated System for Customs Data (Asycuda) in reducing subjectivity in the valuation of imports.
- The rules ensure that goods are available to all Grenadians under the same conditions. As such, customs is guided by the **market** value of goods.
- The presenter mentioned that studies show that high taxes do not necessarily bring high revenue and suggested that lower taxes may bring on higher compliance rates.

## Presentation: “Health”- Merle Clarke (Diaspora Consultative Committee-New York)

### Key Points:

- Recommendations/proposals from the Diaspora Consultative Committee New York (DCCNY) focused on the following areas:
  - **Primary/Preventive and Tertiary Care:**
    - Stress the importance of primary health career education through creative and continuous media messages.
    - Focus on upgrading and staffing existing clinics and establishing new ones in areas of need.
  - **Mental Health:**
    - Training health care providers beginning with physicians, occupational therapists, nurses and administrative staff.
    - Appointment of a Director of Mental Health Services and implementing mental health legislation.
    - Establishment of a patient information system/database along with a thorough review of the listed psychotropic drugs on formulary.
    - The policies and principles of mental health delivery to be closely assessed and followed. It is recommended that mental health services be organizationally integrated with the primary health care system.
  - **Nutrition:**
    - The focused on good nutrition among the population should begin in schools with the development of teaching guides to implement the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Council’s Food Policy.
    - Recognized the role of the Grenada Food and Nutrition Council in leading programs for good nutrition in Grenada.
    - Emphasized the link between poor nutrition and the changing eating habits of Grenadian population. Reference was made to the fact that the adaptation of a Western diet is seen as contributing to the increasing problems of chronic diseases; high blood pressure, diabetes, and diet-related anemia.
    - Raised concern about the high rate of diet-related anemia in the parish of St. Andrew, which is known as the “bread basket” of the country.
  - **Elderly Care:**
    - Developing a standard of practice for operating facilities that primarily care for the elderly.
    - Develop and improve the dialogue between the Ministry of Health in Grenada and the management/faculty at St. George’s Medical University.
    - Initiate a discussion with the student government/body on what role they believe the University can play in improving the quality of life for the senior citizens of Grenada.

- We recommend SGU incorporate elderly care into their Nursing program curriculum and include the Grenada Nursing School in such training.
- **Health Assessment:**
  - A standard of care and assessment in all related healthcare fields is the fundamental guideline necessary in developing uniformity among healthcare professionals and institutions.
  - The need to identify barriers associated with data collection, and confidentiality of information.
  - Persons experienced in computer programming/design and informatics can create and implement assessment tools that would secure healthcare records
  - Assembling a Health Information Systems team in Grenada and abroad is essential to the development, prosperity and advancement of our healthcare.
  - Professionals from the Diaspora can train nurses/nurses aids in bed-side and customer service, provide professional development seminars, and represent Grenada at international conferences. Additionally, a comprehensive report following the conference will be submitted to the respective bodies.
  - The Diaspora can help in securing medical equipment, supplies and professionals as requested by the Ministry and ensure at least one medical mission to Grenada, Carriacou or Petite Martinique per year.
  - Utilization of the media to assist in public education, and assistance in implementing socialization, physical activity, diet, and safety programs. Educational medical materials including ongoing video information can be placed at institutions and clinics.

**Discussions/recommendations:**

- Public education and awareness campaigns, facilitating informative “town hall” style meetings, networking and identifying mental health professionals and/or agencies to volunteer time and services.
- Providing vocational training to those diagnosed as having mental illness.
- Educating families of individuals with mental illness and how they are affected.
- Information seminars targeting primary and secondary schools, colleges and churches in all parishes.
- Annual training, refresher courses and in-services can be offered to health professionals.
- Revision and redevelopment of the mental health project in Carriacou.
- Encouraging groups and organizations to adopt-a kitchen or school garden and help in the training of school personnel in fulfilling the needs of the School Feeding Program.
- Trained dieticians/nutritionists can be sought to assist with existing food programs.
- The creation of a mirror committee of persons in Grenada to provide feedback on the feasibility and desirability of the proposals made during the conference.

## **Presentation: “Engaging the Diaspora: Response from the consultation process” (Diaspora Consultative Committee-UK)**

### **Key Points:**

Diaspora Grenadians wanted to know:

- What specific skills are needed in Grenada and where exactly is the need?
- Which age groups are most in need?
- Where specifically is help needed in terms of musical instruments, home economics equipment and craft materials for schools?
- Grenadians in the Diaspora felt that there was the need for customer service skills training across the tourism industry- from workers at the airport through to traders in the markets.
- The need for regular workshops which will encourage Grenadians at home and those abroad to better engage them and find ways of working together for the benefit of their homeland.
- The need for training in health and safety at work in many areas.
- The need for personal development and deportment guidance for school age and younger people.
- The need to tap into the business communities in Grenada in order to facilitate a two-way consultation process. This will give the business owners the opportunity to contribute to the identification of skills as they will most likely be the employers of skilled Grenadians.
- The need to ensure that there is good record keeping so that the DCC information collected is not lost.
- The need for an individual within the Public Service to act as a coordinator between the Home and Diaspora communities to ensure stability and continuity of the DCC projects.

### **Discussion/recommendations:**

- Provide technical training and other support in agreement and collaboration with the Grenadian Department of Education and Human Resources.
- Establish a Directory of Expertise and Skills which will be retained at the High Commission and could be made available to Grenada.
- Many Grenadians in the Diaspora from London, Cardiff, Milton Keynes, Bedford and Luton have signed up to run workshops, training programmes, provide advice, and participate in mentoring schemes within their areas of expertise. These cover a wide range of technical and vocational skills including aircraft maintenance, telecommunications, carpentry, IT and project management.
- Members are also willing to assist in the provision of educational resources: technical, home craft, IT equipment and musical instruments where needed. The establishment of links with organisations providing education and skills training programmes in Grenada, would also be beneficial.
- Facilitate partnerships between UK and Grenadian schools to provide support and assist in the development of school mentoring schemes in Grenada.
- Members of the sub-group agreed to support the purchasing of billboards to promote the reading of books and creation of jingles as part of a nationwide strategy to encourage young Grenadians to become more avid readers.

## **Presentation: “Health”- Sen. Ann Peters (Minister for Health)**

### **Key Points:**

- The Minister took care to assure participants that donations, contributions and suggestions of the Diaspora are not taken as an attack on persons resident in Grenada.
- 57 million dollars was allocated to the Ministry of Health in the 2011 budget.

## **Presentation: “Education”-Hon. Franka Bernadine (Minister for Education and Human Resource Development)**

### **Key Points:**

- Success of school books program
- Curriculum development in keeping with Grenada’s developmental goals
- Human resource development through scholarships, training courses etc.
- Anger management and counselors at the nation’s schools
- The replacement of the Common Entrance examination with the Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment (CPEA) which was developed by the Caribbean Examinations Council CXC. The exam is divided into components with continuous assessment capturing talents and skills.

### **Discussion/recommendations:**

- Perceived hostility towards Grenada University of Science and Technology (GUST).
- Lack of good customer service skills in Grenada and calls on the Diaspora to volunteer to provide sessions/classes on customer service to persons within the hospitality industry.
- Concern about the immigration and customs officers at the airport. Persons who are trained are not kept but transferred therefore there is a constant rotation of staff and the need to train new staff constantly.
- The infusion of technical studies at the primary level was an important aspect of the curriculum refocuses. Therefore the aim was not to transform the primary schools to technical centers but to re-focus the school’s curriculum.

## **Presentation: “Grenada draft constitution: the case of the Diaspora”-Dr. Simeon Randy McIntosh –Chairperson: Ms Jenny Gumbs – Consul-General, Toronto/Mr L Junior Wharwood – Honorary Consul, Montreal**

### **Key Points:**

- Constitutional reform must focus on our fundamental, collective, moral right to frame our own fundamental law for our governance, instead of being restricted by our colonial master.
- The language and character of our independence constitution embodies that of the colonial master which implies the power they still maintain to define us as a people, which is evident by our continued relationship with the British sovereign and her judicial committee.

- With political independence, we have acquired the power to redefine and re-name ourselves and our political community. Thus, constitutional reform is the most convenient time for us as Grenadians to exercise our sovereign will to frame our own fundamental law and reconstitute our polity.
- The constitutional reform is an exercise of our collective right. Therefore it is important at this point to understand the fundamental difference between a true monarchy and a constitutional republic.

Presentation of declaration of the Diaspora founding conference -Mr. Roy Mc Ewen  
(See appendix)

**Closing remarks by Hon I.J. Karl Hood, Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Environment, Foreign Trade & Export Development**

END

## APPENDIX

### GRENADA DIASPORA FOUNDING CONFERENCE

#### DECLARATION ON THE GRENADIAN DIASPORA: PARTNERING IN NATION-BUILDING

(Adopted on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2011, Grand Anse, St. George's, Grenada)

WE THE DELEGATES TO THE GRENADA DIASPORA FOUNDING CONFERENCE,

**RECOGNIZING** the invaluable contribution that the Grenadian Diaspora throughout the world is called on to make to the economic, social, cultural, human and political development of Grenada;

**DESIROUS** of making available the wealth of our individual and collective resources, expertise, networks, and perspectives to the benefit of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique;

**DESIROUS ALSO** of returning to Grenada to live and to be fully integrated in the daily undertaking of nation-building;

**WELCOMING** the engagement of Grenadians living in Grenada;

**AWARE** of the need to partner with the Government and People of Grenada as well as with all Grenadian Diaspora communities, in a multifaceted, strategic and overarching approach to constructing a sustainable and inclusive plan of action for strengthening our nation and defining a more sustainable development path;

**WELCOMING** the initiative of the Government of Grenada in instituting this consultative process with the Grenadian Diaspora and embracing our talents, commitment and patriotism to develop a rationalized approach to matching national needs and objectives with the resources and vision of members of the Grenadian Diaspora towards a more structured, coordinated and sustainable relationship between Grenadians in Grenada and in the Diaspora;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** with satisfaction the active demonstration of the Government of Grenada's commitment at all levels to this consultative process with the Grenadian Diaspora as evidenced by the participation at this

Founding Conference of the Governor General, the Prime Minister, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Environment, Foreign Trade, and Export Development, other members of Cabinet and Senior Government Officials;

**BEARING IN MIND** the challenges placed before us in the statements delivered by His Excellency the Governor General, the Honourable Prime Minister, and the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs during the Opening Ceremony as well as the overviews on national endeavours in education, health and sports by the respective responsible Government Ministers; and

**COGNIZANT** of the invaluable work done towards the realisation of this Founding Conference by Grenadians in Canada, the Caribbean, United Kingdom, United States of America, and by nationals who have returned to live in Grenada,

**DECLARE OUR COMMITMENT** to collaborate with the Government and People of Grenada, in a harmonised Diaspora undertaking aimed at nation-building, through the following means:

1. The inclusion of all Grenadian Diaspora communities throughout the world as well as Grenadians who have lived abroad for many years and have returned to reside in Grenada on a permanent basis.
2. Participation in the International Diaspora Consultative Committee (IDCC), established at this Founding Conference, to deepen cooperation and the bond among members of the Grenadian Diaspora throughout the world.
3. Strengthening national strategies in the Five Transformational Sectors identified by the Government of Grenada, and in particular the areas mentioned at this Founding Conference in Culture, Education, Economy (Business and Investment), Health, Sports, youth and Tourism.
4. The design, furnishing and implementation of a plan of action with short, medium and long-term goals.
5. The pursuit of the following immediate goals with a view to their adoption at the Homecoming in 2012:
  - a. The elaboration of a plan to recognize and honour Grenadian Heroes;
  - b. The establishment of an annual Grenada Diaspora Summer Camp to be held in Grenada aimed at educating children in the Diaspora about the home of their parents / ancestors;
  - c. The establishment and maintenance of a skills-bank reflecting expertise of members of the Grenadian Diaspora;

- d. The development of a comprehensive program to preserve the cultural heritage of Grenada; and
  - e. Provision of resources to assist in the functioning of the Office of Diaspora Affairs established in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2009.
6. Consultation with financial and other relevant organizations to reduce the transaction costs of remittances.
  7. The consideration of the development of a Diaspora Bond to promote investment.
  8. Engagement on possible mechanisms and instruments to increase involvement of the Grenadian Diaspora in governance.
  9. Consultation with all individuals, civil society organizations and the private sector to take advantage of their respective and invaluable contributions to this nation-building endeavour.

**DECLARE ALSO:**

Our support for the planned Diaspora Homecoming, scheduled for 5<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> August, 2012 and our commitment to contribute to its organization and success.

Our deepest appreciation to Prime Minister, Honourable Tillman Thomas and to the Government and People of Grenada for the warm reception and for hosting this Diaspora Founding Conference.

The success of this Founding Conference and our interest in the continuation of such consultative and interactive meetings on a more regular basis.

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