

**Most Gracious Speech
To Both Houses
of Parliament**



By
His Excellency
Sir Carlyle Glean,
Governor-General

ON FRIDAY, THE FOURTEENTH OF OCTOBER, 2011

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ON THE OCCASION OF THE
FOURTH SESSION OF THE EIGHTH PARLIAMENT,
OCTOBER 14, 2011

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament.

On the occasion of the commencement of the fourth session of the eighth Parliament, my Government continues to successfully navigate the turbulent economic waters of the Great Recession. We have managed to stabilize our economy and are laying the basis for a sustainable diversified economy that can transform our country.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, for the first time since 2008, Grenada has recorded positive economic growth for the last three quarters. This is a clear indication that we are emerging from the recession. It is also a positive indication that our commitment to sound economic management is beginning to yield good fruits.

My Government takes pride in the fact that Grenada is now widely recognized as a well run democratic country upholding the fundamental tenets of democracy, good governance, transparency and accountability. My Government's resolve and firm commitment to prudent and profound economic management continues to be applauded by all the key financial and other organizations including the CDB, ECCB, The World Bank, the IMF and the EU. Our dedication to fiscal and economic discipline has allowed Grenada greater access to concessionary financing and grants.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, our strategic focus on the key transformational sectors namely agriculture and agribusiness, construction, information and communications technology, tourism, energy development and health and education services confirms our commitment to pursue a balanced, sustainable development path for Grenada. Early initiatives in these key areas are designed to maximize early wins and establish the fundamentals for accelerated actions in the future.

ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, this fourth session of the eighth Parliament is being held at a unique juncture in the world's history. We are still in the throes of what is now referred to as the Great Recession. Uncertainty and market volatility lingers. Global economic recovery appears elusive and talk about a double dip recession is current. Major economies of the world are challenged with many in

Europe struggling with high debt and fiscal deficits. Nine EU countries have Debt to GDP ratios of over 80% with Greece and Italy at 142.8% and 119% respectively.

The challenges of managing an open economy such as Grenada's, in this difficult recessionary environment are quite daunting. In fact, Grenada is not alone as virtually all our Caribbean neighbors are contending with the same issues. Unemployment, fiscal deficits, rising debt, slow economic growth, increasing poverty, diminishing grants and declining Foreign Direct Investments all dominate our agendas.

Within the OECS, we all have similar challenges with St. Kitts, Antigua, and Grenada in particular experiencing high debt to GDP ratios. Coupled with increasing unemployment and slow economic growth, prudent economic management of our economies in the region assumes great significance. My Government accordingly places tremendous emphasis on sound economic management. We will continue to pursue tax reform, the enhancement of our revenue base and the effective control of expenditure.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, despite our good progress so far, our public finances are not yet on a sustainable course and remains a priority on our immediate agenda. Discussions with related organizations and stakeholders are ongoing and my Government is pursuing all options to arrive at a manageable and sustainable path.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS OFFICE

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, my Government continues to be guided by the philosophy that all citizens have a right to be governed by processes that are impartial and transparent; and to choose the Government of their choice through free and fair elections. In support of this, the Parliamentary Elections Office will focus on the following priority areas:

1. Continued public Education
2. Continuous registration of eligible persons
3. Training of electoral personnel and other relevant staff
4. The preparation and upgrading of polling stations

Additionally my Government will move to ensure that the amendments to the Representation of the People Act of 1993 will be completed to allow the electoral machinery to be fully operational.

HEALTH

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, my Government believes that good health is a basic human right and a vehicle for economic growth. As such we are moving to transform this sector and we are currently upgrading our five year strategic plan to guide the way forward over the next five years. Major projects and services which commenced in 2011 will continue. These include the introduction of the Electronic Health Management Information System, Billing, and Admission system, National Health Insurance, the Clinical Teaching Programme, the infra-structural upgrade of the hospital (Phase II), the expansion of District Medical Officer's Clinics, the construction of the Gouyave Health Centre and the integration of mental health into our primary health care focus.

In 2012 and beyond, focus will be on enhancing the delivery of preventative, curative and rehabilitative services through inter-sectoral collaboration. Emphasis will continue on primary prevention through health education, promotion and the revitalization of the Primary Health Care approach.

AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, agribusiness remains a very important activity in the economic life of Grenada. This sector recorded a 7.7% growth in the first half of the year driven primarily by cocoa, nutmeg and banana production. Plantains, avocados, breadfruit and root crops, specifically dasheen which was exported to the North American Market were in abundant supply. This sector responded positively to Government's initiatives to rebuild confidence and sustainability through a strategic framework for its transformation.

In pursuit of this transformation, my Government will focus on the following areas:

1. Intensify planting activities to increase acreages of nutmeg and spices, cocoa and fruits

2. Upgrading of agricultural farm roads and other infrastructure
3. Develop a comprehensive Policy and Strategy for the Agro-Processing Subsector
4. Provide continued support for livestock development for meat and dairy products
5. Increase agricultural and fisheries marketing initiatives
6. Enhance our agricultural research and development capacity
7. To develop a national food security plan and to support the conservation of our natural environment.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND SPORTS

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, the empowerment of our young people continues through the Grenada Youth Upliftment Programme, the flagship programme of the Division of Youth Empowerment. This programme is subdivided into five components: Grenada Youth Education and Training, Youth Service and Leadership, Youth Rehabilitation, Small Business Enterprise Initiative, and Grenada Youth Apprenticeship Project.

In the year 2012 my Government through the Youth Empowerment Division would be focusing on the following:

- The Revision of the National Youth Policy
- Grenada Youth Upliftment Programme
 - o Expansion of the Small Business Enterprise Programme
 - o Expansion and Strengthening of Youth Networks Programme
 - o Re-activation of the National Youth Council
 - o Continuation of the Grenada Youth Apprenticeship Programme
 - o Continuation of the Grenada Youth Education and Training (GYET) Programme
 - o Continuation of the Youth in Transition Programme and Motivated to Change Initiative
 - o Continuation and expansion of the National Holiday Programme

- o Expansion of the National Youth Forums
- o Implementation of the National Youth Parliament System
- Continued Rehabilitation of the Youth Recreation and Cultural Center

LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, my Government will continue its thrust to provide efficient and effective labour Administration practices for sustained economic development. Emphasis will be on the pursuit of the decent work agenda through the review of labour Legislation, the promotion of safety and health at workplaces, the introduction of a Labour Market Information System and the development of a HIV/AIDS policy at the workplace.

As part of our employment creation efforts, the Cruise Ship Programme registering persons for possible selection of jobs on the Royal Cruise lines has been revised and efforts to re-enter the US Farm Workers programme is being intensified. Following an extensive review, a new minimum Wage Bill which provides for increases in wages in fourteen categories is being enacted.

Consequent on the receipt of the ninth actuarial review of the NIS, the recommendations will be implemented during the year 2012. These recommendations are expected to improve benefits, enhance administrative effectiveness and ensure continued sustainability.

HOUSING, LANDS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, our decent, affordable housing agenda for all citizens will accelerate with preparation for the final establishment of the housing settlements at Soubise, Frequente and Mt. Gay. Cadastral and topographic surveys of five sites for the second phase of the low income housing project will begin during the year. These sites include Douglaston, St. John, Mt. Rose, St. Patrick, Dumfries, Carriacou, Morne Delice, St. David and Diamond, St. Mark.

Land management is an important aspect for development as almost every investment decision is tied to the land. A key objective of Grenada's

Public Sector Modernization Programme is to streamline the various land functions, merging them into one agency.

This process is ongoing with the overall aim to ensure that land management practices contribute towards the sustainable development of Grenada, securing land tenure, facilitating investment and employment and increasing tax revenues while protecting the natural beauty of the island.

Additionally, the formation of one land agency will improve service delivery in the lands sector through interventions such as business process improvements, the introduction of technologies (such as GIS, GPS), e-Government and a citizen centric service delivery culture.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, my Government's emphasis on access to enhanced community facilities and services remains paramount in the building of strong communities throughout Grenada. A key element in this process is the fostering of independence and the empowerment of communities to find solutions, pursue initiatives and meet their needs.

CARRIACOU AND PETITE MARTINIQUE AFFAIRS

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, my Government will continue to pursue economic activities designed to build sustainable economic activity in Carriacou. These activities include the commencement of the reconstruction and expansion of the Lauriston Airport, the building of roads with emphasis on the Belvedere/Belair and Power Station roads, the Top Hill Senior Citizens Home, a Ministerial Complex to house the Ministry, support for Carriacou festivals and continued work on the Sandy Island Oyster Bed Marine Protected Area.

The Duty Free Zone Project at Dumfries with URBANIZA of Brazil is ongoing. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has now been elevated to a Binding Agreement. However, the containerised port component of the project is now being examined for Grenville, St. Andrew.

With funding from the CDB, NAWASA, and with assistance from the Indian Government, we will commence a study to develop the water system in Carriacou & Petite Martinique.

Importantly, the Local Government Act will be taken to Parliament clearing the way for the election of the Local Government Council. This will finally result in greater autonomy to the people of Carriacou and Petite Martinique.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, Grenada continues to be known as a peaceful and safe country. National security remains a high priority of my Government. As a consequence, all pertinent areas will receive attention. These include the continued reform of our prison system, the prevention of crime, the expansion of community policing, improving traffic management and building public confidence in the police. Legislative reform to include driving under the influence of alcohol, addressing illegal parking, liability for passengers who choose to board buses outside of prescribed bus stops and illegal vehicle modification will be pursued.

Disaster risk Management and reduction is central to the effective management of our country particularly at this time of the year. Primary focus on Community awareness and preparedness, capacity building of NaDMA and active stakeholder cooperation will continue. This holistic approach ensures maximum risk reduction and effective response. During the year, emphasis will be placed on the introduction of the regional disaster management model legislation which is necessary to enable the Agency to function more effectively.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, the journey of Public Sector Modernization is continuous given the ever changing needs of our citizenry. Building on our various programmes already implemented, my Government's main areas of focus for 2012 are:

1. Implementation of the governance code for the Senior Managers Board and Ministers of Cabinet; including the signing of performance agreements.
2. Implementation of a forward planning agenda for Cabinet and the Policy and Legislative agenda.

3. Forging partnerships with local, regional and international institutions of repute to build leadership capacity of Senior managers in the Public Service.
4. The strengthening of the monitoring and evaluation capacity of the Cabinet Office to ensure timely implementation of Cabinet decisions.
5. The continuation of the Expenditure Review Audit of the Public Service.

LEGAL AFFAIRS

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, maintaining public trust and confidence, protecting the rule of law and effective administration of justice are critical facets of good governance. My Government has a robust legislative agenda updating Grenada's laws, some of which will be available online during the year 2012.

During the year, many Constitution Review consultations were held and this process will continue as we seek to give opportunity to every Grenadian to decide on changes to our constitution. We have been working with the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court and the OECS in the development of a reform Strategy for the judiciary. This involves legal, institutional and infrastructural changes under the Halls of Justice project. This work will continue as we enter the design and implementation phase of critical activities.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, the process of restructuring our registries will continue. The Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property Office (CAIPO) will operate a fully automated registration system thus reducing the time it takes to register and or incorporate a business in Grenada. Similarly, the Public Prosecution's Office will be working with stakeholders to prepare and implement the new Criminal Procedure Rules Amendments to increase the jurisdiction of Magistrates and to increase the maximum penalty for certain Criminal Offences.

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREIGN TRADE AND EXPORT DEVELOPMENT

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, the Ministry of Environment, Foreign Trade and Export Development will continue the development of an Export Strategy for the Services Sector in collaboration

with the Commonwealth. The Strategy will focus on the Construction services; Business and professional services; Culture, entertainment and sporting services, and, Education services.

My Government will work to enhance the Coalition Secretariat housed at the Grenada Industrial Development Corporation. The Coalition serves as an umbrella organization to Service Sector Associations. The primary objectives are:-

- To prepare the stakeholders for the challenges and opportunities of the Services Regimes of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), the CARIFORUM-EC Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and all other trade agreements that Grenada will engage in by disseminating information through workshops etc;
- To help facilitate increase in the export of services;
- To be a partner with the public sector in the development of the Services Sector in Grenada;
- To assist in organizing individual service professionals into professional associations.

The Ministry will focus on increasing Grenada's exports and also penetrating new markets for our exports. The Ministry will also continue to facilitate Trade missions, as well as to further enhance and develop the skills of persons involved in craft and to train new entrants in manufacturing.

Discussion will continue to finalize the Canada-CARICOM Trade negotiation and negotiation at the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

In relation to the Environment, priorities would be given to mainstreaming Climate change mitigation and adaptation measures; modernize environmental policies and Legislations; promote environmental awareness through education and the integration of solid waste management with Grenada Solid Waste Management Authority (GSWMA).

WORKS, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND UTILITIES

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, my Government will concentrate on the coordination and implementation of all the major

infrastructural projects ongoing and planned for the next two years. Much emphasis will be placed on the effective functioning of the Projects Coordination Committee which will drive the implementation process.

TOURISM, CIVIL AVIATION AND CULTURE

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, my Government's focus is on building a competitive people-focused tourism industry that delivers quality visitor experiences in a sustainable way. During the year we will continue to enhance our tourism product and pursue the marketing and promotion of Grenada in niche markets where we have a comparative advantage. Electronic marketing tools will be utilized to expand our reach, facilitate convenience and improve access for visitors.

Much attention will be paid to the incorporation of our rich resource base; terrestrial, marine, heritage and cultural to create meaningful experiences for our visitors and nationals. Festivals and events will be enriched and encouraged particularly at the community level. Private sector investment in the accommodation and attraction sectors will be encouraged as we endeavour to restore and upgrade our major tourist sites and attractions.

Special emphasis will be on our growing Yachting and Dive sectors and on complementing our strategic initiative to attract Medical, Health and Wellness tourism. The need to build appropriate room stock is receiving considerable attention as this remains important to attain a critical mass and the rationalization of marketing support for some airlines serving Grenada.

Compliance with international safety and security of air transportation obligations is also a priority of my Government. In this regard, the Department of Civil Aviation, the Air Transport Licensing Board, the Grenada Airports Authority and the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority will continue to collaborate to ensure that Grenada is compliant.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, my Government will complete our national cultural policy and begin its implementation in 2012. In keeping with the United Nations declaration of 2011 as the "Year for People of African Descent" my Government has consolidated the two new festivals: Spice Word Festival and the Camerhogne Folk Festival under the theme "Remembering our African Traditions".

The establishment of a National Art Gallery and the restoration of the Antilles Complex will receive much needed attention given our emphasis on heritage culture. Further, the National Performing Company and a National Festival Music Band will be established.

ENERGY

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, my Government is moving expeditiously to implement our National Energy policy. In this regard, the following projects constitute policy initiatives:

- The installation of 1.9 megawatts of electricity generating capacity in Carriacou through the finance and purchase of wind turbines. With the support of a grant of 2.5 million Euros (\$9.6 million EC) from the European Union, my Government is working in conjunction with GRENLEC to implement during the year. This will result in a lower cost of electricity and less dependence on fossil fuels.
- The development of Grenada's geothermal potential in collaboration with GRENLEC.
- Active preparations for the development of our hydro carbon potential.
- The joint establishment of a regional energy regulator to be known as the Eastern Caribbean Energy Regulatory Authority. Like ECTEL, this will be a sub-regional entity and should eventually lower electricity prices in the Eastern Caribbean.

ICT

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, my Government during the year established the ICT Center for Excellence and Innovation, and our own Internet Exchange Point; the first such initiatives in the English speaking Caribbean. Work on the CARCIP Project and Plans for the outsourcing of Government IT work will continue. Additionally, my Government will acquire a convergence telephone system for all Government offices thus reducing cost considerably.

During the year, timely e-legislation will be pursued to enhance efficiency and Grenada's ICT profile.

My Government will continue its focus on our internet penetration programme through Community Access Points facilitated by the NTRC and Government. Complementing this will be the addition of Internet Hot Spots in open spaces throughout Grenada including Carriacou. Work continues in the National Health Management System, the updating of the National ICT Strategy in sync with the Caricom Strategy as well as the OECS Research Education Network Project.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, Grenada's foreign policy continues to be driven by the advancement and protection of its national interest and status as a nation. In 2012 our main areas are:

- The continued development of a Career Foreign Service
- The mobilization of Investment and resources
- Continued engagement of our Diaspora in National development
- The advancement of Grenada's Maritime Boundary delimitation
- The establishment of new alliances and the strengthening of Diplomatic relations

Following the preparatory and founding conferences in 2010 and 2011 respectively, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will host a "Home Coming" during the period August 5-18, 2012. Additionally the Diaspora Unit will be strengthened with the appointment of an Ambassador for Diaspora Affairs.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, after four years at the helm of the forty three member AOSIS, leading the fight for climate justice and a sustainable environment, Grenada will relinquish the chair of this distinguished body to the island of Nauru at the end of the year. My Government pledges our continued support for this just cause.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, strong families build strong communities and strong countries. As such, my Government will continue to work towards the strengthening of families through

the National Parenting Programme. Parenting courses will continue in several health centres, parent teachers associations and throughout various communities in our nation.

The establishment of a social safety net policy framework with assistance from the World Bank and the UN is ongoing. This policy, among other things, will govern transfers that can help alleviate poverty experiences in Grenada.

Following the enactment of the Child Protection and Adoption Bill, and the Domestic Violence Bill in 2011, the Child Justice Bill is being reviewed. This bill will govern issues of young people in conflict with the Law. Additionally, amendments to the sexual offences provisions of the Criminal Code are under consideration as well as the issue of sexual harassment and child maintenance.

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, decisive action will be taken to end all forms of gender based violence, the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Key actions will include the finalization of the National Gender Policy, the conduct of training courses to empower unemployed and under employed women and ensuring compliance with relevant international Treaties and Conventions.

EDUCATION

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, recognizing the strategic importance of our human resources, my Government continues to enhance the educational curriculum, the physical infrastructure, the quality and capacity of teachers and our management process. We are on target towards the full implementation of universal secondary education during the year 2012 and training for the preparation of the Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment has commenced.

Our teacher education programme will continue. This programme will accelerate with the current development of a conceptual framework for the upgrading to the bachelors level, through the introduction of a mix-mode programme with the St. George's University.

The rehabilitation of our schools will continue with sixteen identified for such action. These include the Holy Cross RC, the St. Patrick Anglican,

St. Joseph Convent, St. George's, the Grenville Secondary, and the Mt. Rose SDA Comprehensive. Similarly, there will be an expansion of programmes for certification of NVQ and CVQ inclusive of programmes for Prior Learning Assessment, Prisons and TAMCC School of Continuing Studies.

CONCLUSION

Madam President, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, my Government approaches our fourth year in Government with renewed vigour and commitment as we continue to implement our articulated development agenda for Grenada. Despite the lingering economic uncertainty that pervades the world, Grenada is holding its own. We are making incremental progress. We have stemmed the growth slide and we are laying the foundations for a better, diversified economy.

However, many challenges remain. We have to treat urgently with our debt sustainability situation as a priority and we will. In doing so, we will continue to put Grenada first and adhere to our core values of transparency, accountability and good governance. We will continue to listen and exhibit care and sensitivity to our people's needs.

Inspired by the outstanding performance of our world champion Kirani James, my Government intends to complete its first term in office much stronger than we started.

What is now required is the collective and united commitment of all Grenadians in this process of nation building. That is why we look expectantly towards a productive Parliament.

Let us do it together.

May God bless our nation.

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