



**THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TRADE & COMMERCE**  
**Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**

# **Diplomatic Courier**

Jan — April, 2020 | Issue No.1

**Tribute to the late Sir Frederick  
Nathaniel Ballantyne**

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**SVG takes up seat as UNSC  
Non-Permanent Member**

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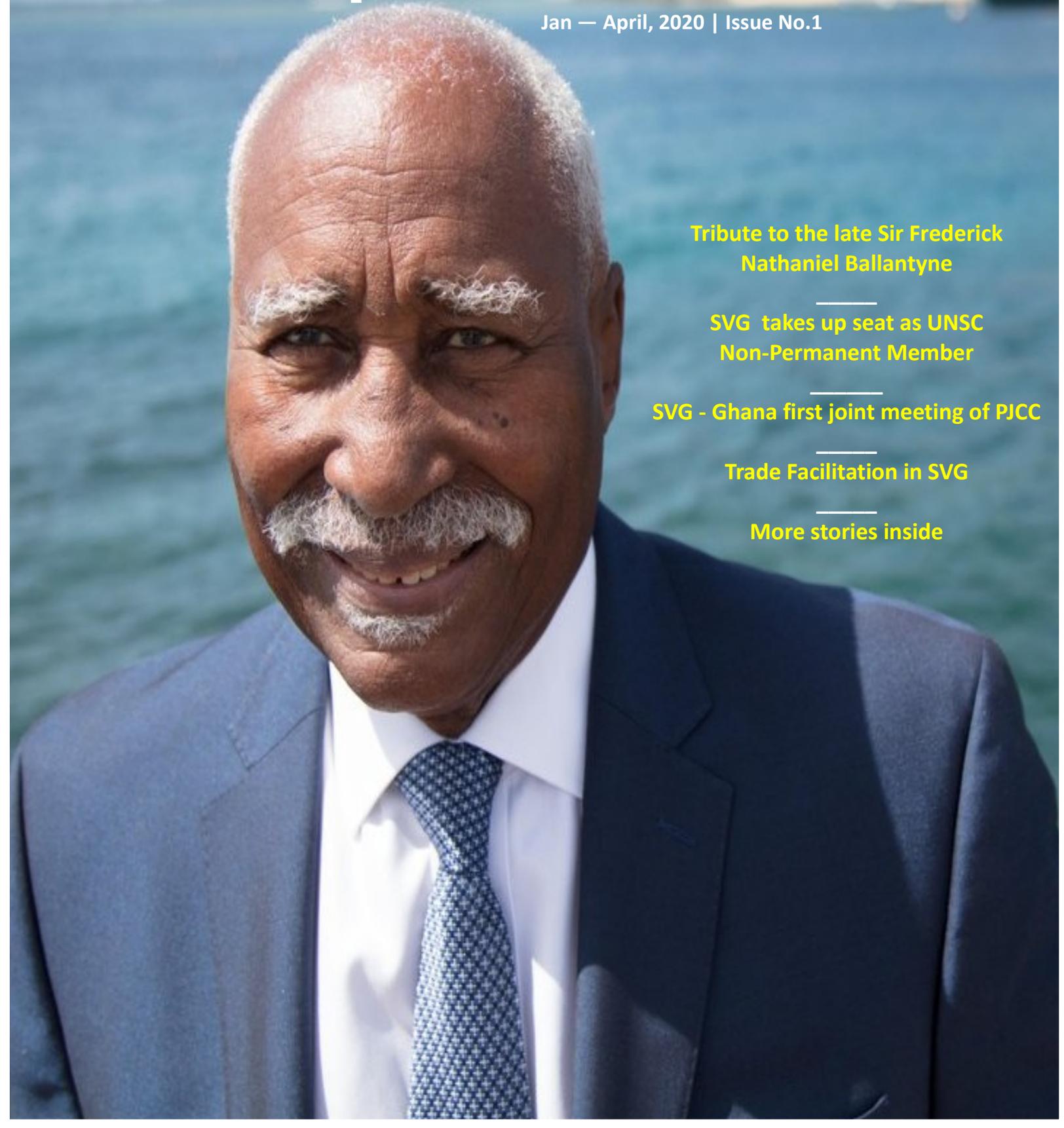
**SVG - Ghana first joint meeting of PJCC**

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**Trade Facilitation in SVG**

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**More stories inside**



## A TRIBUTE TO SIR FREDERICK BALLANTYNE, THE LONGEST SERVING GOVERNOR GENERAL OF ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES



**His Excellency, Sir Frederick Nathaniel Ballantyne,  
GCMC, MD, DSc.**

Sir Frederick's contributions to the field of medicine have been hallowed not only in St. Vincent and the Grenadines but worldwide. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Science (D.Sc.) degree by the University of the West Indies (UWI) in 2009 for his contribution to the field of medicine. He was also honoured in 2013 by Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, New York with a humanitarian award.

Sir Frederick served his country with dignity and with humility and these qualities were evident in every facet of his life, and even to its end. His final request was that he be laid to rest in a coffin made of breadfruit wood, a symbol of pride, humility and nationalism.

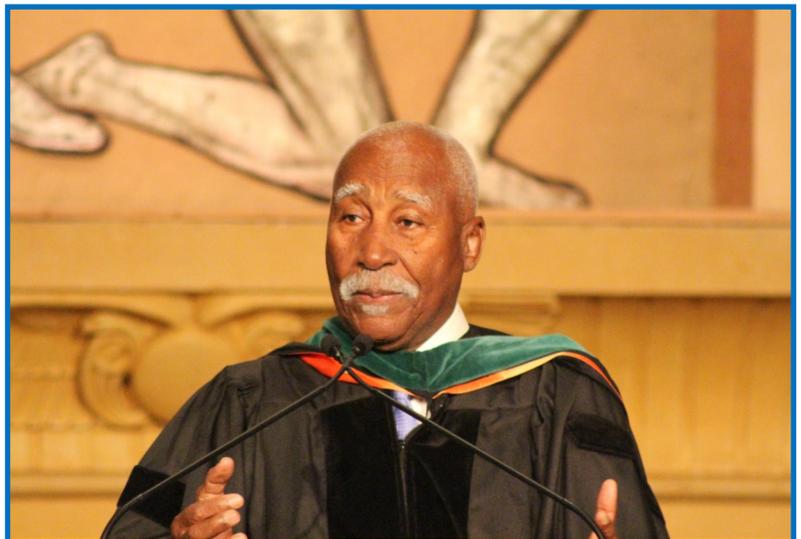
Sir Frederick Nathaniel Ballantyne lived a full life and his legacy will live on in the hearts and minds of Vincen-tians as well as local and international counterparts for generations. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce conveys best wishes to his family and will work to preserve the life and legacy of Sir Frederick.

The Government and People of St. Vincent and the Grenadines recognises the life and legacy of the late His Excellency, Sir Frederick Nathaniel Ballantyne, GCMC, MD, DSc.

Sir Frederick Ballantyne was St. Vincent and the Grenadines' longest serving Governor General, a role he held from September 2002 to July 2019. As a son of the soil, "Sir Frederick" loved St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Vincentians, and worked tirelessly for the development of our blessed homeland.

He was a trained cardiologist and served as Chief Medical Officer for a number of years. Sir Frederick played a pivotal role in facilitating various medical volunteer programmes which allowed Vincen-tians to have access to state of the art-advanced medical care.

One of his most notable contributions to the field of medicine in SVG is the World Pediatric Project (WPP) which has provided free critical medical care for local and regional children; a service that would have otherwise been unavailable. He was also instru-mental in expanding the immunisation programme for children.



**His Excellency, Sir Frederick Ballantyne  
delivering an address at the Trinity School of Medicine's com-  
mencement Ceremony, 2017.**

## SVG TAKES UP SEAT AS NON-PERMANENT MEMBER ON UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL (UNSC) - JANUARY 2, 2020



**The flag of St. Vincent and the Grenadines being raised at the 35th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on September 17, 1980 to signify the country's admission as the 154th Member State of the United Nations.**

*"Today is a historic one not only because we are the smallest nation ever to sit on the United Nations Security Council, but also, perhaps, the urgency of now calls for fresh, disinterested and impartial perspectives on the seemingly intractable problems of our day."* These are the words of Her Excellency, I. Rhonda King, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations in New York, in her address at the United Nations Security Council's flag installation ceremony, as St. Vincent and the Grenadines officially assumed its position as an elected, non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council.

On January 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020, St. Vincent and the Grenadines was formally installed; 40 years after the flag of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines was raised at a ceremony in front of the General Assembly building of the United Nations on 17 September 1980.

The flag of St. Vincent and the Grenadines that was planted at the installation ceremony signifies that SVG is one of 15 members of one of the most powerful organs of the United Nations, and is now tasked with projecting its voice towards matters of global peace and security for the next two years; 2020-2021.

Prime Minister Dr. Hon. Ralph E. Gonsalves, in addressing the 8699th meeting of the United Nations Security Council on: Upholding the

United Nations Charter, January 9, 2020 stated, *"St. Vincent and the Grenadines, is an exemplar of small island exceptionalism."* These words encapsulate the long and tedious campaign towards this high calling and speaks of the resilience, resolve and readiness of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to tackle matters of great international interest.

Matters such as human rights and democracy and matters of direct consequence to the existence of Small Island states – such as Climate Change. The election of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the UNSC strategically places St. Vincent and the Grenadines at the fore of the battle to speak for small islands from the perspective of a small island.

# ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES ATTENDS THE FIRST MEETING OF THE PERMANENT JOINT COMMISSION FOR COOPERATION (PJCC) IN THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA



**Members of the Vincentian and Ghanaian delegation at the Permanent Joint Commission for Cooperation (PJCC) meeting in Accra, Republic of Ghana.**

The inaugural meeting of the Republic of Ghana-St. Vincent and the Grenadines Permanent Joint Commission for Cooperation (PJCC) was held in Ghana from February 11 to 14, 2020.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Hon. Sir Louis Straker, led a high level delegation to the first meeting of the Permanent Joint Commission for Cooperation (PJCC) between the two countries.

The delegation comprised: Hon. Saboto Caesar, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour;

Mrs. Sandy Peters-Phillips, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce; and H.E. Ellsworth I. John, Ambassador of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to Cuba and concurrent High Commissioner Designate to the Republic of Ghana.

The Ghanaian delegation was led by Hon. Shirley Ayorkor Botchway, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration. The other members of the delegation included Hon. Ambrose Dery, Minister of the Interior; Hon. Barbara Oteng Gyasi, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture; Hon. Dr. Sagre Bambangi, Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture in

charge of Annual Crops, Mr. Yoofi Grant, the Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC), and H.E. Napoleon Abdulai, High Commissioner of the Republic of Ghana to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines resident in Havana, Cuba.

The permanent Joint Commission for Cooperation (PJCC) originated from discussions held between Dr. Hon. Ralph E. Gonsalves, Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana, when Prime Minister Gonsalves visited Ghana in November 2018 and signed a General Cooperation Agreement. Discussions for the PJCC continued during the

**Continued on page 5**



**Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between St. Vincent and the Grenadines and The Republic of Ghana**

reciprocal visit by the President Nana Akufo-Addo of the Republic of Ghana to St. Vincent and the Grenadines in June 2019.

The Commission which covered a period of four days of meetings resulted in agreements reached for cooperation in the areas of political policy coordination, agriculture, trade and investment, tourism, culture, health and education.

Additionally, both parties agreed to cooperate in the promotion of the establishment of an Africa, Brazil, Caribbean and Diaspora (ABCD) Commission.

The Government of the Republic of Ghana agreed to assist St. Vincent and the Grenadines in the agricultural sector, particularly in the production of a variety of yams as a major crop; and cocoa for which Ghana is a leading producer in the world.

During the meeting The Honourable Saboto Caesar, Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour, presented on issues and areas for cooperation in root crop production, fisheries, cocoa technology, breadfruit and ackee. The Honourable Minister explained that with Saint Vincent and the Grenadines cementing itself as the bread basket of the Southern Caribbean, there must be deepening of the diversification process. He added that, “we must

ensure that when it comes to food, SVG must be the country where you can get the supply of the widest variety of commodities”.

A draft Air Services Agreement between both countries is under consideration as well as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Tourism, Arts and Culture, and a Memorandum of Understanding with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) to enhance collaboration including the development of root crop varieties and conduct research on some plants which may possess medicinal properties.

The Minister for Tourism, Arts and Culture of Ghana was scheduled to travel to St. Vincent and the Grenadines within the following two months to facilitate the finalization of the Memorandum of Understanding related to Tourism, however plans have been postponed due to result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines agreed to grant five (5) scholarships for nurses from Ghana to undertake specialised training in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. This programme however, would come into effect until 2021. The next meeting of the PJCC is scheduled to take place in St. Vincent and the Grenadines during the first quarter of 2022.



## SECOND PHASE OF THE NURSING RECRUITMENT PROGRAMME COMPLETED BY THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES (NHS) OF THE UNITED KINGDOM



Section of the candidates (unemployed registered nurses) at the briefing session for the recruitment process.

In January 2020, officials from Health Education England (NEE) conducted a one-week recruitment exercise in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Sixteen (16) of the registered nurses from the first phase of the recruitment left for the UK in March 2020, and will take up positions at various hospitals in the UK. These include East Lancashire Hospitals, Lancashire Care, Morecambe Bay, Lancashire Teaching Hospitals and Blackpool Hospitals.

The Global Learners Programme for the second time returned to SVG to conduct phase 2 of the recruitment of registered nurses to the United Kingdom from February 25—27, 2020. The recruitment commenced with a general information session at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce's Conference Room which provided in-depth details to the applicants. The interview sessions commenced thereafter and continued throughout the week. A total of forty-five candidates were interviewed and twenty-nine (29) candidates were selected and offered a post at Leeds Teaching Hospitals in United Kingdom.



Ms. Michelle Thompson - Head of the Global Learners Programme, Global Engagement Directorate at HEE briefing the candidates on Monday Feb 24, 2020 before the interview sessions.

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The initiative of the recruitment of unemployed nurses came in effect as a result of an agreement which was concluded on December 7, 2018 between the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Health Education England (HEE). The agreement provides for the recruitment of unemployed Vincentian nurses to the National Health Services of the United Kingdom to be trained and gain experience that will be used in the future to improve healthcare delivery in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. In addition to the long-term recruitment of nurses, the agreement also provides for short-term placements for five (5) to ten (10) employed nurses per year from St. Vincent and the Grenadines to work in the UK for a period of six (6) months. Upon completion of the short-term placements, nurses must return to St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Approximately five (5) nurses per year from the United Kingdom will be seconded for periods of between four (4) to twelve weeks to work in SVG.

The National Health Services (NHS) of the United Kingdom was established in 1948. It is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest employer in the world and employs approximately 1.3 million people. The Global Learners Programme is the only UK Government accredited international recruitment of nurses programme.

The National Health Services officials conducted its recruitment in other countries including India, Dubai and the Philippines. St. Vincent and the Grenadines is the only country in the Caribbean to have been offered in country recruitment services by HEE.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce and the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, expressed its appreciation to the Government of the United Kingdom and officials at Health Education England for their continual support and partnership to the health care development of this country.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce and the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, expressed its great appreciation to the Government of the United Kingdom and officials at Health Education England for their continuous support and partnership to the health care development of this country.



**Ms. Linda Johnson, Maron for Abdominal, Medicine and Surgical specialties briefing the candidates on Monday February 24, 2020 before the interview session.**



**Hon. Sir Louis Straker, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce giving brief remarks at the climax of the interview session on Thursday February 27, 2020.**



**Hon. Sir Louis Straker and Ms. Michelle Thompson with other officials from HEE and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade & Commerce.**



**Participants and Facilitators of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Empowerment Program (Second Phase)**

## TRADE FACILITATION IN SVG - THE BENEFITS

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) Members concluded negotiations on the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) at the ninth Ministerial Conference held in Bali, Indonesia in December 2013. The objective of this Agreement is to boost global trade by expediting the movement, the release and clearance of goods, including goods in transit.

The TFA has huge potential to reduce trade costs thereby boosting trade between countries and raising world income. Developing countries especially are expected to realize the biggest gains since they currently face some of the largest obstacles in trading procedures at the border. Some studies have suggested that developing countries trade costs will fall by as much as 15%, while households will gain access to a greater variety

of goods and companies will source inputs at a lower cost and benefit from better entry to foreign markets.

The TFA entered into force on 22 February 2017 when the WTO obtained acceptance of the Agreement from two thirds of its 164 Members. The entry into force of this Agreement launches a new phase for trade facilitation reforms all over the world.

The TFA is divided into three sections:

Section 1 contains approximately thirty six measures set out in twelve Articles. These are border related procedures that set out processes and obligations that governments must implement in order to provide transparency, fairness, streamlined clearance

procedures and help to reduce administrative costs.

Section 2 consists of special provisions that allow developing and least developed countries (LDC) to implement the Agreement at their own pace. Each Member can determine when it will implement each of the technical provisions and can identify provisions that can only be implemented upon receipt of technical assistance and support for capacity building.

In order to benefit from these implementation flexibilities, Members must notify the other WTO Members when it will implement each trade measure using one of three categories.

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**Category A** - provisions that are already being implemented at the time the Agreement entered into force.

**Category B** - provisions that a Member will implement after a transitional period.

**Category C** - provisions that can only be implemented upon the receipt of technical and financial assistance and support for capacity building.

Section three speaks to the establishment of a permanent committee on trade facilitation at the WTO and also requires Members to have a national Committee to facilitate domestic coordination and national implementation of the Agreement.

In 2013, with assistance from United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD), a categorization of measures was conducted and resulted in the identification of eighteen category A, four Category B and sixteen Category C measures. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines ratified the TFA in January 2017 and has since met all required notifica-

tion deadlines. Additionally, with funding from the International Trade Centre (ITC), project proposals for all sixteen category C measures were developed to present to potential donors for funding to implement the measures.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines established a national committee since 2011 during the negotiation phase of the Agreement and the Committee comprises of all public and private stakeholders involved in trading at the borders.

The overall aim of the national committee is to provide policy guidance on trade facilitation reforms, support the implementation of operational solutions and formulate strategies in line with the National Development Strategy, regional and international obligations.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce along with the National Trade Facilitation Committee successfully hosted the UNCTAD Empowerment Program. This program, through financial assistance from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs of the United Kingdom

commenced in November 2018 with the first face to face module, followed by a series of online modules from September to November 2019 and concluded with the second face to face module in February 2020.

An overall total of twenty six persons participated in this program which was geared to enhancing the country's capacity to respond to the implementation requirements of the WTO TFA by developing a Roadmap for trade facilitation implementation and a comprehensive knowledge management strategy for the effective functioning of the National Committee.

Presently, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines continues to work assiduously in collaboration with all national, regional and international stakeholders towards successful implementation of all necessary trade reforms to fulfill the obligations of the Trade Facilitation Agreement.



**Clariesse Chan-Proeller**  
**Workshop Facilitator**



**Representatives of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Friends (Reading) and the St. Vincent and the Grenadines New London Association with local Head Teachers**

VINCENTIANS  
IN THE UNITED  
KINGDOM  
DONATE TO  
SVG SCHOOLS  
FOR CHILDREN  
WITH SPECIAL  
NEEDS

The Vincentian diaspora in the United Kingdom continues to make monetary contributions as tangible investments in developing the local education system.

In a short ceremony held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce on Tuesday, March 5, 2020. The St. Vincent and the Grenadines Friends Association (Reading) and the St. Vincent and the Grenadines New London Association donated a combined sum of EC\$6,825.00 to the three (3) Schools for Children With Special Needs in SVG. The SVG Reading Association donated EC\$3,150.00 while SVG New London Association donated EC\$3,675.00.

Ms. Michelle Stowe, Head Teacher, received the donation on behalf of the Bequia Sunshine School for Children with Special Needs, Teacher Ms. Sattria Phillips received the donation on behalf of the School for children with Special Needs, Georgetown, while Ms. Naseem Smith, Headteacher received the donation on behalf for the School of Children with Special Needs, Kingstown.

During the ceremony, Hon. Sir Louis Straker, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce highlighted the very important work that is being done through the SVG High Commission in London under the auspices H.E. Cenio Lewis and his staff; especially in collaboration with the Vincentian diaspora in the UK. Minister Straker expressed gratitude to Mr. Dudrey Browne, Vice Chair of the SVG and Friends Association, UK and Mr. Denzil Winsborrow, Chairman, New London Association, UK for the in generous donations to the schools.

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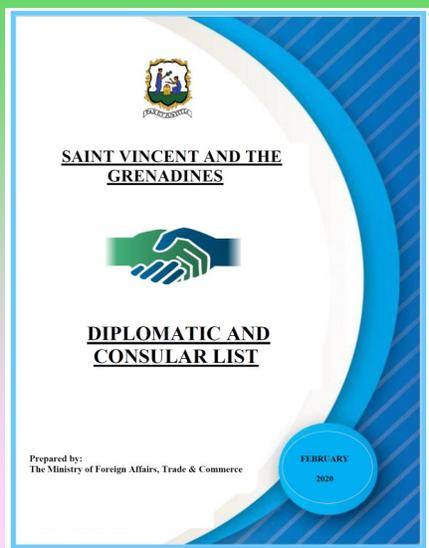
H.E. Cenio Lewis also gave brief remarks and expressed that the donation though it may seem infinitesimal, he would like the public to understand that the principle behind the donation is of utmost importance.

The principle of giving back to your country, especially to the needs of the most vulnerable is highly commendable. High Commissioner Lewis emphasized that in the future when funds are collected from the Associations to be distributed to schools in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, that donation will be distributed to the School for Children with Special needs along with other schools in the country.



The donation to the Schools for Children with Special Needs would be used to purchase several items to assist the children's educational development. These include textbooks and teaching aids for Bequia; materials for an art project and multisensory equipment for Kingstown; and garden tools, fabric, crayons and playground equipment for Georgetown.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce and the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, expressed gratitude to the SVG Friends Association (Reading), England and the SVG New London Association for their continuous efforts in contributing to the economic development of this country be it healthcare, education or otherwise.



**You can view the New Edition of the Diplomatic and Consular List of St. Vincent and the Grenadines**  
<http://www.foreign.gov.vc/foreign/>

## SVG'S CHAIRMANSHIP FOR REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL BODIES

### **CARIFORUM - June 2019 - 2020**

**St Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) assumed its role as Chair of the Caribbean Forum of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group and States (CARIFORUM) for a one-year period from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020.**

The Chairmanship role rotates annually in alphabetical order among the CARIFORUM Member States of Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

CARIFORUM was established to manage and coordinate relations between the Caribbean States which are signatory to the Lomé (New Cotonou) Convention. Its remit includes programming and managing implementation of regional resources made available to the Caribbean region by the EU through the European Development Fund (EDF), coordination of implementation of the CARIFORUM/EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), managing CARIFORUM/EU Political Dialogue, promoting Intra-CARIFORUM cooperation as well as promoting CARIFORUM relations with British, Dutch and French Overseas, territories, departments and collectivities in the Caribbean. There have been four (4) meetings convened since St. Vincent and the Grenadines assumed chairmanship.

### **Non-Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC)**

#### **January 1, 2020 - December 31, 2021**

**St. Vincent and the Grenadines commenced its tenure as non-permanent member (Group for Latin America and Caribbean (GRULAC) ) on the United Nations Security Council for the period of January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2021.**

St. Vincent and the Grenadines has to date been the smallest Member State in terms of population and territorial mass, to be elected to serve on this very important organ of the United Nations. In keeping with the theme of "Friends of All: We Strive for a Better World", St. Vincent and the Grenadines is committed to reconditioning the traditional narratives on security by bringing to the fore the particular vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States (SIDS). As such, St. Vincent and the Grenadines will work tirelessly towards addressing the unique vulnerabilities of SIDS, especially as it relates to the nuanced and unprecedented challenges posed by climate change. The recognition of the link between climate change, and economic and human security is an absolute imperative for the survival of SIDS.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines will continue to actively promote the principles of sovereign equality and respect for international law, non-interference and non-intervention, collective cooperation in solving global problems, as well as the concept of small island exceptionalism. Moreover, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines will seek to work with fellow Council Members, over the period, to address issues of international peace and security, particularly those which concern Africa, the Middle East and Latin America.

## SVG'S CHAIRMANSHIP FOR REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL BODIES

### **Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC)**

**April 2020 - April 2022**

**St. Vincent and the Grenadines chairs the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee from April 2020 to April 2022.**

The Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) is an organ of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). The Committee was established in 1975 pursuant to ECLAC resolution 358(XVI) to promote and strengthen economic and social cooperation and integration among the countries of the Caribbean and to promote cooperation between them and the countries and integration processes of Latin America and the Caribbean.

ECLAC, which is headquartered in Santiago, Chile, is one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations. It was founded with the purpose of contributing to the economic development of Latin America and the Caribbean region, coordinating actions directed towards this end, and reinforcing economic ties among countries and with other nations of the world. The promotion of the region's social development was later included among its primary objectives.

### **Caribbean Community (CARICOM)**

**July 2020 - December 2020**

**St. Vincent and the Grenadines' Chairmanship of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) is scheduled to run from July 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020.**

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) is comprised of 20 diverse countries: 15 Member States and 5 Associate Member States and stands on four main pillars: economic integration, foreign policy coordination, human and social development, and security. It is from these pillars the community derives its objectives which include inter alia: improved standards of living and work, accelerated, coordinated and sustained economic development and convergence and the enhanced coordination of Member States' foreign and foreign economic policies and enhanced functional cooperation.

The signing of the Treaty of Chaguaramas on July 4, 1973 marked the establishment of CARICOM. The treaty was later revised in 2002 to facilitate the establishment the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).

As the oldest integration organisation in the Caribbean, CARICOM is a respected voice in international fora and can boast of many achievements in education, in health, in culture and in security.

# HER EXCELLENCY, DAME SUSAN DOUGAN, GOVERNOR GENERAL OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES RECOGNIZED AS ONE OF THE TOP INFLUENTIAL WOMEN IN THE CARIBBEAN

## Women's History Month

*We salute these Caribbean women leaders who have made history in Caribbean politics!*



Her Excellency Susan Dougan  
Governor General of St. Vincent and the Grenadines



## SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES' GOVERNOR GENERAL

## HER EXCELLENCY, DAME SUSAN DOUGAN, GCMG, OBE.

Her Excellency, Dame Susan Dougan, Governor General of St. Vincent and the Grenadines was recognized as one of the Top 5 Influential Caribbean Women by *Everybody's New York Magazine* issued in March 2020.

Dame Susan was officially sworn-in as Governor General on August 2, 2019 becoming the first woman in the country to assume this office.

In an interview with the Magazine, the Governor General noted that she feels "honoured, privileged and humbled to have been chosen to be Head of State of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines." She further noted that being Head of State provides her with the opportunity to reach out to organisations and institutions to provide support and various forms of advocacy.

When asked if women and teenage girls are given as much of an equal opportunity to succeed as their male counterparts, she was quoted as saying, "Teenage girls are offered equal opportunities to their male counterparts. The Government's policy of universal access to secondary education makes provision for seamless transition of all students from primary to secondary school at 11+."

She further stated that while equal opportunities are offered to both males and females, females generally appear to make use of the opportunities provided as the secondary level and pursue education and training at the post-secondary level to acquire the skills that will give them the competitive edge in the workplace as such, there is a higher percentage of females in the public service at the management level.

Dame Susan was one of the other four other influential women including Prime Minister of Barbados, Mia Mottley, President Paula-Mae Weekes of Trinidad and Tobago, Governor-General Cécile La Grenade of Grenada and Governor General Sandra Mason of Barbados.

The Ministry is indeed proud of Dame Susan Dougan's accomplishment and wishes her continuous success in her tenure as Head of State.

# SVG-UN SECURITY COUNCIL TEAM MAKE STRIDES AMIDST COVID-19 PANDEMIC



**St. Vincent and the Grenadines' UN Security Council Team with Prime Minister, Dr. The Hon. Ralph E. Gonsalves and Foreign Minister Sir. Louis Straker.**

As the world continues to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated effects, the Vincentian team at the United Nations continues to make great strides as part of its obligation as a member of the UN Security Council.

The month of March saw various contributions by the team. These are some of the contributions made by the SVG-UN Security Council team.

**Peace and Security in Africa:** The SVG-UN Security Council collaborated with African Colleagues Tunisia, Niger and South Africa (A3)+1 to deliver a joint statement about terrorism and violent extremism in Africa. The joint statement addressed a number of issues as well as strategies that need to be implemented to tackle terrorism in Africa including: addressing the various means of support for terrorism, addressing the fundamental causes of conflict such as socioeconomic marginalization and addressing the connection between terrorism and organized crime;

strengthening the regional coordination.” A presidential statement was subsequently adopted.

**Iraq:** The delegation reinforced its position regarding issues related to conflict and development in Iraq and called for both to be addressed simultaneously. Further, the delegation emphasized the need for urgent economic and social reconstruction of Iraq. Finally, it was reiterated that the international community has a responsibility to provide Iraq with support to ensure they materialize their future possibilities across the peace, security and development nexus.

**Informal Working Group (IWG) on Documentation and other Procedural Questions:** Under the chairmanship of Her Excellency Rhonda King, Permanent Representative, a committee meeting was held on March 6 to discuss among other things balancing efficiency, effectiveness and transparency in the council's work. The meeting also addressed other issues to be explored over the next

two years.

**Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC):** During a video conference of the peace keeping mission in DRC, the A3+1 (Tunisia, Niger and South Africa and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) delivered a joint statement reiterating their support to the government and people of DRC. The statement encouraged the government to formulate a framework that supports the country's return to peace and security and to economic and social development with the support of the United Nations, the countries of the region and the international community.

During the month of March several meetings were held to address the technical readiness of the council to address and operate within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic given the council's inability to meet.



**Her Excellency, I. Rhonda King, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations in New York**

# UPDATE FROM THE EMBASSY OF SVG IN THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA (TAIWAN)



## Post- Christmas lunch hosted by the Vice Minister of Economic Affairs, Ms Wang Mei-Hua

On January 2, 2020, new scholarship recipients and Minister Counsellor Elroy Wilson were treated to a post- Christmas lunch hosted by the Vice Minister of Economic Affairs, Ms Wang Mei-Hua. Students were invited to share their experiences in Taiwan since they arrived in August 2019. Students were also treated to several authentic Taiwanese dishes. Brief remarks were made by Minister Mei-Hua and Minister Counsellor Wilson, where both reiterated the lasting friendship between both countries. The luncheon was also attended by Ms Peggy Carr, SVG's Cultural Ambassador who resides in Taiwan.

## Seed Instructor Training: The Capacity Building Project for The Prevention and Control of Diabetes in St Vincent and the Grenadines



On 6<sup>th</sup> January, 2020, Minister Counsellor Elroy Wilson attended the opening ceremony for Seed Instructor Training of The Capacity Building Project for the Prevention and Control of Diabetes In St Vincent and the Grenadines. Brief remarks were given by Minister Counsellor Wilson and Ms Cathy Wang, Director of Humanitarian Assistance Department, Taiwan ICDF.

The ceremony marked the opening of a training session geared towards preparing health practitioners to better deal with diabetes; one of the number one life style diseases in St Vincent and the Grenadines and the Caribbean region. The training was attended by five (5) health professionals from St Vincent and the Grenadines. These were: Chief Nursing Officer,

Peggy Da Silva and four Family Nurse Practitioners; Alisa Edwards, Laura Alfred, Neleycer Billiny-Jack and Lydia Ollivierre-Bess.

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# UPDATE FROM THE EMBASSY OF SVG IN THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA (TAIWAN)

## The Embassy of SVG in R.O.C. became an Advisor to Happy Homes World Alliance International



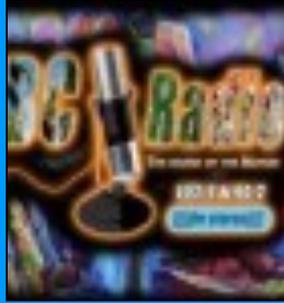
**Ambassador Andrea Bowman, Minister Counsellor Elroy Wilson and Happy Homes World Alliance International Representatives.**



On January 20, 2020, Her Excellency Andrea Bowman, Ambassador of SVG in the Republic of China, Taiwan, became an Advisor to Happy Homes World Alliance International (HHWAI) in its quest to hold a 60-Country UN Forum for Young Leaders in August, 2020 in New York City.

HHWAI is an inter-faith NGO committed to strengthening the family by promoting the values of T.A.B.L.E (the family table of Talk; Accept; Bless; Listen and Enjoy).

This values are encouraged among young leaders who would then be able to influence other young persons.



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*Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce*

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