

FEATURE ADDRESS
by
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PRIME MINISTER
&
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GRENADA PUBLIC SECTOR MODERNIZATION
CHANGE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

LAUNCH OF OUR NEW *PUBLIC SERVICE VISION*
MAY 27TH, 2010

Ministerial Complex
Botanical Gardens Grounds
St. George's | Grenada

The following is the text of the speech delivered by Prime Minister Tillman Thomas on the occasion of the launch of the new Public Service Vision on May 27, 2010. This pronouncement comes as part of the Grenada Public Sector Modernization Change Management Program.

Fellow Cabinet Ministers

Members of the Head Table

Members of the Senior Managers' Board

Specially Invited Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Good Morning.

Thank you for accepting our invitation and being with us today. Your presence here demonstrates your interest and commitment to public sector modernization in Grenada.

Today we will witness the launch of the Vision for the Public Service, the unveiling of the new Public Sector Modernisation Billboard and the official launch of our modernization campaign.

The Public Sector Modernization Change Management Programme was launched on March 2nd, 2009. Since then, many initiatives were undertaken and some have been completed.

Our administration has articulated the need for change and pledged **to restore integrity, renew hope, and build our country together**. We also promised:

- to practice the politics of inclusion of all (public sector, private sector, civil society, citizens all) in the decision making process as we seek to build our nation; and
- to modernize the Public Service to enable greater efficiencies and improved customer service.

At the launch of this programme, I also introduced the vision for the Grenada Public Service, which I would like to reiterate:

A Public Service that fully understands and demonstrates that it exists solely to serve the citizens of Grenada;

A Public Service that delivers services based on the following core values: diligence, integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality; and

A Public Service that puts public interest first and demonstrates professional competence, responsiveness, openness and transparency, and that is fully accountable for its actions and performance.

Many persons might ask **‘WHY DO WE NEED A VISION?’**

I want to offer you some reasons:

Firstly, **The Scriptures tell us in Proverbs 29:18, that ‘where there is no vision, the people perish’.**

Of course, we know that “to perish” means “to suffer complete destruction”.

The history of the Public Service is closely linked with that of the Public Service Commission, which was established **by administrative action of the Governor of the Windward Islands on June 1, 1952. This means that**

as an institution, the Grenada Public Service has been in existence for fifty-eight (58) years.

As a Public Service, we must know why we exist, where we are headed, and how we intend to get there. If we do not know where we are going, we may end up on the wrong road to nowhere.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am confident that you will agree with me that many of the needs that had to be addressed 58 years ago, are no longer the same. As such, we must cast a new vision.

Secondly, our new vision will establish a standard or benchmark for all internal and external stakeholders to gauge our direction and performance as an organisation.

Thirdly, our new vision will help us to regenerate the desired culture of our public service. A solution-based customer care culture, wherein we will see those whom we

serve as customers and clients whose time and concerns must never be taken for granted.

We must evolve to a state where as public servants we will begin to show by our actions that our real bosses are the people whom we serve. For the people we serve are in fact the very ones who pay taxes and help to keep the wheels of our economy turning.

Ladies and gentlemen: We must begin to view Government as a business -- a business that must be successful!

Of course, to succeed in business, we must have a shared vision which must be translated into positive action. In fact, it is very important that we pursue our vision by taking critical strategic actions. Joel A. Barker stated (and I quote) ***‘Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world*** (end of quote).

That is why, the vision for the public service will be placed in the hands of every public officer and will be prominently

displayed in all Public Service Buildings. Billboards will be erected in every parish as a constant reminder to all, of the need to modernize the Public Service so that we can bring improved services to our people.

It is a vision that we all must know, own, and embrace, as it will guide our actions in delivering service to our brothers and sisters. This vision was created after extensive consultations with internal and external stakeholders and is included in our National Strategic Development Plan.

This vision is quite attainable and already a number of measures have been put in place to ensure that this vision is being achieved. Some of these undertakings include:

- The establishment of the Ombudsman Office
- The appointment of the Integrity Commission
- The Initiation of the conceptual design of a Grenada Management Accountability Framework
- The development of a Governance Code for Senior Managers.

- The commencement of in-service training for public officers.
- The setting up of a complaints desk at the Ministry of Health.
- The articulation of the vision in remarks of government officials
- The approval of four priority areas for Public Administration; and
- Within the next month, a human resource audit of the Public Service will be undertaken.

Ladies and gentlemen, I want to encourage all of us, to share this vision and relentlessly strive towards its realization. The road will not be an easy one, but I believe that with sensible application of our abilities and skills, along with the help of Almighty God, we can make it happen ...together.

Grenada has undergone several public sector reform initiatives over the years with mixed results. We all know

this. However, we will not allow this fact to be a source of discouragement; for we also know that change is the only constant in life. And while we do celebrate some of the achievements of the past, it is also our responsibility to devise new strategies to change the way we do business.

This need for change is driven by technological advances, global trends and the evolving needs of our people. As a Public Service, we have a responsibility to cater to these changing needs and we must ensure that all the necessary tools and mechanisms are in place for optimal delivery of services.

Today, I want to re-emphasize my support for public sector modernization. Our Government sees modernization as a *consistent effort to improve the way we do business so as to increase organizational efficiency and effectiveness; a consistent effort to enhance the competencies of public officers to deliver services with a signature of excellence.*

In a recent video-conference organised by the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, the Governor mentioned that (and I quote) “*Grenada seems to have the environment and the circumstances which could, with a focused effort, be amenable to successful implementation of a public sector modernization effort*” (end of quote).

As a result, Grenada will be used as the case study for modernization in the OECS. This, Ladies and Gentlemen, is a tremendous achievement.

I therefore implore upon you as Public officers to live this vision. Things are changing around us and we cannot afford to hold on to non-productive practices that bring no positive results. The focus now should be on the implementation of the best practices that have worked in other similar environments.

I wish to encourage all my colleagues in Cabinet, the Senior Managers Board as a collective body, individual

ministries and departments and public officers to embrace this vision so we may “build and advance as one people”.

As the Minister with responsibility for the Public Service, I wish to offer my congratulations on this special occasion, and express my sincerest appreciation to all members of the Senior Managers’ Board, the Reform Management Unit and the numerous officers from various departments and ministries. Together, you all have been working **arduously** towards the realization of our modernization agenda.

Thank you for your commitment and support.

I expect that you will all continue to be champions for public sector modernization and that you will be working to effect positive change in the Public Service.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my distinguished pleasure to officially launch the following Vision for the Public Service:

A Public Sector that “fully understands and demonstrates that it exists solely to serve Grenada, its

citizens and residents, helping them to achieve their goals, and do so with integrity, professional competence, responsiveness, openness and transparency, and that is fully accountable for its actions and performance.”

Thank you.

May God bless us all.