



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FOREIGN TRADE

GOVERNMENT OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

# DIPLOMATIC COURIER

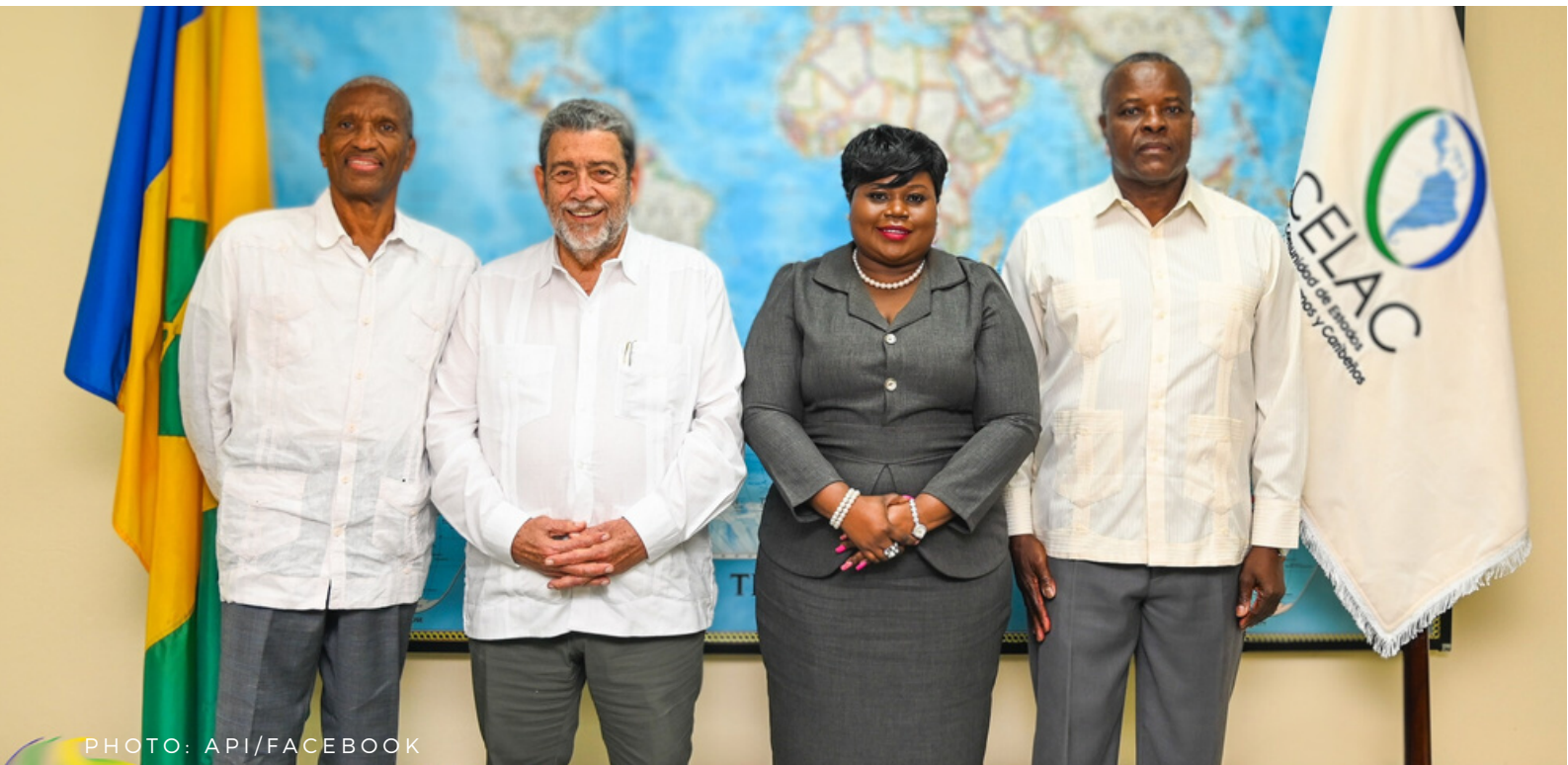


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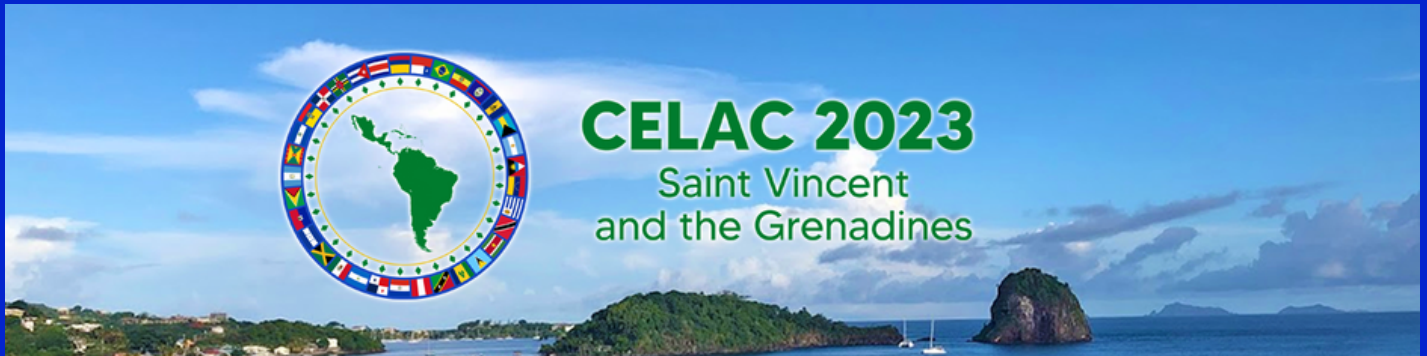
# CELAC 2023

## Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

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# SVG is the first CARICOM country to assume the Pro Tempore President of CELAC



*L-R: Dr. Hon. Ralph E. Gonsalves; Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Santiago Cafiero - Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of the Argentine Republic, Hon. Keisal Peters; Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.*

Having achieved unanimous support, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is the first CARICOM country to assume the Pro Tempore Presidency of the Community of Latin American and the Caribbean States (CELAC) for the period 2023.

At the Seventh Summit of Heads of State and Government convened in Buenos Aires, Argentina on January 24, 2023, the thirty-three (33) member organisation consented to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines being the Pro Tempore President for one year.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines' delegation was headed by Dr. the Honourable Ralph E. Gonsalves; Prime Minister, other members included: Senator the Honourable Keisal Peters; Minister Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, His Excellency Gareth Bynoe; Ambassador for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines-Resident in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and His Excellency Ambassador Andreas Wickham.



*Dr. Alberto Fernández; President of the Argentine Republic and Dr. Hon. Ralph E. Gonsalves; Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines*

## Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade made inaugural visit to the Republic of China (Taiwan)



*Hon. Keisal Peters; Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of St. Vincent and the Grenadines speaking at welcoming ceremony at the "Empower Women! Empower LAC!" Forum.*

On February 14 2023, The Honourable Keisal Peters, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade made her inaugural visit to the Republic of China (Taiwan).

Minister Peters attended The "Empower Women! Empower LAC!" Forum pertaining to the ongoing project "Assisting the Economic Empowerment of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean in the Post-Pandemic of COVID-19 Technical Assistance for Women's Employment and Entrepreneurship and Financial Inclusion". Through the ambit of bilateral cooperation, the Government of the Republic of China (Taiwan) has supported this project. To date, hundreds of Vincentians have benefitted from this programme.



*Hon. Keisal Peters; Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade met with Her Excellency Tsai Ing-wen; President of the Republic of China (Taiwan) during her inaugural visit to Taiwan in February, 2023*

On January 26, 2023, Memoranda of Understanding was signed to support the Women's Empowerment Programme in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) with several local Non-Governmental Organisations at the Blue Lagoon Hotel.

During the visit, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade met with Her Excellency Tsai Ing-wen, President of the Republic of China (Taiwan). Minister Peters expressed appreciation to the Government and People of Taiwan for their unwavering support to SVG through the years, in the areas of entrepreneurship, disaster recovery, education and the like. Further, the Minister pledged the continued support of SVG to Taiwan.

## Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade made inaugural visit to the Republic of China (Taiwan)

In her address, President Tsai highlighted the importance of the alliance between SVG and Taiwan for mutual economic development. The President also highlighted the importance of the Women's Empowerment Project as an avenue to achieving such economic development.

In addition to taking part in the "Empower Women! Empower LAC!" Forum, Minister Keisel Peters was given the distinguished honour of cutting the ribbon, signaling the official opening of a reading room, an initiative by the Embassy of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in the Republic of China (Taiwan).

The reading room consists of over forty (40) books authored by Vincentians and is part the Embassy's contribution to encourage reading which falls within mandate of the Government of SVG's education revolution. It is also hoped that this initiative will assist Taiwan in reaching the goal of ensuring that the country is bilingual by the year 2030.

*"In St. Vincent and the Grenadines, education is a very important cornerstone, particularly in our administration, we refer to it as the education revolution. And one of the keys to that revolution is reading."*

-HON. KEISAL PETERS

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FOREIGN TRADE  
OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES. -



H.E. Andrea Bowman, Ambassador of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the Republic of China (Taiwan)



Hon. Keisel Peters; Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade cutting the ribbon to signal the official opening of the reading room housed at Taipei's Diplomatic Quarters

# The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade launches Import-Export guide



(L-R): Mrs. Shernelle Dick-Brazel; Assist. Comptroller - Customs and Excise Department, Ms. Kathy John; Trade Facilitation Officer, Hon. Keisal Peters; Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Mrs. Okolo John - Patrick; Director, Foreign Trade

The Foreign Trade Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade recently launched the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines [Import-Export Guide](#). (Follow link for online version of the guide).

The guide serves as an important tool to facilitate the ease of doing business in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. It gives investors, entrepreneurs, and other interested persons access to valuable information and contact agencies in a one-stop shop.

The document was developed with input from all stakeholders both public and private sectors involved in trading at the border.

The Import/Export Guide is intended to inform traders and the general public on

the legal and procedural requirements for engaging in trade transactions within the borders of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

The Guide fulfills some aspects of St. Vincent and the Grenadines' obligations under the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement Article 1 which states: ***“World Trade Organisation members shall publish trade rules, regulations, and procedures in an easily accessible and non-discriminatory manner so that traders and other interested parties can become acquainted.”***

The Foreign Trade Department will continually work to ensure information is widely available and accessible for all traders.

**H.E. LUIS MANUEL LOPEZ MORENO, AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENPOTENTIARY OF MEXICO, PRESENTED LETTERS OF CREDENCE TO THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES**

H.E. Luis Manuel Lopez Moreno, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of The United Mexican States to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, presented Letters of Credence to H.E. Dame Susan Dougan, GCMG, OBE, Governor General of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines at Government House on Friday, February 24, 2023.

Ambassador Manuel Lopez Moreno also met with Prime Minister; Dr. The Hon. Ralph E. Gonsalves, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade; Senator The Hon. Keisal Peters, Dr. The Hon. Godwin Friday; Leader of the Opposition as well as other high-level officials on the 23rd and 24th February 2023.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and The United Mexican States established diplomatic ties on July 31, 1990. Since then, both countries have maintained fruitful relations and have cooperated in the areas of trade, education, arts and culture. In the area of education, scores of Vincentian students have benefited from both short term and long-term academic training in Mexico in various fields.



*His Excellency Luis Manuel Lopez Moreno, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of The United Mexican States to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines presenting Letters of Credence to Her Excellency Dame Susan Dougan, GCMG, OBE, Governor General of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines*



*L-R: His Excellency Luis Manuel Lopez Moreno, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of The United Mexican States to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Hon. Keisal Peters, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade; Dr. The Hon. Ralph E. Gonsalves, Prime Minister*

## SECONDARY SCHOOLS' TEACHERS ATTACHMENT PROGRAMME IN THE CARICOM SINGLE MARKET AND ECONOMY (CSME)



*(L-R): Mrs. Mrs. Roxanne Williams; Teacher at the St. Vincent Grammar School, Hon. Keisal Peters; Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Mrs. Latoya DeRoche-John; Teacher at the St. Vincent Girls' High School, Ms. Sylvonne Jack; CSME Focal Point for St. Vincent and the Grenadines.*

Two secondary school teachers were selected to participate in a Teacher Attachment Programme facilitated by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat.

Mrs. Latoya DeRoche-John, a teacher at the St. Vincent Girls' High School and Mrs. Roxanne Williams, a teacher at the St. Vincent Grammar School were nominated to participate in the Secondary Schools' Teacher Attachment Programme in the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).

The experienced teachers were assigned to complete their attachment in Trinidad and Tobago during the period of March 6-17, 2023.

The programme was facilitated by the CARICOM Secretariat with assistance

from the 11th European Development Fund (EDF).

The Teacher Attachment programme was geared towards enhancing implementation of and advocacy on the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) in the region and gave teachers regional exposure to enhance learning opportunities for students.

In a subsequent interview on the National Broadcasting Station (NBC Radio), the teachers indicated that the experience allowed for the monitoring of the best practices at the assigned school in an effort to integrate these practices at their respective schools in SVG. Teachers were also given an opportunity to share some of the best practices in SVG with the assigned schools.



## OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE NON-RESIDENT AMBASSADOR OF THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN TO SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES



*(L-r): Dr. The Hon. Ralph Gonsalves; Prime Minister, Hon. Keisal Peters; Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, His Excellency Fernando Nogales; Non-Resident Ambassador of the Kingdom of Spain to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.*

Non-Resident Ambassador of the Kingdom of Spain to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, His Excellency Fernando Nogales paid an official visit to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines from Thursday, January 19 to Friday January 20, 2023.

During the visit, Ambassador Nogales met with high level officials including, Dr. The Hon. Ralph Gonsalves; Prime Minister, Hon. Keisal Peters; Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Hon. Camillo Gonsalves; Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Information Technology, Hon. Saboto Caesar; Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour, as well as members of the private sector.

The meetings explored economic development opportunities between the Kingdom of Spain and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in the areas of transportation, tourism, fisheries and trade.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the Kingdom of Spain has maintained cordial engagement since establishing diplomatic relations on July 12, 1986.

# The World Trade Organisation (WTO) Outcomes of the 12th Ministerial Conference

## TRADE FOCUS

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the only international organization that handles the rules of trade between countries.

Within the WTO, the topmost decision-making body is the Ministerial Conference. This Conference usually takes place every two years to take decisions on all matters under any of the WTO trade agreements.

The WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference, known as MC12, was held in Geneva Switzerland from the 12th - 17th June 2022.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines participated in the Conference with Hon. Kiesel Peters as Head of Delegation and Lead spokesperson on Trade for the OECS.

The conference concluded successfully on the 17th June, 2022 with agreement on a package of key trade initiatives.

The significant outcomes in key areas of interest for St. Vincent and the Grenadines are:

### 1. FISHERIES SUBSIDIES

WTO members have developed an Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies which sets new global rules to curb harmful subsidies and protect global fish stocks, in a manner that also recognises the needs of fishers in developing and least-developed countries (LDCs).

Developing and LDC members stand to benefit from provisions specific to them in the Agreement and from technical assistance and capacity building that shall be provided through the WTO Fisheries Funding Mechanism.

### 2. ECOMMERCE WORK PROGRAMME & MORATORIUM

Honourable Keisal Peters was selected by the WTO Director-General as a Minister-Facilitator for the thematic discussions on Electronic Commerce. WTO members agreed to maintain their current practice of not imposing customs duties on electronic transmissions and to intensify discussions among members on this topic. The moratorium will remain in effect until MC13.

### 3. WTO REFORM

WTO members have agreed to undertake a comprehensive review of the WTO's functions in order to ensure the organization is capable of responding more effectively to the challenges facing the multilateral trading system.

In the MC12 outcome document, Ministers committed members to work towards reform of the organisation to improve all its functions through an open, transparent and inclusive process as well as talks addressing concerns about the WTO Dispute Settlement System.





L-R: Mrs. Okolo John-Patrick; Director of Foreign Trade, Mrs. Nicolette Dalton; Trade Officer 1, Mr. Joel Richards; Senior Technical Specialist, Trade - OECS (Geneva), Hon. Keisal Peters; Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (SVG)

#### 4. WTO RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC INCLUDING IP RESPONSE

In response to the ongoing impact of COVID-19, members adopted a Ministerial Declaration as WTO’s response to the current and future pandemics. This includes a waiver of certain requirements under the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) concerning the use of compulsory licenses to produce COVID-19 vaccines.

The Declaration calls on relevant WTO bodies to continue or initiate work on lessons learned and challenges experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Areas of focus will include export restrictions, food security, intellectual property, regulatory cooperation, services, tariff classification, technology transfer, trade facilitation, and transparency. A yearly stocktaking exercise will take place in the General Council up to the end of 2024.

In parallel, the Ministerial Decision on the TRIPS Agreement provides a platform for members to work together to diversify vaccine production capacity. This outcome also opens the way for technical support from World Health Organisation, World Intellectual Property Organisation, the WTO and others to make full and effective use of all the options.

#### 5. SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY DECLARATION

Ministers adopted a Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Declaration on responding to challenges that may significantly impact international trade in food, animals and plants. The Declaration commits WTO members to launching a work programme to identify new challenges in the implementation of the WTO's SPS Agreement, with the aim of enhancing how the Agreement is applied.

#### 6. WTO WORK PROGRAMME

Ministers also adopted a decision reaffirming the commitment of members to the WTO's Work Programme on Small Economies, which seeks to address the particular challenges facing these economies, including Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

These conclude seven (7) key outcomes from the Ministerial Conference.

The 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12) in Geneva was successfully concluded on 17 June, 2022. The negotiated outcomes known as the “Geneva Package” confirms the historical importance of the multilateral trading system and underlines the important role of the WTO in addressing the world’s most pressing issues.



## VISIT OF UNITED NATIONS' DELEGATION TO SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES



*(L-R Front): Mr. Raul Salazar; Chief of Office for the Americas and the Caribbean (UNDRR), Mrs. Mami Mizutori; Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction and Head of UNDRR, Dr. The Hon. Ralph Gonsalves; Prime Minister, Hon. Keisal Peters; Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Ms. Michelle Forbes, Director - National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO).*

*(L-R Back): Nahuel Arenas, Deputy Chief of Office for the Americas and the Caribbean (UNDRR), Ms. LaFleur Quammie; United Nations Country Coordination Officer, Mrs. Jeanette Elsworth; Chief - Communications, Advocacy, Knowledge Management and ICT (UNDRR), Mr. Luis Buron; Communications and Public Information Assistant for the Americas and the Caribbean (UNDRR).*

A delegation from the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) visited Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in February 2023. The delegation was headed by Mrs. Mami Mizutori; Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction and Head of UNDRR, along with officials from the UNDRR for a high-level meeting with Prime Minister; Dr. The Honorable Ralph Gonsalves.

The meeting was convened to discuss ongoing initiatives with Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, with particular focus on policy

developments in building coherence between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

Additionally, the scope for discussions included the “Making Cities Resilient (MCR2030) initiative” that was implemented in Arnos Vale and the advancement of a Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems agenda, and other pertinent matters.



*Dr. The Hon. Ralph Gonsalves presents plaque to Mrs. Mami Mizutori; Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction and Head of UNDRR*

# SCHOOL VISITS 2023

*The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade hosted its annual School Visits Programme from March 20 to 29 2023. The School Visits Programme is geared towards the sensitization of form four students about the work of the Ministry while providing career options for students who may be interested in Foreign Policy and/or Foreign Trade.*

*Approximately 700 students were involved in the 2023 Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, School Visits Programme.*



# SCHOOL VISITS 2023



Nothing like a little Macarena to end this week's school visits. 🇹🇼



## THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA DONATES BUSES TO THE GOVERNMENT OF ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES



The Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines tremendously appreciates the support of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia in deepening of bilateral relations and the thrust to advance the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals; particularly SDG 4 - Quality Education and SDG 17 - Partnership for the Goals.

The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is the recipient of two (2) school buses (One Toyota Coaster Bus and One Toyota Hiace Commuter) which were donated from the Government of the Republic of Indonesia to support student mobility across the length and breadth of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The buses are used to transport secondary school students from Chateaubelair in the Northwest and Sandy Bay and communities en route to Georgetown in the northeast to the capital city Kingstown. The donations were facilitated through the Ministry of Transport, Works, Land and Surveys, and Physical Planning in 2022 and 2023.

Both buses currently accommodate approximately fifty-two (52) students daily and support students attending the Thomas Saunders Secondary School, the St. Martin's Secondary School, the St. Joseph's Convent Kingstown, St. Vincent Girls' High School and the St. Vincent Grammar School.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the Republic of Indonesia formally established diplomatic relations on November 30, 1993 and will be celebrating the 30th anniversary in November 2023.



## MOROCCAN DELEGATION VISITS SVG



*(L-r): Mr. Driss Bettache - Director, African and International Partnerships at the Office of Vocational Training and Promotion of Employment (OFPPT), Mrs. Sandy Peters-Phillips - Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Ms. Hala Bensaghir - Desk Officer Officer at the Office of Vocational Training and Promotion of Employment (OFPPT), Hon. Keisal Peters - Minister, Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Mrs. Soumaya Samlali - Head of International Cooperation Division at the Office of Vocational Training and Promotion of Employment (OFPPT), Mr. Younes Dirhoussi - Diplomatic Advisor at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates, Mrs. Okolo John-Patrick - Director, Foreign Trade - Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Dr. Tamira Browne - Director (Ag), Foreign Policy and Research - Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade.*

A Moroccan delegation headed by Mr. Younes Dirhoussi; Diplomatic Advisor at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates, along with three high-level officials from the Office of Vocational Training and Promotion of Employment (OFPPT) visited Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for a four (4) day visit, from Tuesday, January 10, 2023 to Friday, January 13, 2023.

During the visit, the delegation conducted a series of meetings with high-level officials of the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines including, Dr. The Hon. Ralph Gonsalves; Prime Minister, Hon. Keisal Peters; Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Hon. Camillo Gonsalves; Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Information Technology, Hon. Saboto Caesar; Minister of

Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour, as well as other high-level officials from across the public service.

The meetings were aimed at identifying areas of vocational training to be included in the new roadmap of cooperation that will be signed between the Governments of the Kingdom of Morocco and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The new roadmap will contribute in strengthening the bilateral cooperation between the two countries.



**H.E. ANDRES BENGTÉN  
AMBASSADOR OF THE  
KINGDOM OF SWEDEN TO ST.  
VINCENT AND THE  
GRENADINES PRESENTED  
CREDENTIALS TO THE  
GOVERNOR GENERAL OF  
SAINT VINCENT AND THE  
GRENADINES**

H.E. Andres Bengtcén, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines presented credentials to H.E. Dame Susan Dougan, GCMG, OBE, Governor General of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines at Government House on Wednesday, March 29, 2023.

Ambassador Bengtcén also met with high-level Government Officials, including Dr. The Honourable Prime Minister; Dr. Ralph E. Gonsalves and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade; The Honourable Keisal Peters.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the Kingdom of Sweden have enjoyed over thirty years of cooperation since establishing diplomatic relations on April 2, 1992.



*H.E. Dame Susan Dougan, GCMG, OBE; Governor General of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and H.E. Andres Bengtcén; Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.*



*L-R: H.E. Andres Bengtcén; Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Hon. Keisal Peters, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade; Dr. The Hon. Ralph E. Gonsalves, Prime Minister.*

# HONORARY CONSUL OF MONACO GRANTS ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS TO PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS



Two students from the Kingstown Preparatory School benefitted from academic scholarships granted by the Honorary Consul of the Principality of Monaco to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.



In memory of his late mother; Ms. Maria Pragliola, a former primary school teacher who dedicated her life to teaching in Italy, Mr. Giuseppe Ambrosio; Honorary Consul of the Principality of Monaco to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines granted academic scholarships totaling 500 Euros. The grade four (4) students, Justin Murphy and Blossom McCalom, both expressed tremendous appreciation.



The Maria Camilla Pragliola Scholarship will be granted yearly to two primary school students of good character and good academic standing.



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MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FOREIGN TRADE

GOVERNMENT OF ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

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