

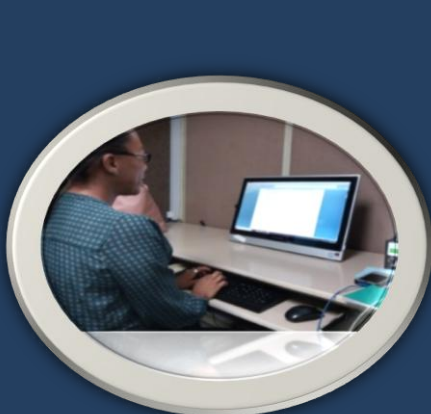


THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TRADE & COMMERCE
Of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

ISSUE: 2/2018

Diplomatic Courier

December 2018



INSIDE: * Benefits Of E-Commerce *SVG Strengthening its Diplomatic Ties
* SVG's Centennial Celebrations to commemorate the Life and Legacy of Nelson Mandela *Vincy Innovation Expo, 2018 * Mission Corner and more.



Benefits of E-commerce in SVG

Within the last decade, electronic commerce has grown substantially around the world and is expected to grow rapidly with the advancement of technology.

Individuals might ask, what is electronic commerce or e-commerce? The term 'electronic commerce' is understood to mean the production, distribution, marketing, sale or delivery of goods and services by electronic means. It covers a range of different types of businesses, from consumer based retail sites, to music sites, to business exchanges trading goods and services between corporations. E-commerce is not limited to those types of businesses but has been incorporated in the field of agriculture across the world. E-commerce allows consumers to electronically exchange goods and services eliminating the barriers of time or distance. Currently, e-commerce is one of the most important aspects of the Internet to emerge.

The government of St Vincent and the Grenadines continues to make efforts in developing the infrastructures that will help to facilitate the growth of electronic commerce. There are

a number of Acts in SVG that have been passed in order to enhance the e-commerce environment, these are: Electronic Funds Transfer Act 2014, Electronic Transaction Act 2015, Electronic Filing Act 2015 and Cybercrime Act 2016.

There are a number of advantages to be derived from e-commerce for both consumers and businesses in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, in this issue, we will highlight just a few.

E-Commerce Advantages for Consumers in SVG

1. Convenience:

Products are at the consumer's fingertip once there is a reliable internet connection. Stores such as Amazon, eBay and our local online stores can be accessed at any time without leaving your home.

2. Time Saving:

With e-commerce there is no need for pointless moving from store to store. Once your product has been identified online from the list of products that are available from your seller the next steps are easy as 123.

3. Provides Options:

E-commerce allows consumers to be able to review and compare products from multiple stores. Additionally, it allows the consumer to compare prices in order to

make the best buying decision possible.

E-Commerce Advantages for Businesses in SVG

Increasing Customer Base:

E-commerce allows buyers from around the world to have access to businesses here in SVG all year round. This gives businesses the prospect of increasing their customer's base beyond SVG and the Caribbean because they don't have to travel to access the services of your business.

Rise in Sales: By accessing a larger customer base this allows businesses the possibility of increasing their sales and profitability levels. Additionally, the number of employees required as compared to a physical store may not be needed thus allowing the business to retain more of its earnings.

Reduce Cost: One of the most positive aspects concerning e-commerce to businesses is that it helps owners to reduce a number of costs such as inventory, advertising and marketing, wages, salaries and rent.

In the next edition we will focus on some disadvantages if that may be encountered by consumers and businesses.

SVG Strengthening its Diplomatic Ties

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce added three (3) new envoys to its list of accredited ambassadors as a means of strengthening diplomatic ties with St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The countries are the Republic of El Salvador, the Republic of Ghana, and the Republic of Ecuador.

The Ambassadors of the aforementioned countries were welcomed to this island during the month of July, 2018 to present their letters of credence to the Governor General of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

On Tuesday 17th July, 2018 at Government House, H.E. Raymundo Ernesto Rodriguez-Diaz, Ambassador of the Republic of El Salvador presented his letters of credence to the Governor General, His Excellency Sir Frederick Ballantyne. The Ambassador is accredited to St. Vincent and the Grenadines with residency in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

H.E. Napoloen Abdulai, High Commissioner of the Republic of Ghana also presented his credentials to the Governor General on 23rd July, 2018. On Monday July 30, 2018, H.E. Maria Augusta Calle Andrade, Ambassador of Ecuador presented her letters of credence to Acting Governor General, Mr. Noel Clarke. Both the Ghanaian and the Ecuadorian Ambassadors are resident in Cuba.

All these ambassadors have reaffirmed their countries commitment to enhancing and deepening their cooperation with St. Vincent and the Grenadines within the framework of south-to-south cooperation.

Top Photo Right: H.E. Napoloen Abdulai, High Commissioner of the Republic of Ghana presented his credentials to Sir Frederick Ballantyne, Governor General of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Below Photo: High Commissioner Abdulai and Mrs. Abdulai meeting with Minister, Hon. Sir Louis Straker



Right: H.E. Maria Augusta Calle Andrade, Ambassador of the Republic of Ecuador presented her Letters of Credence to the Acting Governor General of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Mr. Noel Clarke

Left: H.E. Maria Augusta Calle Andrade, Ambassador of the Republic of Ecuador presented her letters of credence to Hon. Sir Louis Straker, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade & Commerce,



H.E. Raymundo Ernesto Rodriguez-Diaz, Ambassador of the Republic El Salvador meeting with Hon. Sir Louis Straker, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs

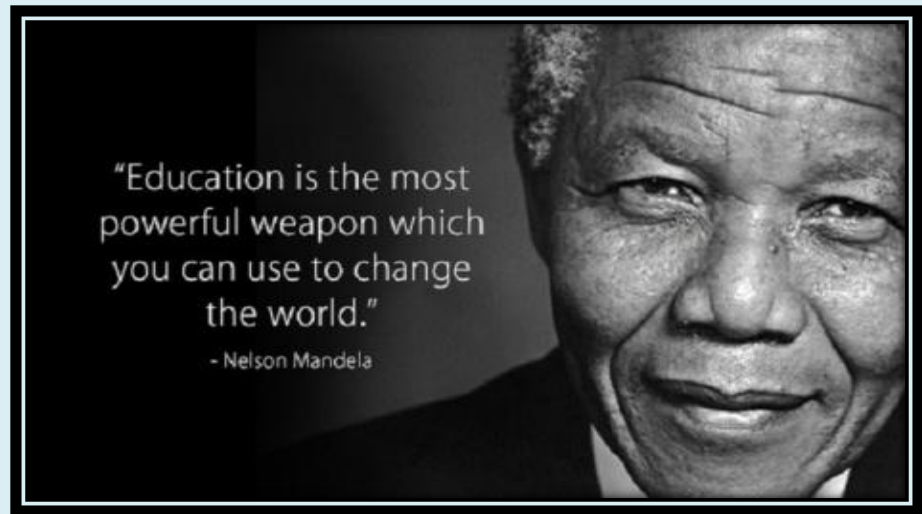
SVG'S CENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS TO COMMEMORATE THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF NELSON MANDELA

Every year on the 18th of July, the day on which Nelson Mandela was born, the United Nations requests that countries around the world pay homage to Nelson Mandela's legacy through service activities. For 67 years, he devoted his life to the service of humanity and became the first democratically elected president of a free South Africa on the 10th of May, 1994, as he led the peaceful transition from apartheid to democracy. In 1996, he signed into law a new constitution for South Africa, based on justice, equality, the rule of law and human rights for all. Nelson Mandela's vision continues to be realised through this constitution, and the government remains committed to pursuing his dreams and aspirations. This year, the Government of South Africa has made a special appeal for governments worldwide to celebrate the centenary of Nelson Mandela's life and legacy.

In order to reflect on Mandela's life and legacy, the Cabinet of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines sanctioned a number of activities to join in the international centennial celebrations. The official launch of these celebrations was on the 11th of June, 2018.

On Sunday the 15th of July, 2018 a centennial relay with 100 legs was ran across Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Participants in the relay included the Honourable Minister of Health, Wellness and the Environment and accomplished long distance



Pamenos Ballantyne. The relay climaxed at the Cruise Ship

Berth in capital city Kingstown, where a Freedom Songs Concert was held which saw performances from several local artistes and cultural groups.

On Monday the 16th of July, 2018 a lecture entitled "Renewing the Mandela Legacy and Promoting Active Citizenship in a Changing World" was held at Frenches House. The lecture was held under the distinguished patronage of Her Excellency X. N Ngwevela - High Commissioner of South Africa. The featured address was delivered by the Honourable Luke Browne who reflected on the life and legacy of Nelson Mandela and the relevance to the Vincentian context.

On Tuesday, 17th of July 2018, there was a showing of the movie "Invictus" at the Russell's Cinema. The movie "Invictus" told the story of Mandela's unification of South Africa through sports, specifically rugby and was attended by

various spheres of the general public.

On July 18th, 2018 the day celebrated internationally as Nelson Mandela Day, persons from the public and private sectors donned their best African attire to pay respect to the impact of Nelson Mandela's legacy, as well as to recognise the ancestral and cultural links that nationals of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the wider Caribbean Community share with the African region.

On this day, a ceremony was held at the Chauncey bus stop to official rename the South Leeward Highway, the Nelson Mandela Highway. The ceremony heard addresses from the Honourable Prime Minister, Dr. The Hon. Ralph E. Gonsalves, the Hon. Sir Louis Straker, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce, the Hon. Julian Francis, Minister of Transport, Works, Urban Development and Local Government, as well as Her Excellency Xoliswa N. Ngewvela, High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa

to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The activities culminated on Friday the 20th of July, 2018 with a special recognition ceremony to highlight the participants in the activities held to celebrate the centennial anniversary of Nelson Mandela.

There is tremendous significance attached to the activities held here in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. They served to deepen the relations between Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the Republic of South Africa. They also paid homage to Nelson Mandela's legacy of reconciliation, freedom and equality. With these celebrations, may we remember the words that Nelson Mandela once spoke: "we must use time wisely and forever realise that the time is always ripe to do right".

**Photo
Highlights
from the
Centennial
Celebrations
to
Commemorate
the Life
and Legacy
of Nelson
Mandela**

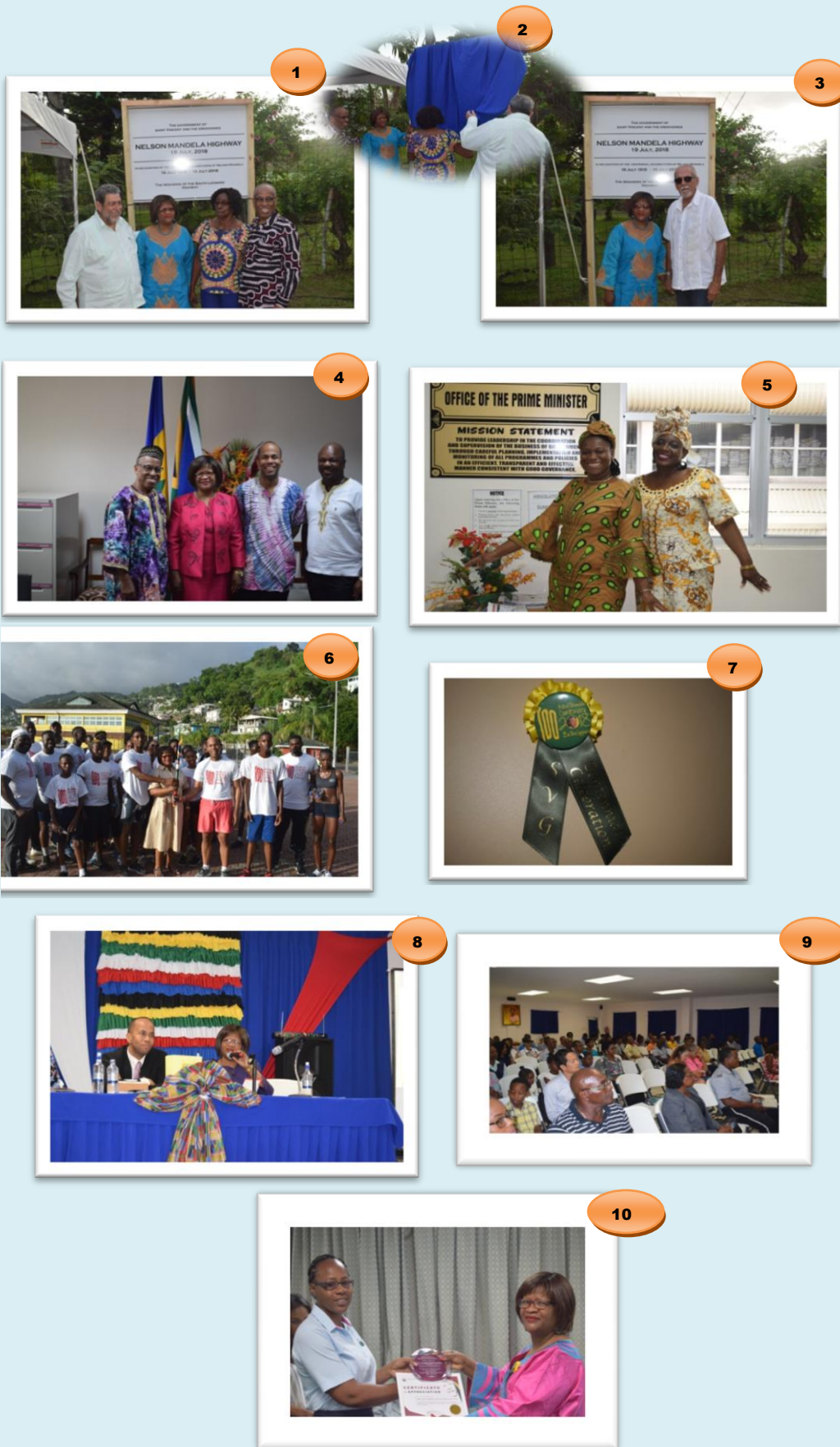


Photo 1,2,3: Renaming of the Leeward Highway to the Nelson Mandela High. Dr. Ralph E. Gonsalves, High Commissioner Ngwevela, Hon. Sir Louis Straker and Hon. Julian Francis were amongst the officials to witness the unveiling. **Photo 4 & 5:** Ministers of Government with High Commissioner Ngwevela and members of the staff of the Prime Minister's office showcased their dress attire for the "Mandela Dress Day". **Photo 6 & 7:** Hon. Luke Browne along with other athletes who took part in the 100 Centennial Relay Races. Each participant was pinned with brooch (photo 7) by High Commissioner Ngwevela. **Photo 8 & 9:** Interactive lecture entitled "Renewing the Mandela Legacy and Promoting Active Citizenship in a Changing World" was held at Frenches House in Kingstown. The Featured address was delivered by Senator the Hon. Luke Browne. At the end of the lecture, an open forum was held. **Photo 10:** Recognition of Winners of the Nelson Mandela Painting Competition & Most Prominent Entity of the Mandela Dress Day was held to climax the Centennial celebrations.

Vincy Innovation Expo, 2018 & Coconut Festival



20, 2018. The Vincy Innovation Expo which is first of its kind under the umbrella of the Ministry promises to be bigger and better in 2019 so as to incorporate other locals who may not have had the opportunity to showcase their products.



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce in conjunction with the Permanent Mission of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations hosted an Exposition in recognition of "World Creativity and Innovation Day" which is celebrated annually on April 21st. The Expo took place at the Alliance-Française in Kingstown on Friday 26th July, 2018. The celebrated event is done to raise awareness of the role of creativity and innovation in problem-solving with the overall goal of sustainable development.

The Ministry wishes to thank the local entrepreneurs for their participation: Jazzy's All Natural, My Crown of Curl, Little Nut Farm, Red Bikini Rum Punch, Lacoda Bath & Sparkles, HH Collections, LinkUp, PaySwif, Duane Andrews, Alana's Design, Vincy Direct, Jaeson Bowens and more. You can find out more of the local innovations on the Ministry's facebook page @mofasvg.



The participants were able to display a wide range of local innovations and creations spanning from the field of Science and Technology, inclusive of Information Technology, Agriculture, and Engineering, various Arts, such as Music, Art Works, Fashion, Culinary Arts, and Local Crafts. The participants were judged on their presentations and products by local judges.



A prize-giving ceremony held was held on Monday August

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVISED TREATY OF CHAGUARAMAS

ARTICLE 164: PROMOTION OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

One of the major principles articulated under the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas establishing the Caribbean Community including the CARICOM Single Market & Economy (CSME), is a distinction between Less Developed Countries (LDCs) and More Developed Countries (MDCs). The consequence of this distinction was a special regime for the LDCs aimed at mitigating economic disadvantages by advancing the prospects for successful competition within CARICOM.

Article 164, as part of this regime, seeks to promote industrial development in the LDCs mainly through the suspension of Community origin treatment to any goods approved by the Council of Trade and Economic Development (COTED) within CARICOM. This translates to higher import duty rates on eligible goods originating from the MDCs and extra-regional countries.

On the 1st of January, 2016, St. Vincent and the Grenadines after approval from the COTED, amended the import duty rates of Aerated Waters, other Waters, Aerated Beverages, Beers, Stouts, and Wheat or Meslin Flour (70% originating from MDCs and 100% originating from third countries). The other goods on the approved list are specify categories of:

1. *Animal feeds*
2. *Paints and Varnishes*
3. *Wooden furniture*
4. *Carbon dioxide, Oxygen & Acetylene*



Participants in attendance at the sensitization workshop on Article 164 held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade & Commerce Conference Room.

5. *Pasta*
6. *Curry Powder*
7. *Candles*

The Article also provides for accompanying support measures for the local industries through institutions such as the CARICOM Development Fund, and the CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality. Through these institutions, the industries can expect to access technical and financial support pending availability and approval from the COTED.

In June 2018, the 74th Special Meeting of the COTED approved a recommendation by the LDCs to allow for the continuation of the provisions of Article 164 post its expiration date of 31st December, 2018. This extension was for five (5) years in the case of Pasta and five (5) years with a review for curry powder and ten (10) years for the other products. This therefore gives the local industries a greater opportunity to put measures in place to ensure that they can be competitive within the CSME.

Throughout this whole process, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce sought to further sensitize the business sector about Article 164 and its implications. Most recently, the Ministry held discussions with a number of businesses throughout St. Vincent and the Grenadines including officials from the Customs and Excise Department, St. Vincent Bureau of Standards and the Department of Industry.

The Ministry also facilitated discussions between manufacturers and importers of Article 164 products and OECS Secretariat officials. These discussions aimed to provide further clarity on the aims and objectives of this special regime in its quest to ensure a competitive CSME.

ECOSOC | NEWS

Inga Rhonda King, President

New York, 26 November-7 December 2018

Participation in International Meetings



The ECOSOC President with Her Majesty Queen Mathilde of Belgium, the UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education and other High-level officials – 4 December

On Tuesday, 4 December, ECOSOC President, Inga Rhonda King delivered an opening statement at the ministerial segment of the Global Education Meeting (GEM) 2018 on the theme “Education in an Interconnected World: Ensuring Inclusive and Equitable Development”. This was the first GEM since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and an occasion to take stock of progress made toward the implementation of SDG 4 on inclusive and equitable quality education.

The ECOSOC President underscored that, besides being a basic human right that everyone should enjoy, education was also central to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. She stressed

the importance for the GEM 2018 to positively contribute to the 2019 High Level Political Dialogue (HLPF) where SDG 4 will be reviewed in depth. The President also urged strong support for the preparation of the SDG Summit in September 2019.

Bilateral Meetings of the President of ECOSOC



The ECOSOC President with the President of the General Assembly – 27 November

On 27 November, ECOSOC President Ambassador, Inga Rhonda King, met with H.E. Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the General Assembly for their monthly meeting. The two Presidents discussed areas of collaboration between the two Charter Bodies of the UN and upcoming meetings scheduled over the next quarter.



SVG Represented at the First UAE-Caribbean Cooperation Forum

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines along with other CARICOM countries and the Dominican Republic were invited to participate in the first UAE-Caribbean Cooperation Forum held in Dubai from November 24-26 2018. The Forum was fully sponsored by the Government of the United Arab Emirates and explored the economic potential of future ties between the United Arab Emirates and the Caribbean. Furthermore, it provided an opportunity for senior business representatives and other high profile delegates to identify emerging drivers for effective partnerships that will yield mutual benefits between the UAE and the Caribbean.

The Forum was centred on the current economic and business related issues and advised on the key strategic directives for

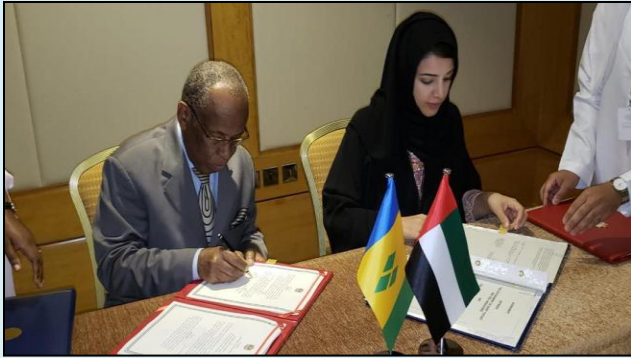
future economic growth between both regions. As a result of the Forum, delegates undertook the following:

- The development of strategic directives for economic growth and development between the UAE and CARICOM;
- The enhancement of networks between key stakeholders from the United Arab Emirates and CARICOM;
- The identification of funding opportunities for various projects and programmes; and
- The establishment of new business opportunities across the United Arab Emirates and the CARICOM region.

In addition, the various representatives at the Forum discussed topics relating to the role of the private sector in building a connected and competitive future, renewable

energy and green innovation: curbing climate change, embracing international cooperation, and the hosting of a successful Expo2020 to be held in Dubai.

The Vincentian delegation was headed by the Hon. Sir Louis Straker, Deputy Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce. Other members of the delegation included the Hon. Camillo Gonsalves, Minister of Finance, Economic Planning, Sustainable Development and Information and Technology, Hon. Cecil Mckie, Minister of Tourism, Sports and Culture, Mrs. Sandy Peters-Phillips, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce, Mr. Glen Beache, CEO Tourism



Authority, Mr. Anthony Regisford, Executive Director of the Chambers of Industry and Commerce, Ms. Shaunelle McKenzie, Culture Ambassador, and Mr. Lance Oliver and Mrs. Ruth Stevens from the business community.


Notably, the visit facilitated the signing of three important agreements that will promote cooperation between Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and

the United Arab Emirates. The Agreements are as follows:


1. Agreement between the Government of SVG and the Government of the United Arab Emirates for the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments;
2. Agreement between the United Arab Emirates and the Government of SVG for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to taxes on income and capital;
3. Participation Contract of EXPO Dubai 2020 between the

United Arab Emirates and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The conclusion of the aforementioned agreements coupled with the recently concluded visa waiver agreement that was signed in May 2018 provide the mechanism for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to explore and develop initiatives and partnerships with businesses, the tourism and creative industries.


The Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines remains committed to deepening relations with its bilateral partners for the benefit of all Vincentians



**THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
TRADE & COMMERCE**



ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION 2019




GROUP PRIZES!

1st Place
Envoy - Trophy, Phone & \$300
Ambassador - Trophy, Phone & \$500

2nd Place
Envoy - Trophy, Phone & \$200
Ambassador - Trophy, Phone & \$400

3rd Place
Envoy - Trophy, Phone & \$100
Ambassador - Trophy, Phone & \$300

 Phone prizes from the Samsung J series


Envoys Category: Age range of 9-13 years

1. What are the benefits of social media to business and trade development? **or**
2. 'A Day in the Life'. Imagine you are your country's Foreign Minister for a day: which countries will you build a relationship with and why? **or**
3. An essential document for travel is the passport. Explain why it is necessary to have a passport. 300 - 600 words


Ambassadors Category: Age range of 14-18 years

1. CSME: is it working? **or**
2. In your view, how can the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) develop strategic action plans to address the future of climate change within Small Island Developing States (SIDS) such as Saint Vincent and the Grenadines? **or**
3. Vincentian citizenship cannot be bought or sold. 1,000 - 1,500 words


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Essays must be submitted - in font size 12, double spaced, Times New Roman - **to email address** svgforeign@gmail.com
Submission deadline : 29th March, 2019



**THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
TRADE & COMMERCE**



ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION 2019




Essay Competition Guidelines

All participants in the Essay Competition must ensure that the following guidelines are followed:

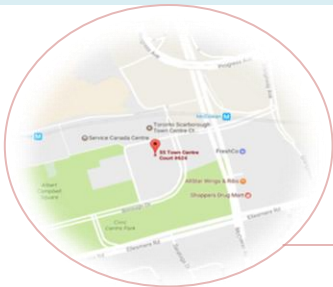
1. The Essay Competition is open only to nationals and residents of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.
2. Each participant must select a category depending on their age by 1st April 2019. Participants in the Envoys category must be born between 1st April 2006 and 1st April 2010 (9 - 13 years) and participants in the Ambassadors category must be born between 1st April 2001 and 2nd April 2006 (14 - 18 years).
3. Submissions must be written in Standard English.
4. Submissions must have a cover page.
5. Submissions must include the following details in the header of the document: Name of Participant, School of Participants, E-mail address, Telephone Number, Word Count.
6. Submissions must include page numbers at the bottom of each page.
7. Plagiarism is not accepted in the competition. All participants guilty of plagiarism will be disqualified. Research is expected but be sure to write the source of your information if necessary.

8. All participants are required to strictly adhere to the word count. In the Envoys category (300 and 600 words) and in the Ambassadors category (1,000 and 1,500 words). Submissions must have a clear Introduction, Body and Conclusion.
9. The final copy submitted for the competition must be the participant's own work and should not be excessively corrected or improved by another person.
10. Participants are only allowed to submit one entry. Once an essay is submitted, there would not be any opportunities for revisions and amendments.
11. Each Participant, through entering the competition, agrees to the publishing of your name and essay on the website and social media pages of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce.
12. Submissions must be typed and in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) or in PDF format (.pdf). Each submission must be typed in Times New Roman font, size 12.
13. All submissions must be made by 5:00 p.m. on Friday 29th March, 2019.
14. All submissions must be made via e-mail to svgforeign@gmail.com.

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Visit Ministry's FB Page for essay questions and prizes
www.facebook.com/mofasvg



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AMBASSADOR: H.E. Ms. Lou-Anne Gilchrist

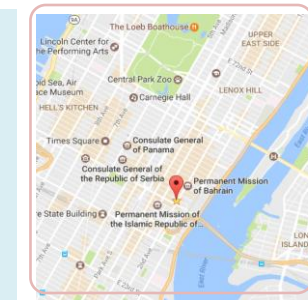


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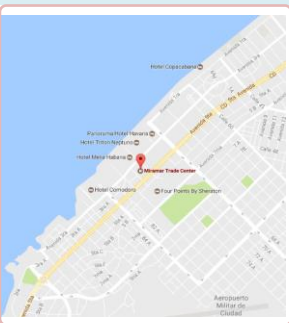


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Overseas Diplomatic Mission and Consulates of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines



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