



GRENADA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

FOURTH SESSION OF THE ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT

OFFICIAL REPORT

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TUESDAY 28TH OCTOBER & TUESDAY 4TH NOVEMBER, 2025

*Sitting of the House of Representatives
held at Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's
on Tuesday 28th October & Tuesday 4th November, 2025*

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***Sitting of the House of Representatives
held at Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's
on Tuesday 28th October & Tuesday 4th November, 2025***

Attendance

PRESENT

Mr. Speaker

Honourable Leo Cato, MP

in the Chair

- | | |
|--|--|
| Honourable Dickon Mitchell, MP
(<i>St. David</i>) | - Prime Minister & Minister for National Security, Home Affairs, Information, Disaster Management & Public Administration, Infrastructure and Physical Development, Public Utilities & Civil Aviation and Transportation |
| Honourable Philip A. Telesford, MP
(<i>St. George South-East</i>) | - Minister for Health |
| Honourable Joseph Andall, MP
(<i>St. Patrick West</i>) | - Minister for Foreign Affairs, Trade & Export Development |
| Honourable Lennox John Andrews, MP
(<i>St. Andrew South West</i>) | - Minister for Economic Development, Planning and Co-operatives, Agriculture & Lands, Forestry and Marine Resources |
| Honourable Tevin Andrews, MP
(<i>Carriacou & Petite Martinique</i>) | - Minister for Carriacou, Petite Martinique Affairs and Local Government |
| Honourable Dennis Cornwall, MP
(<i>St. Patrick East</i>) | - Minister for Finance |
| Honourable Kerryne Z. James, MP
(<i>St. John</i>) | - Minister for Climate Resilience, the Environment and Renewable Energy |
| Honourable Ron Livingston Redhead, MP
(<i>St. George North-East</i>) | - Member |
| Honourable Delma Thomas, MP
(<i>St. Andrew North-West</i>) | - Minister for Youth and Sports, Mental Health, Wellness, and Religious Affairs, with a special focus on the Mt. Gay Psychiatric Hospital |
| Honourable Andy Williams, MP
(<i>St. George South</i>) | - Minister for Mobilisation, Implementation and Transformation |
| Honourable Emmalin Pierre, MP
(<i>St. Andrew South-East</i>) | - Leader of His Majesty's Opposition |
| Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen, MP
(<i>St. Mark</i>) | - Deputy Speaker |
| Honourable Kate Lewis-Peters, MP
(<i>St. Andrew North-East</i>) | - Member |
| Honourable Peter David, MP
(<i>Town of St. George</i>) | - Member |

***Sitting of the House of Representatives
held at Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's
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Attendance

ABSENT

Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith C. Mitchell, PC, MP, JP - Member
(*St. George North-West*)

***Sitting of the House of Representatives
held at Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's
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***Prayers
Minutes***

The Sitting of the House of Representatives began at 9:36 a.m.

Mr. Speaker: Let us pray.

(House Prayer was said)

Mr. Speaker: Join me as we say the Lord's Prayer together.

(The Lord's Prayer was said)

Mr. Speaker: Pray be seated.

(Sound of gavel)

Mr. Speaker: This Parliament is now in session.

Deputy Clerk (Ag.): Item 3 – Oath of Allegiance or Affirmation of a new Member.
Item 4 – Confirmation of Minutes.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of the proceedings of a Sitting of the House of Representatives, held at Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's, on Thursday the 24th of July 2025, at 9:00 a.m., be taken as read.

Question put and agreed to.

Minutes taken as read.

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held at Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's
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Minutes

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of the proceedings of a Sitting of the House of Representatives, held at Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's, on Thursday the 24th of July 2025, at 9:00 a.m., be confirmed.

Question put and agreed to.

Minutes confirmed.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Ceremonial State Opening of the Fourth Session of the Eleventh Parliament held at Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's, on Friday the 12th of September 2025, at 10:00 a.m., be taken as read.

Question put and agreed to.

Minutes taken as read.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business. Just hold. The white noise... I am not sure... All right. Proceed.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Ceremonial State Opening of the Fourth Session of the Eleventh Parliament held at Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's, on Friday the 12th of September 2025, at 10:00 a.m., be confirmed. Thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

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***Minutes
Announcements
Papers and Reports***

Minutes confirmed.

Deputy Clerk (Ag.): Item 5 – Messages from the Governor-General.
Item 6 – Announcements by Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. The first thing I wish to say is to inform the Members of this House that we do have an air conditioning unit issue here in Parliament, so you will feel warmer than usual today. The folks are working on the unit. In fact, the units worked up until yesterday, but when we came in this morning, we found out that they were not working again. So, we do apologise for the unusual warmth in the House.

I also want to inform this Honourable House that the Parliament has secured the majority of vehicles for Parliamentary Representatives, and those vehicles will be distributed in short order.

At this point, as we sit here in Parliament in Grenada, I want us to reflect on our sister island, Jamaica. Hurricane Melissa is actually bombarding the island of Jamaica at a wind speed of 175 miles per hour, so clearly it is a category five hurricane, and it is likely to do a lot of damage in its path.

I invite this Honourable House to join me as we observe one minute of silence. We will contemplate the Lord's Prayer as we think of our brothers and sisters in Jamaica going through this particular experience.

(A moment of silence was observed)

Mr. Speaker: Thank you.

Deputy Clerk (Ag.): Item 7 – Presentation of Petitions.
Item 8 – Presentation of Papers and Reports from Select
Committees.

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*Papers and Reports
Statements by Ministers*

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, given the current circumstances, that our Honourable Members of this House did not receive their papers on time, it is our wish that the Papers not be laid in this House this morning.

Mr. Speaker: Accepted, Honourable Leader of Government's Business. It is a special situation that we had to consider, so let us proceed.

Deputy Clerk (Ag): Item 9 – Unopposed Private Business.

Item 10 – Questions.

Item 11 – Urgent questions under the provisions of Standing
Order No. 29 (1) (Notice of Questions).

Item 12 – Statements by Ministers.

Item 13...

Mr. Speaker: Just hold. Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS debate on the Gracious Address delivered by the Governor-General on the occasion of the Ceremonial State Opening of the Fourth Session of the Eleventh Parliament on Friday, 12th September 2025, was deferred to a date to be named;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the said Address be now further deferred to a date to be named. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Honourable Member, just approach the bench. I...

(Leader of Government's Business, Honourable Philip Telesford approached the Speaker's Table)

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*Statements by Ministers
Personal Explanations*

(Leader of Government's Business, Honourable Philip Telesford returned to his seat)

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In respect of Item 12, as initially called, I withdraw my previous statement. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Leader of Government's Business. You may proceed.

Deputy Clerk (Ag.): Item 13 – Personal Explanations.

Hon. Peter David: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the past, I have not used item 13. It is rarely used, but I would like to use Personal Explanations for me to read into the record of a personal statement on an issue. May I? And I think in order to read, I will have to distribute copies of what I am about to say, so I would like to ask that it be given.

Mr. Speaker: Honourable, it falls on the Personal Explanations, right?

Hon. Peter David: Well, Mr. Speaker, if you can define it, then I can respond.

Mr. Speaker: Huh?

Hon. Peter David: It is an issue that I am making a statement that I consider to be Personal Explanations. Yes. Mr. Speaker, I will have it distributed, and then you can make... I will have a copy given to you, and you will determine if I should or should not do it now. I mean, there is another time on the agenda, I can do it...

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Personal Explanations

Mr. Speaker: Under the Adjournment, of course.

Hon. Peter David: But I choose to do it now, Mr. Speaker, because...

Mr. Speaker: But it has to fall under Personal Explanations.

Hon. Peter David: Well, yes, this is the first time explaining my position on an issue.

Mr. Speaker: Okay.

Hon. Peter David: It is just a reading into the record, Mr. Speaker. It would not take more than three to five minutes.

(Parliamentary Orderly hands Mr. Speaker a script received from Honourable Peter David)

Mr. Speaker: Honourable MP, I would rather this be presented under the Adjournment.

Hon. Peter David: Mr. Speaker, I have no difficulties. Just to say that... The agenda... You have Statements by Ministers... It is really an opportunity for Members that are not in Government to make a statement on a fundamental issue, and there is no item on the agenda, but if I should await Adjournment, I mean, I will do it, but I find it is relegating it to a kind of by the way. I would like it in the heart of it, but if Mr. Speaker says, I have no option but to say, okay.

Mr. Speaker: All right. Thank you, Honourable MP.

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*Personal Explanations
Motions*

Hon. Peter David: But, Mr. Speaker, I will have it distributed nonetheless at the time when at the time... The Parliamentary Orderly is...

Mr. Speaker: That's fine.

Hon. Peter David: Yes.

Deputy Clerk (Ag.): Item 14 – Motions.

Hon. Dickon Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, may I rise a point of procedure?

Mr. Speaker: Go ahead, Honourable Prime Minister.

Hon. Dickon Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when I got here this morning, I was told that the Members of the Opposition had not received the documents pertaining to today's Sitting. I was under the impression that, in light of that lack of basic notice that Parliament was going to be adjourned, to ensure that the appropriate notice was given to them, so that we can have a proper Sitting of Parliament.

I am not clear if it is that the Opposition is now no longer maintaining that position, and I am not clear, frankly, Mr. Speaker, what is happening because it seems to me that we are kind of all over the place. I think from a procedural point of view, I actually was expecting in the Announcements that you would address the issue, because either way proceeding with the business of the House, on the assumption that the issue of notice and the issue of having the documentation is being waived or if it has been taken.

Certainly, for my part, I am not in a position to argue with the position taken, because it does appear as if there has been a wholesale failure on the part of the Parliament to make sure that Members got the proper notice and documentation. So, I am a bit lost as to why we are confirming Minutes and all of that, because then it means that we are saying that Parliament is properly constituted. So, maybe I am missing

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something here, which is why I would like the procedure to be clarified, please. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Prime Minister. We did discuss at length the issue raised. I discussed it with the Members of the Opposition, and so, there is a position that at the first Sitting of Parliament, we are required to put the Committees in place. We are required to do this.

So, which... and in fact, the Committee of Privileges, right, need to be in place because of what has been happening with the FROC's inability to function, because the Committee is not in place. So, the idea is to get done what is urgent, Honourable Prime Minister and then to seek an adjournment. Yes? For the Bills, and I think the Resolutions. That is my understanding.

Hon. Dickon Mitchell: Yes, but, Mr. Speaker, that is the point I am making. We hear and that has not been communicated to anybody; I did not know that, and I still think there is a more fundamental point. If Parliament was not properly constituted, respectfully, this is not the first Sitting, so I am not clear as to whether or not the notice is being waived.

So, in my mind, you cannot... You cannot say I am submitting to the jurisdiction, and then I am objecting to the jurisdiction. So, what I want to find out from you, Mr. Speaker, procedurally, is whether or not, in light of my understanding of the issue that was raised, whether or not this is a Sitting of Parliament...

Mr. Speaker: It is.

Hon. Dickon Mitchell: ...and therefore, we are saying that the notice issue is not an issue?

Mr. Speaker: It is. Honourable Prime Minister, you may move that Parliament be

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adjourned now, right, but it is a constituted Sitting.

Hon. Dickon Mitchell: But, Mr. Speaker, is it for me to move? If you are the Speaker, and it has been brought to your attention that the notice has not been given...

Mr. Speaker: Notice of what?

Hon. Dickon Mitchell: Well my understanding, unless I am wrong, is that both the Order Paper, and all of the documents pertaining to today's Sitting...

Mr. Speaker: Correct.

Hon. Dickon Mitchell: ...either had not been received or was sent via email with a link yesterday to the Members. I am saying, on that basis alone, Mr. Speaker, unless the Members were saying we are waiving the procedural irregularity, and proceed, and I do not hear that they are, I'll be guided, then it ought in my view, Mr. Speaker, to have been appropriate, obviously out of courtesy, because people are here and people need to know what is happening that after you entered, the announcement, you indicate that this is the position and that this has to be adjourned to a date to be fixed, so that the appropriate notice and documents could be received. That is my understanding of what should have happened, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Peter David: Mr. Speaker, may I?

Mr. Speaker: Honourable MP for the Town of St. George.

Hon. Peter David: Mr. Speaker, I rise just in response. I do not know anything of the background, but just in response, one phrase or sentence used by my learned friend. You can't waived that. It cannot be waived. If it is the rule... Because there is a procedure

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for changing the rule, which is not simply a waiver. So, I am saying that. I do not know the background to the issue.

Mr. Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Emmalin Pierre: Mr. Speaker, in relation to the matter at hand, I think the agreement was that we are going to go through the Committees, which is a requirement for the first Sitting of Parliament and that that list was circulated prior. I totally agree. Anything that we do not have documentation for should not be discussed this morning or raised this morning. And so, I want to recommend, Mr. Speaker, that we move immediately to setting up the Committees and then to adjourn.

(Honourable Peters David raised his hand, indicating that he wanted to have the floor)

Mr. Speaker: Hold Honourable. According to the Order Paper, we should be on Item 14, right? So, the intention was to get the Committees passed, so it is really the Leader of Government's Business; if Members do not feel comfortable, then a Motion may be put to the floor, and we will adjourn. Yes. So, it is really... the next item is 14, Motions. I now wait on the Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Peter David: May I, Mr. ...

Mr. Speaker: Just hold, Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, having only received these documents, officially, from the Parliament of Grenada, yesterday the 27th of October, on a link that points us to a number of other documents, not all pertaining this particular Sitting, and considering the fact, Mr. Speaker, that in order to properly debate

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these Bills and Resolutions, Members must have the information at least seven days prior, I now move that this Honourable House be adjourned. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Yes, I was going to ask you...

Hon. Philip Telesford: Let me just... Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just to amend what I said. I move that the Honourable House be adjourned until next Tuesday at 9:00 a.m., which will be on the 4th of November, 2025. So, the House will be adjourned... The Motion is that the House be adjourned until next Tuesday, the 4th of November at 9:00 a.m. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Peter David: Mr. Speaker, a question.

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

Hon. Peter David: Do I rise now to do what I have to do, or do I wait until you make that announcement because I intend to proceed at your direction?

Mr. Speaker: Yes, you wait. Leader of the Opposition. I can barely see your light.

Hon. Emmalin Pierre: Mr. Speaker, as it relates to the Adjournment. I want to raise two things. I wish to ask that we review whether it is a requirement that the Committees be established at the first Sitting of Parliament. Could we review that?

And secondly, the announcement, the unilateral announcement that Parliament would be next Tuesday. Mr. Speaker, we have been operating with a schedule, and I do not need to go through the reasons why we are operating with a schedule. I would have thought that because this House comprises of two sides, that they would at least be some

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kind of collaboration or conversation, as it relates to the date for the next Sitting of Parliament. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: All right. It is an important point. There is a Motion before us. I did indicate, according to the Standing Orders, we need to form the Committees in our very first Sitting, but... and this is the... This was the initial intention to get the Committees out of the way and then adjourn, but there is a Motion on the floor for the Adjournment of this particular Sitting to Tuesday, the 4th of November.

(Inaudible comments by Members)

Hon. Peter David: Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to the Motion. That is their issue, not my issue.

Mr. Speaker: All right. Sorry about that, but I have been advised that if we do the Adjournment now, the meeting continues on the next Sitting. Right? At the next Sitting next Tuesday, the meeting continues. So Honourable MP for the Town of St. George, you would not be able to speak because the meeting itself continues, I am advised. Right? So...

Hon. Peter David: Mr. Speaker, I beg to say something.

Mr. Speaker: I just made it clear to you.

Hon. Peter David: I know, but I want to clarify. Mr. Speaker, I understand, but...

(Inaudible comments by Members)

Hon. Peter David: Mr. Speaker, we are moving to adjourn this Sitting, and I

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understand that it was said that it was not properly constituted; I need clarity, because if it was not properly constituted, there is one course of action, but if it is that the Sitting was properly constituted, then there is another issue. If the issue was simply documentation, then the issue of discussing and debating these documents would be the issue, but if the Sitting is properly constituted, then that is different.

We are properly constituted, and we are asking for an Adjournment, and as far as I am concerned, we are allowed to speak on the Adjournment. I am not sure what rule says that the Adjournment has to be another Adjournment. Mr. Speaker, the issue I want to address is urgent.

Mr. Speaker: Yes, but...

Hon. Peter David: It is an urgent matter of Personal Explanations.

Mr. Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Emmalin Pierre: Mr. Speaker, I want to just make a kind request that we consider or reconsider the date that was mentioned for the next Sitting of Parliament, and to ask whether or not the Opposition would be considered in the decision of the date for the next Parliament.

Mr. Speaker: All right, so...

(Inaudible comment by Members)

Hon. Philip Telesford: No, we can do it now.

Mr. Speaker: Listen, Honourable, Honourable.

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*Motions
Adjournment*

Hon. Peter David: I am good, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Mr. Speaker, this is pretty normal. I mean, if the Opposition feels... As a matter of fact, we can just take a simple vote on that, but I am saying if the Opposition feels that there is a more convenient date, they can let us know now, and we will just agree; this should not be a complex matter.

(Inaudible comment by Members)

Hon. Philip Telesford: Yes.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion approved.

Mr. Speaker: This Parliament is now adjourned until Tuesday, the 4th of November at 9 a.m., in the forenoon.

(Sound of gavel)

The Sitting of the House of Representatives adjourned on Tuesday, 28th October 2025, at 10:09 a.m.

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***Resumption
Attendance***

The Sitting of the House of Representatives resumed on Tuesday, 4th November 2025, at 9:17 a.m.

PRESENT

Mr. Speaker

Honourable Leo Cato, MP

in the Chair

Honourable Dickon Mitchell, MP
(*St. David*)

- Prime Minister & Minister for National Security, Home Affairs, Information, Disaster Management & Public Administration, Infrastructure and Physical Development, Public Utilities & Civil Aviation and Transportation

Honourable Philip A. Telesford, MP
(*St. George South-East*)

- Minister for Health

Honourable Joseph Andall, MP
(*St. Patrick West*)

- Minister for Foreign Affairs, Trade & Export Development

Honourable Tevin Andrews, MP
(*Carriacou & Petite Martinique*)

- Minister for Carriacou, Petite Martinique Affairs and Local Government

Honourable Kerryne Z. James, MP
(*St. John*)

- Minister for Climate Resilience, the Environment and Renewable Energy

Honourable Ron Livingston Redhead, MP
(*St. George North-East*)

- Member

Honourable Delma Thomas, MP
(*St. Andrew North-West*)

- Minister for Youth and Sports, Mental Health, Wellness, and Religious Affairs, with a special focus on the Mt. Gay Psychiatric Hospital

Honourable Andy Williams, MP
(*St. George South*)

- Minister for Mobilisation, Implementation and Transformation

Honourable Peter David, MP
(*Town of St. George*)

- Member

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Attendance

ABSENT

- | | |
|--|---|
| Honourable Lennox John Andrews, MP
<i>(St. Andrew South West)</i> | - Minister for Economic Development, Planning and Co-operatives, Agriculture & Lands, Forestry and Marine Resources |
| Honourable Dennis Cornwall, MP
<i>(St. Patrick East)</i> | - Minister for Finance |
| Honourable Emmalin Pierre, MP
<i>(St. Andrew South-East)</i> | - Leader of His Majesty's Opposition
<i>(Excuse tendered)</i> |
| Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith C. Mitchell, PC, MP, JP
<i>(St. George North-West)</i> | - Member
<i>(Excuse tendered)</i> |
| Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen, MP
<i>(St. Mark)</i> | - Deputy Speaker
<i>(Excuse tendered)</i> |
| Honourable Kate Lewis-Peters, MP
<i>(St. Andrew North-East)</i> | - Member
<i>(Excuse tendered)</i> |

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***Prayers
Announcements***

Mr. Speaker: Let us pray.

(House Prayer was said)

Mr. Speaker: Join me in saying the Lord's Prayer, please.

(The Lord's Prayer was said)

Mr. Speaker: Pray be seated.

(Sound of gavel)

Mr. Speaker: This Parliament now reconvenes. Honourable Members, when we last sat here in the first part of this Sitting, we had to adjourn the Parliament because it was reported that Members did not receive the necessary documents to be studied for the debate, and because we claimed that the documents were not received in time for the Parliamentary Sitting, we went through the Order Paper but item eight, the Presentation of Papers and Reports from Select Committees, was in fact omitted. So today, as the first Order of Business, we will go to number eight, and then I will direct which part of the Order Paper we will take after.

I wish to draw to the attention of this House that I received a letter this morning from the Leader of His Majesty's Opposition, and I would read to the Members the content of the letter, and subsequently we have this laid in the House.

It reads,

"Honourable Leo Cato

Speaker of the House of Representatives

Parliament of Grenada

St. George's

Grenada

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Announcements

Dear, Mr. Speaker,

**Re: Opposition Members' Non-attendance at the Sitting of Parliament
Scheduled for Tuesday, November 4, 2025.**

I write on behalf of the Members of the Opposition in the House of Representatives, to formally inform you that we will not be attending the Sitting of Parliament, scheduled for Tuesday, November 4, 2025, nor the Sitting of the Senate scheduled for Thursday, November 6, 2025.

This decision was not taken lightly. It follows a troubling and consistent pattern of disregard for the constitutional role of the Opposition and erosion of respect for the Institution of Parliament itself.

At the last Sitting of the House on Tuesday, October 28, 2025, the Prime Minister publicly scolded the Speaker, and the "Government Side" unilaterally dictated the Adjournment date of the House without appropriate consultation or adherence to the established Parliamentary norms.

This occurred in the midst of serious procedural failures, where Members were not provided with critical documents in a timely manner, a clear breach of Parliamentary norms and due process.

Furthermore, the Leader of the Opposition's request for appropriate consultation on the adjourned date was dismissed and trivialised, further highlighting the pattern of disregard for fair and respectful Parliamentary engagement.

Our absence from today's Sitting is therefore an act of principle. We stand in firm protest against the continued marginalisation of the Opposition, the intolerable erosion of democratic parliamentary norms, and the creeping authoritarianism have no place in Grenada's Parliamentary Democracy.

We trust that our position will be duly recorded in the official records of the House.

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***Announcements
Papers / Reports***

Yours respectfully,

Emmalin Pierre

Leader of His Majesty's Opposition"

Those were the words of the Leader of the Opposition. There are some things that we have to bear in mind. I would not really comment on her letter except to say that the schedule of meetings of Parliamentary Sittings is determined by the Standing Order, and I think Standing Order No. 15 clearly says how the meetings are set, and the dates are determined.

Just to add as well, we also established that the documents were in fact sent, but there must have been some technical errors with the mailboxes of some recipients, hence the documents did not appear, right? But our record showed that the documents were sent, I think it was on the 16th of October.

With that said, I urge that we proceed to item eight, which is... Yes, which we omitted in our previous session. Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to present the following Papers and Reports to this Honourable House:

1. Grenada Development Bank Annual Report 2022;
2. Report of the Director of Audit, Grenada on Child Protection Authority (CPA) for the year ending 31st December, 2019;
3. Report of the Director of Audit, Grenada, on Child Protection Authority (CPA) for the year ending 31st December, 2020;
4. Report of the Director of Audit, Grenada, on Child Protection Authority (CPA) for the year ending 31st December, 2021;
5. FROC Report on the Medium Term Fiscal Framework 2026 – 2028, 22nd July 2025;

Civil Aviation Regulations (2):

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6. Civil Aviation (Flight Safety) Regulations SRO No. 23 of 2024; and
7. Civil Aviation (Unit of Measurement for Air and Ground Operations) Regulations SRO No. 24 of 2024;
8. Civil Aviation (Certification of Air Navigation Services) Regulation SRO No. 12 of 2025;
9. Civil Aviation (Air Traffic Services) Regulations SRO No. 13 of 2025;
10. Civil Aviation (Aeronautical Charts) Regulations SRO No. 14 of 2025;
11. Civil Aviation (Aeronautical Information Services) Regulations SRO No. 15 of 2025;
12. Civil Aviation (Meteorological Services for Air Navigation) Regulations SRO No. 16 of 2025;
13. Civil Aviation (Aeronautical Search and Rescue) Regulations SRO No. 17 of 2025;
14. Civil Aviation (Safety Management Regulations) SRO No. 18 of 2025;
15. Civil Aviation (ANS Fatigue Management) Regulations SRO No. 19 of 2025;
16. Civil Aviation's (Construction of Instrument Flight Procedures) Regulations SRO No. 20 of 2025;
17. Civil Aviation (Aeronautical Telecommunications) Regulations SRO No. 31 of 2025;
18. Civil Aviation (Flight Checking Organisations Approval) Regulations SRO No. 32 of 2025;
19. Civil Aviation (Radio Navigational Aids) Regulations SRO No. 33 of 2025;
20. Civil Aviation (Communications Procedures including those with Pans Status) Regulations SRO No. 34 of 2025;
21. Civil Aviation (Communication System) Regulations SRO No. 35 of 2025;
22. Civil Aviation (Surveillance and Collision Avoidance Systems) Regulations SRO No. 36 of 2025; and
23. Civil Aviation (Aeronautical Radio Frequency Spectrum Utilisation) Regulations SRO No. 37 of 2025.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Leader of Government's Business. Honourable Members, the afore-mentioned documents and Reports have now been laid in Parliament.

Deputy Clerk (Ag.): Item 14 – Motions.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS debate on the Gracious Address delivered by the Governor-General on the occasion of the Ceremonial State Opening of the Fourth Session of the Eleventh Parliament on Friday, 12th September 2025, was deferred to a date to be named;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the said Address be now further deferred. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion approved.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the Standing Order No. 69 (1) of the Standing Orders of the House of Representatives provides for the election of a Committee to be known as the Public Accounts Committee;

AND WHEREAS it is further provided that the Committee be elected at the first Sitting of each session at which business of the House other than the reading of the Throne Speech is transacted;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT this Honourable House doth now elect its Members to the said Committee. The Members, Mr. Speaker...

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Mr. Speaker: Just hold... hold on, Honourable.

Question proposed.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Mr. Speaker, I proposed the following Members to the Committee:

- The Honourable Emmalin Pierre, Leader of His Majesty's Opposition, as Chair;
- Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen, Member;
- Honourable Kate Lewis;
- Senator the Honourable Roderick St. Clair; and
- Senator the Honourable Salim Rahaman;

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion approved.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS Standing Order No. 70 (1) of the House of Representatives Standing Orders, be it known that the Standing Orders Committee, which shall be elected as soon as may be after the beginning of each session;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT this Honourable House doth now appoint the Members of the said Committee.

Mr. Speaker: Honourable...

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Hon. Philip Telesford: Yes, yes, sorry.

Question proposed.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I propose the following Members to the Committee:

- Honourable Speaker, Leo Cato, Chairman;
- Honourable Delma Thomas, Member;
- Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen, Member;

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Leader of Government's Business.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion approved.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS Standing Order No. 70 (2) of The House of Representatives Standing Orders provides for the appointment of a Committee to consist of the Speaker as Chairman and four Members to be known as the House Committee;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT this Honourable House now doth appoint four Members to the said Committee.

Question proposed.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

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Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Standing Orders No. 70 (2), I propose the following Members to the Standing Order Committee:

- Honourable Leo Cato, Speaker of the House, as Chair;
- Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen, Member;
- Honourable Tevin Andrews, Member;
- Honourable Joseph Andall, Member; and
- Honourable Emmalin Pierre, Member;

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

(Mr. Speaker and the Clerk conversed privately)

Question put and agreed to.

Motion approved.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS Standing Order No. 70 (3) of the House of Representatives Standing Orders provided for the appointment of a Committee to consist of the Speaker as Chairman and four Members to be known as the Committee of Privileges, which shall be elected as soon as may be after the beginning of each session;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT this Honourable House doth now appoint the four Members to the said Committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Question proposed.

Mr. Speaker: Honourable Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to propose

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the following Members to the said Committee:

- Honourable Andy Williams, Member;
- Honourable Ron L. Redhead, Member;
- Honourable Peter David Member; and
- Honourable Kate Lewis-Peters, Member;

Under the Chairmanship of the Honourable Speaker of the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion approved.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**RESOLUTION FOR THE PURPOSES OF SECTION 107 (2) OF THE
REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT CAP. 286A;**

WHEREAS it is provided by section 107 (1) of the Representation of the People Act, Cap. 286A (hereinafter referred to as "the Act") that the Governor-General may make Regulations generally for giving effect to the provisions of the Act;

WHEREAS section 107 (1) (c) provides that the Governor-General may make Regulations prescribing the symbols to be used on every ballot paper, and the mode of allocation of such symbols to candidates;

WHEREAS section 107 (2) provides that Regulations made under the Act are subject to affirmative resolution;

WHEREAS Regulations have been made to insert a new symbol to be used on ballot papers under the Representation of the People (Election Symbols) Regulations Cap. 286A;

AND WHEREAS it is now expedient that the Representation of the People (Election Symbols) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations, 2025, attached hereto as a

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schedule, be approved by the House of Representatives;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that pursuant to section 107 (2) of the Act, the Representation of the People (Election Symbols) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations, 2025, be now approved.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Leader of Government's Business.

Question proposed.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as for the Schedule the symbol shall be the Rising Sun with the letters DPM. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Leader of Government's Business.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion approved.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**RESOLUTION FOR THE PURPOSES OF SECTION 73 OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR
EMPLOYEES (PENSION FUND) ACT NO. 19 OF 2024**

WHEREAS it is provided by Section 73 of the Public Sector Employees (Pension Fund) Act No. 19 of 2024 (hereinafter referred to as "the Act") that the Minister may, by Order, subject to affirmative resolution, amend the Schedule to the Act;

WHEREAS by virtue of section 26 (3) of the Interpretation and General Provisions

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Act, the requirement that rules or regulations, or other subsidiary legislation be subject to affirmative resolution means that such rules or regulations or other subsidiary legislation shall not come into effect after having been duly made by the appropriate authority unless and until they have been approved by a resolution of the House of Representatives and, after having been so approved they have then been published in the *Gazette*;

WHEREAS the Minister proposes to amend Schedule 1 of the Act to insert the names of Statutory Bodies that have officially expressed interest in signing onto the Public Sector Employees Pension Scheme, established in accordance with section 5 of the Act;

WHEREAS the Minister has exercised his powers to make an Order under section 73 of the Act;

AND WHEREAS it is expedient that the Public Sector Employees (Pension Fund) (Amendment to Schedule 1) (No. 2) Order, 2025, which seeks to amend Schedule 1 to the Act, be approved by the House of Representatives;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that pursuant to section 73 of the Act, the Public Sector Employees (Pension Fund) (Amendment of Schedule 1) (No. 2) Order, 2025, as set out in the Schedule to this Resolution is hereby approved by the House of Representatives.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Leader of Government's Business.

Question proposed.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Mr. Speaker, thank you. I wish to propose the following amendment to the Schedule as of Schedule 1 of the principal Act:

- Grenada Cultural Foundation;
- Grenada National Stadium Authority;

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Rearrangement of Order Paper

- Planning and Development Authority;
- T. A. Marryshow Community College;
- Grenada Solid Waste Management Authority; and
- The National Training Agency.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion approved.

Deputy Clerk (Ag.): Item 15 – Bills.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business... Honourable Prime Minister.

Hon. Dickon Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, if I may on a point of procedure, I am a bit surprised that we are at number 15. I think there were Questions, Ministerial Statements, none of which were covered at the last Sitting. So item 12... The items before Bills, Mr. Speaker, were not covered; Questions, Ministerial Statements, none of these items... Questions, Urgent Questions, Statements by Ministers, none of those matters were addressed in the last Sitting.

Mr. Speaker: Honourable Prime Minister, yes, but they were called as items. They were not called?

Hon. Dickon Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, I do not recall them being called, and, in fact, that is why I raised the issue of what was happening on the last occasion, because I certainly knew that we had Ministerial Statements that we intended to make, and we did not get that opportunity to do so. I mean, if the Minutes are available from the last Sitting, then obviously we can clarify that.

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Rearrangement of Order Paper

Mr. Speaker: Honourable Prime Minister, please.

(The Prime Minister, Honourable Dickon Mitchell approached the Speaker's Table)

(Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister, Honourable Dickon Mitchell and the Clerk conversed privately)

(The Prime Minister, Honourable Dickon Mitchell, returned to his seat)

Hon. Dickon Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make an amendment to the Order Paper so that items 10, 11 and 12 could be added to the Order Paper. Item 10, Questions, item 11, Urgent Questions under the provision of the Standing Order and item 12, Statements by Ministers.

Mr. Speaker: 10, 11, 12? Honourable Prime Minister, I want to see if I get the numbers right. 10, 11 and 12?

Hon. Dickon Mitchell: Yes, Mr. Speaker. So item 10 would be Questions, item 11 would be Urgent Questions under the provision of Standing Order No. 20 (1) and item 12, Statements by Ministers.

Mr. Speaker: All right. Honourable Members, you heard the Motion raised by the Honourable Prime Minister that we go back to items 10, 11 and 12; that we revisit items 10, 11 and 12 for the sole purpose of input and interjections. So I now put it to the vote.

Question put and agreed to.

Order Paper amended.

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Mr. Speaker: So we now go back before we take Bills go back to items 10, 11 and 12.

Deputy Clerk (Ag.): Item 10 – Questions.

Item 11 – Urgent Questions under the Provision of Standing
Order No. 20 (1) (Notice of Questions).

Item 12 – Statements by Ministers.

Mr. Speaker: Honourable MP for St. Andrew North-West.

Hon. Delma Thomas: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pleasant, good morning to everyone. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to update this Honourable House on several key initiatives being advanced by the Ministry of Youth, Sports, Mental Health, Wellness and Religious Affairs; initiatives designed to empower our people, strengthen our communities and build a more resilient Grenada.

Last Sunday, November 2, we officially began the observance of National Youth Month 2025 with a church service at the Grand Roy Catholic Church in St. John, a fitting start that grounded our celebration in gratitude, reflection and faith. It was a moment to thank God for the resilience, creativity and promise of our young people and to recommit ourselves, and leaders and mentors to the continued growth and development.

This year's Youth Month is being observed under the theme: "Our youth, our strength, our Grenada". It is a theme that speaks directly to a belief that the energy, innovation and determination of our youth are the true pillars of our nation's progress.

Throughout the month of November, a series of meaningful activities will engage young people across the state, from school visits and youth empowerment workshops to our financial management webinar series held every Tuesday, which focuses on helping our youth make wise and sustainable financial decisions. We will also celebrate the success of our young men and women in the M-Power Programme on November 5, that's tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, and it will be done at the Trade Centre.

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Other key highlights include the Youth-Can-Cook, which will be held in St. John, National Youth Sports Night, Youth Caravan on November 15, an opportunity for young people to showcase their talent, teamwork and community spirit. Later in the month, we will engage youth leaders in a national Youth Parliament Debate on November 26, followed by the Youth-in-Business Programme launch on November 27, aimed at supporting entrepreneurship and innovation. Our celebration will culminate with a youth award and cocktail ceremony. We are not leaving out our sister island, so activities will be held in Carriacou.

Mr. Speaker, last Friday marked a significant milestone in our Government's ongoing commitment to youth development, an advancement of sports in Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. We officially launched the Coach-in-Schools Programme, a major step towards the institutionalisation of sports across our education system.

This initiative, which was fully implemented as of yesterday, ensures that every secondary, primary and pre-primary school in the tri-island state will have a dedicated sports coach assigned to it. The programme will be supported by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Ministry of Sports. **(Applause)**

The introduction of this programme reflects our government's belief that sports must not be treated as extracurricular activities, but as an essential pillar of education and national building. Through this initiative, we are providing structured coaching in a range of disciplines, athletic, netball, football, cricket, basketball and more, but Mr. Speaker, more than just the coaches in schools, the coaches will also be in the community.

Mr. Speaker, we are developing playgrounds and playing fields across Grenada and putting in lighting, and the lighting cannot be just for show or for major activities, but it will be our policy to turn on the lights for a period so that we can get people to move.

As a human being, I always say we were made to move, and so we want to encourage people to go into the different playgrounds and exercise, whether it's in the morning or in the evening. The lights will be turned on from seven to nine in most major playing fields, so that people can exercise.

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Mr. Speaker, importantly, 70 coaches were recruited, but 40 of the recruited are Imani trainees transitioning into full-time employment. **(Applause)** Tangible evidence of our youth programmes is creating pathways to sustainable careers. At a recent orientation, Mr. Speaker, one coach remarked that after years in the Imani Programme, the opportunity restores his sense of pride and purpose. He said in school he felt that there was a stigma as it relates to Imani and how he was referred to in the school, and so, Mr. Speaker, as a government, we are happy that we can transition, not only these 40 coaches who are Imani's, but we are working to transition the entire programme into permanent engagement. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow at the Grenada Trade Centre, over 200 young men will proudly graduate from the M-Power Programme. A transformative initiative designed to empower, equip and engage our young men. Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that over 400 young men started that cohort. However, in tomorrow's graduation, we will see just over 200. And while a number of young men gained some permanent engagement along the way, the dropout rate among our young men is a troubling signal. It reflects lost potential and deep social challenges that demand just more than government intervention. This is why programmes like M-Power are not optional, but essential, and I call on all stakeholders, families, communities, the church and the private sector to join us in keeping these young men engaged, and we have to look at more ways and means to ensure that these young men are engaged positively. And so as a government, we will be looking at other ways and other means to get these young men off the street and keep them grounded.

Through M-Power, participants would have benefited from skills training, vocational and technical development and community engagement, all anchored in mentorship and personal growth. Mr. Speaker, this graduation does not mark the end, rather it signals a new beginning.

These trainees will now transition in permanent forms of engagement whether through employment opportunities, continued skills development or entrepreneurship with the ministry's support of EC\$3,000.00 and mentorship for six months to one year. So we

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are not leaving them alone to set up their own business, we will be following them for six months to a year. We are particularly proud that some graduates will move into their own small ventures supported by continued mentorship and coaching.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Mental Health, continues to lead in several mental health and wellness initiatives nationwide. Over the past week, the teams from the ministry have conducted visits to outpatient facilities, engaging directly with clients and staff, offering tokens of encouragement at the level of the community as part of our continued outreach and advocacy for mental wellness.

We are also pleased to announce the upcoming launch of the school mental health programme in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. This programme will bring structured mental wellness education and early intervention support in our schools, promoting emotional intelligence, resilience and positive coping strategies among students. This initiative reflects our recognition that education and mental well-being go hand-in-hand and that healthy minds are essential for national development.

Continued support for Carriacou and Petite Martinique. Mr. Speaker, the ministry remains actively engaged, providing support in Carriacou and Petite Martinique as they continue to recover from the devastation caused by Hurricane Beryl. Our interventions include psychosocial support, youth and community engagement activities and direct assistance to families affected.

We continue to work alongside other ministries and local leaders to ensure that recovery is comprehensive, addressing not just physical rebuilding but also emotional and social restoration. The resilience of the people of Carriacou and Petite Martinique remains an inspiration to us all, and the government would stand with them until recovery is complete. I thank you. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Thank you, Honourable MP for St. Andrew North-West. I think it's the light of the MP for Carriacou and Petite Martinique.

Hon. Tevin Andrews: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I just decided to

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give the House an update on what's taking place in Carriacou and Petite Martinique as it relates to our recovery effort, regarding Hurricane Beryl.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Grenada, through the Ministry of Carriacou and Petite Martinique Affairs and Local Government, continues to make significant progress in rebuilding and restoring homes affected by the passage of Hurricane Beryl.

The Government has already constructed, delivered or is in the process of constructing a total of 152 homes affected (**applause**), which were destroyed by the hurricane, and those include pre-fabricated homes, build-back-better homes and social development homes. A short while ago, I got a message from my team at the ministry, who informed me that through the intervention of the Ministry of Housing, as we speak, there are some social development homes being constructed. So certainly that 152 number will increase. (**Applause**)

Of course, Mr. Speaker, this demonstrates this government's unwavering commitment to helping our people get back on their feet and rebuild their lives with dignity. In addition to the homes being delivered, Mr. Speaker, directly by the government, material support has been given, and a number of additional supports have been given to families and homeowners.

I am pleased to announce, Mr. Speaker, as a result of the support that was given, as it relates to material support from the Government of Grenada, that 66% of homes that were destroyed by Hurricane Beryl have now been restored. What does that mean, Mr. Speaker? That means that 387 homes out of the 586 homes have been restored on the island of Carriacou and Petite Martinique. (**Applause**)

This means, Mr. Speaker, that we still have 199 homes that need to be built on the island of Carriacou and Petite Martinique. Those remaining figures mean, in Petite Martinique, we have just over 50 more homes that need to be constructed, and of course, the rest in Carriacou. Mr. Speaker, it is also important to highlight this remarkable progress that has been achieved through the combined effort of the Government of Grenada, the people of Carriacou and Petite Martinique and other partners.

Turning to roofing, Mr. Speaker. Roofing restoration. Over 3,000 roofs were either

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destroyed or damaged. Today, Mr. Speaker, 78% of those roofs have been restored. **(Applause)** A total of 2,441 out of the 3,129 roofs have been restored. This means, Mr. Speaker, we have 688 roofs both in Carriacou and Petite Martinique that need to be restored and of that figure, Mr. Speaker, I am happy to make known to the people of Carriacou and Petite Martinique and the nation that in Petite Martinique, there are just 20 more roofs that need to be added on. Let me repeat, some people don't comprehend or understand that.

Out of the 3,000-plus roofs that were destroyed on the island of Carriacou and Petite Martinique, the Government of Grenada, the people of Carriacou and Petite Martinique and the various partners have restored 2,441 of those homes. **(Applause)** And on the island of Petite Martinique, the remaining roofs that need to be fixed are only 20 **(applause)**, which, of course, is the majority of roofs that need to be fixed in Carriacou, Mr. Speaker.

Now, this speaks volumes, the commitment, the remarkable achievement that this Government has made, the sacrifice that all of us on "This Side" had to make, and I will deliberate a little more on the sacrifices during my Budget Presentation, Mr. Speaker. But I must pause to thank and commend the steady leadership of Honourable Dickon Mitchell **(applause)** for ensuring that we've gotten this far, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, to give some perspective. The initial report suggested that approximately 3,018 homes were impacted across Carriacou and Petite Martinique, but following a deeper and more accurate analysis, it was determined that 3,129 roofs were affected, and 586 homes, of course, were destroyed. So, having given you the figures in terms of where we are with roofs and housing, Mr. Speaker, you would see, for the last year and four months, we have made some real and serious progress.

There is still lots of work that needs to be done, and I am confident that if we made so much progress within such a short timeframe, one year four months, I have absolutely no doubt that come next year with the support of my colleagues, our Prime Minister and the team from the Ministry of Finance, that we certainly will be able to have Carriacou restored in its fullness sometime next year, Mr. Speaker.

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Mr. Speaker, some updates as well as it relates to the Lauriston Airport, which will soon be named the H. A. Blaize of the Herbert A. Blaize Airport. Mr. Speaker, the runway edge lights, aeroplane lights and new aerodrome beacon have all been delivered and will be installed by the 14th of November. You might have heard me speak about the night landing initiative in Carriacou and Petite Martinique, regarding the airport. So this is the update that I am giving.

The obstruction lights are also on site and the Grenada Airports Authority, Mr. Speaker, is coordinating the installation ahead of the night landing operations. So the intention is by the first quarter of 2026, we will be able to accommodate night landing in Carriacou. **(Applause)** Really and truly the Ministry of Carriacou and Petite Martinique Affairs and Local Government is spearheading the initiative, but really and truly, it is the Prime Minister's ministry that is doing all the hard work. But I thought as the ministry that is doing some oversight and of course as Member of Parliament that I should update the Honourable House with the progress that is being made there. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Honourable MP for the constituency of Carriacou and Petite Martinique. I now invite the MP for St. John to now take the floor.

Hon. Kerryne James: Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. I am indeed honoured to present to you, as well, some updates on the transformative work by the Ministry of Climate Resilience, Environment and Renewable Energy.

The past few months, Mr. Speaker, have been a period of intense activity, strategic partnerships and tangible progress all aimed at strengthening our nation's resilience, advancing our transition to sustainable and renewable energy and ensuring that our growth is inclusive and climate smart. Mr. Speaker, Grenada continues to distinguish itself within the region as well as internationally as a thought leader in climate resilience, planning and implementation.

Our ministries' work has been pivotal in steering Grenada's participation in the

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global stocktake process, ensuring that small island developing states like ours have a united and credible voice and shaping global climate ambition.

A major milestone for us, Mr. Speaker, was achieved with the approval of the revised national adaptation plan 2025 to 2030, abbreviated as the NAP, by Cabinet on September 29th of this year. This plan, Mr. Speaker, defines the strategic direction for Grenada's adaptation across key sectors, aligning national priorities with the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change and our nationally determined contributions.

Alongside this, Grenada finalised the revised National Determined Contribution, the NDC 3.0, a document that raises our climate ambition with measurable mitigation and adaptation targets, positioning Grenada as a regional leader in data-driven science-based climate action.

Mr. Speaker, within the ministry, we are also ensuring that climate resilience becomes a national culture through the Youth-in-Action for Climate Change Adaptation campaign, the ministry has engaged schools and youth organisations nationwide with creative educational tools from climate theme, colouring books for our younger children to adaptation exercise books and teaching models of rainwater harvesting mechanisms that can be tried at home and within the schools system. All of this was done in close partnership with the Global Water Partnership Caribbean, the GWPC and the G-CREWS Project, currently ongoing in the country.

Further, Mr. Speaker, following the devastation caused by Hurricane Beryl, we have decided to launch a carry a tree initiative to Carriacou, a campaign that was launched in October as a national reforestation initiative mobilising citizens to restore forest cover and strengthen community-based ecosystem resilience, a living demonstration of our commitment to nature-based solutions.

This is one of the most pivotal initiatives that we have launched within the Ministry in recent months, simply because, Mr. Speaker, as a country, we have not really, in the last five to seven years, we have not really done any targeted reforestation measures to ensure that we protect those nature-based solutions that is our first barrier for climate

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disasters and climatic events.

Our Climate Vulnerability Assessment Report, Mr. Speaker, now finalised, provides us with the empirical foundation for climate planning, identifying sectoral risks and informing adaptation priorities for the medium term. In parallel, Mr. Speaker, stakeholder consultations for the Revised National Climate Change Policy, which would be the umbrella policy for both the National Adaptation Plan as well as the National Determined Contributions document, are ongoing, and this is ensuring that Grenada's climate governance remains coherent, inclusive and future-ready for those unprecedented climatic events.

Mr. Speaker, as it relates to expanding renewable energy and energy security. Energy is, of course, the lifeblood of our development, and the Government of Grenada is unwavering in its pursuit of affordable, reliable and sustainable energy for all of its citizens. As a result of this fundamental understanding, Mr. Speaker, we see the energy sector as a public good.

So, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that we are aligned with this mandate, we will be launching in November a project that is entitled 'Solar-for-All', it is one of our flagship initiatives within the ministry, which will deliver tangible energy relief to vulnerable and energy marginalised households as well as targeted small businesses across Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique.

I am also pleased to report, Mr. Speaker, the progress of the Limlair Solar PV Hybrid Battery Storage Project in Carriacou, which was not spared the brunt of the forces of Hurricane Beryl. As most of us may know within this House, Mr. Speaker, that almost the entire plant was destroyed following the passage.

This project was a project under the UAE Caribbean Renewable Energy Fund valued at US\$3.2 million, or an approximation of that, in partnership with MASDAR and our lone electricity company in Grenada, GRENLEC. This facility, Mr. Speaker, will provide up to 20% of Carriacou's electricity needs through renewable energy savings of approximately US\$38,000 per month in fuel cost.

And so, because of this economic importance, we have received a commitment

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from the UAE Fund as well as from contractors, MASDAR, to revisit the design of the plant to ensure that it is indeed resilient to category four to five storms, and they have given their commitment. **(Applause)** So the team within the Renewable Energy Division, Mr. Speaker, has already done the technical assessment, and we will soon be relaunching that project **(applause)** for Carriacou and Petite Martinique.

Under the Geothermal Energy Development Project, we continue to make critical headway as opposed to other aspects of our renewable energy mandate and projects. Geothermal is one such area that is not so glamorous or pretty or fast. It is a very slow, tedious, strategic, calculated process that we must follow. We are thankful as well, Mr. Speaker, for the additional funding we were able to get from the UK Government through the FCDO Project, which has allowed us to change the scope of that project to now have directional drilling holes so that we can maximise on our exploratory drilling process come the second phase of 2026.

The revised engineering designs, Mr. Speaker, and survey works have been completed this year, and the environmental approvals have already been secured. A community study tour, Mr. Speaker, was done through the Geothermal Project, as well as, the OECS GEOBUILD Project, which is a regional project for the OECS countries, at the Buoyant Geothermal Plant in Guadeloupe earlier on this year, which deepened regional technical exchange as well as to give the communities, that will be developed, that we will be drilling at the opportunity to seeing the advantage of having such a plant within their communities so that we minimise negative media or false information taking the headlines, Mr. Speaker.

So it was both a technical exchange for both our team here on the ground within the ministry to get first-hand experience with the geothermal consultants as well as for our community to understand the importance and advantages of such a project.

This project, Mr. Speaker, remains essential in diversifying our energy mix and achieving energy sovereignty in the midst of geopolitical tension.

Mr. Speaker, the month of November marks CARICOM Energy Month under the regional theme this year, "Sustainable Energy for a Resilient Future". Grenada's national

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calendar of activities demonstrates our commitment to continued public awareness, education and citizen engagement. So we have a series of activities that would take place from the 4th of November. We would have a solar city simulator launch and workshop, and this would be done in close partnership with the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) on November 12 and 13.

We would also have, Mr. Speaker, a solar farm for our students within the secondary schools, as well, particularly targeting the form four and five students who would be preparing for the sitting of the CXC Examinations and now moving on to the tertiary institutions. What we want to do, Mr. Speaker, is to let them see that there are opportunities within the new economy in Grenada that they can diversify their studies and that they can get meaningful employment once they are finished obtaining their Associate Degree. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker, in addition to that, we would have the launch of the Solar-for-All Programme, as I mentioned earlier, on November 25. We will also be hosting a renewable energy symposium at the Trade Centre Annexe on the 27th. We have a Renewable Energy Exhibition and Expo, and this was done... It came out as a follow-up to our renewable energy electric vehicle drive, an island-wide motorcade that we held earlier this year, to inform our citizens of the opportunities and the incentives available to us on the island.

Many of the times, Mr. Speaker, we still would have problems, even if we went through and got Parliament's approval, we still have instances where persons whether it be businesses or private individuals, importing vehicles that are beyond the tenure that is approved by this Parliament. And so we continue to implore, and we continue to educate and re-educate our citizens on the important for a transition within the transport sector. We have the incentives of 100% full electric vehicles, 75% concession on hybrid vehicles, and we encourage our citizens to take advantage of these opportunities.

So this Renewable Energy Exhibition and Expo would give much more public awareness to that, it would show them and debunk some of the misinformation that is spread within the transport sector on EV's as well as transitioning their homes to make

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them much more climate smart.

On the 29th of November, Mr. Speaker, in joining my colleague Minister for Youth and Sports, we also see the need for us to keep Grenada moving forward, and so we have a walk that would be done... The year before we had it in Carriacou, St. George and St. John, but this year, because of the time constraint, we will only be going on the Kilo Walk in St. John. And it is dubbed as a Kilo Walk to play on the kilowatts of the energy and also to burn some much needed calories.

So complementing these are weekly public engagement activities. We do have an energy efficiency power hover every Tuesday. We have a radio quiz that will hopefully be broadcast on all radios throughout the nation every Wednesday. We have a no-iron day. Every Friday, you would choose fabric that does not need to be ironed, so that we can save energy, and we would also be doing tips of the week every Monday, and the ongoing residential energy efficiency challenge, and of course, car-pooling days on November 14 and 21.

Mr. Speaker, these initiatives underscore our belief that the energy transition must be people-centred, it must be accessible, and community-led. Mr. Speaker, Grenada has also moved boldly under the environmental portfolio in terms of accelerating innovation in sargassum management, one of the key highlights for our ministry this year. We have moved to transforming the sargassum crisis, Mr. Speaker, into an economic opportunity, and so through the National Task Force on Sargassum Valorisation, we are implementing our national sargassum roadmap targeting the collection and utilisation of 10,000 tons of sargassum by 2026, converting marine waste into value-added products for agriculture and businesses.

Mr. Speaker, at this point, I really want to pay homage and say thanks to the leadership of our Prime Minister, the Honourable Dickon Mitchell, for giving his unwavering commitment towards this opportunity. For a very long time, as a country, we have been looking at the sargassum crisis as a way of reaction as opposed to being proactive. And so had it not been for the Member of St. David's leadership as Prime Minister, we would not have been able to attract **(sound of time bell)** so much

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international as well as regional attention. I hear the time, Mr. Speaker, and I beg for five minutes as I wrap up.

Mr. Speaker, our leadership in this area has already attracted international attention, being referenced as a model for circular economy innovation during the EU's Global Gateway Conference held in Brussels last month. Mr. Speaker, another major milestone in Grenada's deepened partnership is with the International Solar Alliance, abbreviated as ISA.

Following Grenada's active leadership at the ISA's regional committee meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean held in Santiago, Chile, in August of this year, Grenada has signed a country partnership framework with the ISA, marking a strategic turning point for our solar ambition. **(Applause)** So the ISA mission... There is a planned mission to Grenada... We were supposed to do it earlier this month, but with the preparations for COP 30 that will be held in Berlin, Kenya's Mock Conference, we had to reschedule, so it will be done later. This will translate, Mr. Speaker, this partnership into real, true, meaningful action on the ground.

Oftentimes, the Minister has been scrutinised, whether fair or not, in the public sphere as to why we travel so often. But if we only stay in our loop, Mr. Speaker, these opportunities would go to countries that are present at the negotiating table, and so thanks to the permission of the Prime Minister to gain access to these conferences.

The objectives of this mission would be to identify Grenada's priority areas for solar deployment and investment, to co-develop and implementation strategy and country partnership strategy and the mission will launch key priority tracks including revelatory support for scaling renewables, a core financing support for flagship initiatives such as the Solar-for-All, because we don't want it to just be financed by our national budget, but we want to expand it to attract international climate financing. It would also see the pre-feasibility assessment for floating solar as well as mini grids, because we have an issue with land space and technical cooperation for building strong and robust project pipelines.

So our proposed agenda, Mr. Speaker, is designed to yield time-bound deliverables, including our traffic implementation strategy, a pipeline with an indicative

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budget and roles, a regulatory support roadmap, a pre-application support world map and a pre-application co-financing package. In addition to this country partnership framework, we would also be helping the ministry as well to have dedicated staff that will be working in close conjunction with the ministry. So it would also allow us the opportunity to hire staff outside of the national budget's fiscal space.

So, Mr. Speaker, our ministry remains steadfast in ensuring that climate resilience is not an abstract goal, but a lived experience for every citizen, where sustainability, opportunity and resilience are the new pillars of Grenada's development. And Grenada has been leading, Mr. Speaker, within the region and internationally as well, and I want to thank my colleagues for being so compassionate and so tolerant to us and working in close conjunction with us.

Mr. Speaker, this is all for now. I thank you for allowing me the time to go on, and the rest will be said in the Budget. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Honourable MP for the constituency of St. John. Honourable Prime Minister.

Hon. Dickon Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good morning. Mr. Speaker, I wish to first place on record as the Minister for Disaster Management, on behalf of the Government and people of Grenada, our solidarity, empathy and condolences to the people of Cuba, Haiti, Jamaica and the Bahamas on the damage done to lives and livelihoods as a result of Hurricane Melissa.

The Government of Grenada, Mr. Speaker, in conjunction with our own NADMA and in conjunction with the organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, the OECS, will be leading initiatives to provide assistance to the Government and people of Jamaica, Cuba and Haiti in particular, both in terms of cash contributions and material contributions. The Cabinet will be meeting after Parliament today to finalise the package, and we will announce subsequently what the final decision is on this.

Mr. Speaker, I know the public has engaged in heated debate and discussions in

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relation to the disclosure that the United States Government, through the Southern Command, has sought our permission to erect a raider at the Maurice Bishop International Airport, and I have both seen and observed and have obviously met with significant questions and queries from the public about this issue. I just want to provide a little context, Mr. Speaker, as to where we are and emphasise a couple of things.

First, Mr. Speaker, we have ongoing security cooperation and arrangements with the United States and our regional partners on almost all aspects of law enforcement matters including combating the drug trade, narcotics trafficking and the proceeds narcotic trafficking through various legislative initiatives that are common to many of us through many corporation and regional institutions such as the RSS, CARICOM IMPACS, the JRCC, the Gun Intelligence Unit and other areas of cooperation.

Sometimes the corporation does extend to the US Southern Command, which is the military arm of the US. Mr. Speaker, so cooperation with the US is an ongoing and permanent issue, particularly when it comes to... in the case of the US drug flow to the north and in the case of Grenada, many of our Caribbean brothers and sisters, the gun trade to the south.

The request to install the raider is part of a broader request for further security cooperation, some of which we've already agreed to, but which, because of the fact that we don't want criminals to know what some of the arrangements are for addressing crime, we simply cannot disclose publicly. The raider specifically, Mr. Speaker, I think the debate that is ongoing is a clear indication of the fact that this Government is fully aware that, because of the nature of the requests, it could not proceed to make a definitive yes for the very reasons that we've seen played out in public.

So we first appreciate that the Maurice Bishop International site by its very history is one that is historic of significance to the public and one that evokes a lot of emotive reactions, that's one. And therefore, clearly, we appreciate that the public will want to opine on this matter.

Second, and perhaps more fundamentally important. The Maurice Bishop International Airport is a civilian airport and therefore it is not equipped to treat with military

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type operations.

Third, any installation of the raider would obviously disrupt the operations of the Maurice Bishop International Airport, and we would need technical advice as to whether or not it is feasible or advisable to do so. And so, Mr. Speaker, when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs put out the statement indicating that we were considering the request, to a large extent, what we were doing is paying attention to the technical aspect of the request and whether or not such a request could in fact be accommodated at the Maurice Bishop International Airport. That technical assessment is still ongoing and has not been completed.

The U.S request included, first, an opportunity for Southern Command to assess the site. They have done so, and after having done so, they indicated that there were two sites that they were interested in. In light of the ongoing discussions that we held with them on the technical issues, they came back and indicated that they are interested, perhaps in one site. They have also indicated, Mr. Speaker, that they wish to have a response by a particular time. We have not been able to provide that response for the simple reason that I've said just from a technical point of view that we are not in a position to satisfy ourselves as to the safety and other technical requirements as to whether or not such equipment properly ought to be at the airport.

The other fundamental issue that we have to consider, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that Grenada has no military, and therefore, our cooperation with the US has always been in the context of law enforcement and in the context of our own domestic law and in the context of international law. Therefore, we would have inquired about the legal basis or framework upon which, given that this is a military request, the request was being made, and we've entered into discussions on those issues, which are not separate.

So when we indicated that we were considering, I'm simply providing a bit more context and more detail, that is precisely what we have been doing. It's important to point out, and I think this is important for me to go on record to say that as Prime Minister of the country and the government we need, we would not enter into any agreement, which, from a Grenadian perspective, has any possibility of violating Grenadian domestic law or

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violating international law. **(Applause)**

And, as it stands right now, as I said, the technical discussions, largely, are what have been taking place. That is the update I have, and if there is any need for any further updates, we will provide them. I wish to assure the public that we will not make any decisions on this matter in secret and will not disclose them to the public. And in any event, it cannot be kept a secret. You can hide a radar if it's at the Maurice Bishop International Airport.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, and on the assumption that you may query whether under the heading of Ministerial Statements I'm able to say what I am about to say, I wish to assure you that my research suggests that I can, and it says which... I want to say, before I say what I wish to say, I wish to point out that it says, "Ministerial Statement, particularly oral statements, could embrace any number of issues, policy announcements, responses to significant national or international events or crises, updates on ongoing situations, outcomes of international summits negotiations or important meetings, findings of official inquiries or significant court judgments and clarifications of issues and correction of misconception with factual information.

So, Mr. Speaker, I wish to seek your permission to respond to your announcement in which you read into the record a letter written to you by the Leader of the Opposition, indicating that they were absenting themselves from attendance, not just at this Sitting, but at the Sitting of the Senate.

The letter went on... If I misquote, you have the record, so I would urge you to correct me, and I'm paraphrasing here to suggest that I had publicly chided the Speaker, his creeping authoritarianism in Parliament, the Opposition was being marginalised in Parliament, and there was disregard for the constitutional role of the Opposition. It seems to me that we do have an Opposition Leader here today because we have a majority of one. **(Applause)** So, at least I would commend him for doing the people's work by attending Parliament. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker, the repeated absence, this is not the first time. Since this Parliament has been constituted, the Opposition has repeatedly absented themselves, repeatedly

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walked out during the process, which demonstrates to their constituents a wanton disregard and neglect for the job that they were elected to do.

So, factually, Mr. Speaker, contrary to this assertion that the Opposition is being marginalised, I want to emphasise that their constitutional role is being sidelined. It is this administration that has worked assiduously, even against, sometimes, public sentiment, to strengthen the office of an institution of the Opposition. **(Applause)**

It is this administration that has pioneered through the House Committee the payment of salaries for Parliamentarians regardless of whether you're in the Opposition or not. **(Applause)** So you're getting EC\$5,000 a month, and they're not coming to work; that's the example they're setting.

The vehicles are lined up outside in the driveway, Mr. Speaker, with a big seal "Member of Parliament for St. Andrew North-East, St. Andrew South-East, St. Mark and St. George North-West". Where are they? It is this administration, contrary to a lot of popular belief or partisanship, which has pioneered and insisted that Members of Parliament, regardless of whether you're on the Opposition or the "Government Side", should be provided with resources to do the work that the people have elected you to do. Come and do people work. **(Applause)**

And to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that was on dictatorship in the House, authoritarianism and that the adjournment of the matter to today's date was done without consultation with them. Well, first of all, we have to understand certain things. You are the minority in the House, and when a Motion is moved and it is voted upon, and you lose, that's what being the minority is. It is not dictatorship. They sat there. A Motion was moved to adjourn the matter today, to adjourn the sitting to today, and it was done to facilitate them.

Mr. Speaker, when I attended Parliament, I was accosted by a reporter who told me that Parliament was not going to take place because the Opposition said they didn't get the documents; that's even before I got into the Chamber. So, they have already gone to the public and said that. You have written into the record that the documents were sent, but it appears it was not received.

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Well, you know why this is happening, Mr. Speaker, because I have seen the stuff. It's being sent to personal email addresses. It is not being sent to the Member of Parliament's email address. When we talk about institutionalised strengthening, MPs should not be receiving official documents, government releases and Parliament's releases at their personal email addresses. It should be sent to a Government of Grenada or a Parliament email address so they receive the documents. **(Applause)** So, if you have Hotmail or Gmail or whatever it is using, and it can't take the size of the documents, and out of procedural fairness, the Member of Parliament for the Town of St. George is quite familiar with the fact that sometimes procedural fairness is more important than substantive fairness. I got up when proceedings seemed to be galloping to say I was told that the folks on the "Other Side" said they did not get the documents, so it would be to their disadvantage for us to insist on proceeding and by giving them an extra week, so that they could study the documents.

They obviously don't want to work, the documents require too much reading, too much effort, and so the easiest thing to do is to write a letter, act in a cowardly manner, accuse the House, it's seems to me, because I don't know if it's me or the Speaker, they accusing of this authoritarianism and of marginalising the Opposition. There should be no need to consult about when Parliament is sitting. You are employed by people. You went and begged for the job, so come to work. Which Grenadian employee consulted on when to come to work? **(Applause)**

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm stating for the record, I'm quite eager to apologise to you, if it appears that it's merely seeking to provide some fairness to the Opposition at their request that we should adjourn the House to facilitate them in getting the chance to read the documents, which came across that I was rude or impertinent or I was seeking to be chided. I humbly for the record apologise and withdraw the statement, and for future purposes, I will not intervene when the Opposition claims they didn't get documents or they didn't receive them, so that Parliament can proceed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

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Bills: Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2025

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Prime Minister. Let's proceed.

Deputy Clerk (Ag.): Item 15 – Bills.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to introduce for its first reading a Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

Clerk: A Bill which seeks to amend the Marriage Act, Chapter 184 ("the principal Act"), to increase the minimum age at which a person may marry from 16 years of age to 18 years of age and to remove any exception thereto, with consequential amendments to related regulations, shortly entitled, Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the relevant Standing Order of the House be suspended to enable the Bill to be taken through all its stages at this Sitting. Thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

Relevant Standing Order suspended.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Grenada has demonstrated its commitment... Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

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Question proposed.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Grenada has demonstrated its commitment to eliminating violence against women and girls by implementing measures aimed at addressing both covert and systematic factors that affect our women.

Mr. Speaker, through participation in various conventions on which Grenada has signed on, we as a government, Mr. Speaker, continue to uphold the fundamental values that speak out against violence against our women and girls and to engender equity and fairness and the protection of women and girls. Mr. Speaker, the ratification of these conventions on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, affirms Grenada's obligation to take legislative and policy action towards the elimination of violence against women and girls.

Mr. Speaker, a comprehensive desk review and rapid situational analysis were conducted in the year 2020, and I've identified several gaps, which we are now attempting to fix by way of this and other pieces of legislation. One such gap, Mr. Speaker, is the subsisting violation of the convention of the rights of the child by those provisions in the Marriage Act, Chapter 184 ("the principal Act"), which, Mr. Speaker, permit child marriage.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, the Marriage (Amendment) Bill 2025 seeks to rectify this gap by amending the principal Act and increasing the minimum age from 16 to 18, at which Mr. Speaker, a person who previously could have married at the age of 16 would now have to wait until 18. But, Mr. Speaker, very importantly, Mr. Speaker, one must understand that child marriage adversely affects our women and girls, and it is something that should not be accepted in a modern society. This act, Mr. Speaker, seeks to address that particular gap.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to draw your attention to a couple of things. A bad marriage, Mr. Speaker... Imagine a young girl entering into a bad marriage at the age of 16, as

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previously obtained that, Mr. Speaker, could literally shatter the young girl's life and spoil her future. But alternatively, Mr. Speaker, a good marriage can result in the opposite: a bright and wonderful future. But, Mr. Speaker, we are trying to address these deficits to ensure as much as possible that this legislation seeks to allow marriage at the age of 18 when one is bit older.

Child marriage is identified, Mr. Speaker, as, "Any formal or informal union or marriage union or marital union where at least one of the parties is under the age of 18 years", and it is widely recognise, child marriage is widely recognised as a harmful practice and a fundamental violation of human rights.

Mr. Speaker, one would appreciate that child marriage generally is driven by poverty, gender inequality and in some cases, social norms and traditions, lack of education and inadequate security. So, all of these matters, Mr. Speaker, it is important that they are addressed.

Based on projections from UNICEF, Mr. Speaker, and other organisations, an estimated 12 million girls are married each year under the age of 18 years. 12 million, Mr. Speaker. A 2024 Save the Child Report found that a girl is married every 30 seconds, a young girl under the age of 18 is married every 30 seconds. In some countries with high child marriage, about 32 million adolescent girls live in these areas, primarily, Mr. Speaker, in the African continent.

Mr. Speaker, in India, a report published by the Times of India in April 2025 this year, Mr. Speaker, noted that based on data from 416 districts, 1,351 child marriages were prevented between April last year and March this year, that is over 112 child marriages prevented each month. But, Mr. Speaker, the good news is globally, there has been some progress where the overall prevention of child marriage has declined over the past decade. Progress is slow in some regions, especially in West and Central Africa. So, Mr. Speaker, this is a battle that we must win. Thankfully, Mr. Speaker, this part of the globe we are not severely affected. Mr. Speaker, we must amend our legislation to keep up with the times to eliminate child marriage, and so, Mr. Speaker, this Bill proposes that marriage be entered into no earlier than 18 years of age.

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This particular Bill, Mr. Speaker, contains 10 clauses and 1 schedule. Clause 1 provides for the short title of the Bill. Clause 2 provides for the non-application of the Act to marriages solemnised prior to the date of commencement. Clause 3, Mr. Speaker, provides for an amendment to section 3 of the principal Act to prohibit the solemnisation of marriages where either of the parties to the marriage is under 18 years of age.

Clause 4, Mr. Speaker, provides for an amendment to section 19 of the Principal Act to remove all references to the requirement of parental consent with respect to the solemnisation of a marriage. Mr. Speaker, one can understand moving from 16 to 18, which is no longer necessary.

Clause 5, Mr. Speaker, provides for the repeal of section 20 of the principal Act to delete the provisions relating to the procedure when the consent of a parent or guardian is required. Clause 6, Mr. Speaker, provides for an amendment to section 21 of the principal Act to remove all reference to the requirement or refusal of parental consent.

Clause 7, Mr. Speaker, provides for an amendment to section 31 of the principal Act to prohibit the solemnisation of marriage in *articulo mortis* (at the point of death) where either of the parties to the marriage is under 18 years of age.

Clause 8, Mr. Speaker, provides for an amendment to the First Schedule to the principal Act to remove all references to the requirement for parental consent with respect to the solemnisation of marriages in Forms one and two, respectively.

Clause 9 provides for an amendment to the Fourth Schedule to the principal Act to remove all references to the requirement for parental consent.

So, Mr. Speaker, herein is the Bill seeking to address the problem of potential Child Marriage and honouring our commitment to the conventions that we sign on to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Leader of Government's Business. I now invite the Prime Minister to take the floor.

Hon. Dickon Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support

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the passage of the Bill as presented by the Leader of Government's Business, the aim of which is to end child marriages that have been sanctioned by our law, so I want us to be clear. A child in Grenada under our Marriage Act at 16 years old or at 17 years old can, in fact, get married; all he or she needs to do is demonstrate that their parent or guardian is consenting to the marriage. So, that actually permits parents to marry off their children against their children's will or consent under our law now.

This amendment to the Marriage Act, Mr. Speaker, is part of a broader series of legislation that not only this administration, but the prior administration as well, via the spotlight initiative, has sought to embark upon the modernisation and to give primacy of protection to our children. So, there's another Bill which is not yet before this Parliament, which has created all kinds of hullabaloo in the public and all kinds of noise, a Bill which is merely seeking to give children access to sexual reproductive healthcare, and I have not heard the same set of people who was making all the noise talk about the existing laws on our books which permits our children to be married off (**applause**), and to engage in sex; the same sex they seem to think by allowing them to have access to reproductive health care that will engage in.

So, I want us to understand, Mr. Speaker, that we have to resist the temptation for sensationalisation and for all kinds of random woke conspiracy theories when it comes to how this administration seeks to protect our children. We have sought as much as possible, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that we can align almost all government policy and all legislation with a minimum threshold of 18 years, which for the most part is when people are allowed to drive, people are long to get the ID card, their registration card to vote, people are allowed to get a NIS card et cetera.

So, we are seeking consistency. There may be opportunities when exceptions are required as in the case of access to healthcare, and we would also see in the Bill that is coming to the Status Children Act, which comes next, also again, issues of parentage for children under 18 years old, but it's important emphasise, Mr. Speaker, that should law remain way it is, it creates an opportunity for Grenada to be used as a place where children first can married children, second, a place where nefarious actors can take

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advantage of children and parents who may be vulnerable financially and pay them to married off young boys and girls in Grenada who at 16 would be barely leaving high school.

So, I wish to commend the Bill in its entirety because it seeks to make all of the consequential amendments so that the reference to 16 years is removed completely and that at 18, since we recognise this as the age of adulthood or civil responsibility, as in, you have the capacity to enter into legal obligations that are marriage is one, that you would at 18 in the free to do so with no reference to any parental consent but that there would opportunity for solemnising, recognising or validating any marriage in the State of Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique between any persons who are under the age of 18 years old. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Prime Minister, and I now invite the MP for the Town of St. George to take the floor.

Hon. Peter David: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to make a few comments and support. It's just that I think it's a learning curve for many people on issues like this, because I'm sure if we speak to most people in Grenada, they will tell you they weren't aware of these circumstances. I think the passage of this Bill also raises issues about children, not only in the context of marriage but generally.

What I would like to say, and we will raise the issue again in the next Bill, is to strengthen institutions that deal with the issue of children. The institutions I come into contact with every day deal with juveniles in the court. We need to put more resources into these issues so that we can find ways to educate, not only the kids, but parents, because remember, there's a lot of lack of information in families, even in this context.

So, I simply want to say to the government, not to the government, but to our society that we need to resource these institutions that protect the kids. There are many people out there working hard every day to ensure that our children are taken care of and not abused. There's a whole lot of child abuse taking place in our society, and this is one

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that we are addressing today. I think in order to solve a problem, we must treat it seriously, and an indication of that would be putting in more resources.

But there are experts out there whom we can speak to about it. I think we need to, as a society, not treat this as a partisan issue. Again, that's my mantra, not to deal with kids as if they're in this party or that party, but simply deal with our children as the nation's children, and I commend the passage of this Bill, but I also urge that we look at our children with respect to other issues. So, Mr. Speaker, I engage my support. Thank you. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Thank you very much, Honourable MP, for the Town of St. George.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Clerk: A Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move that the House resolves itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider the Bill Clause by Clause. Thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

House in Committee.

House resumed.

Mr. Speaker: Honourable Members, I have to report that the Bill was considered by a Committee of the whole House and passed without amendment. Leader of

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Government's Business

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move that the Chairman's Report be adopted.

Question put and agreed to.
Chairman's Report adopted.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: I beg to move the third reading of the Bill.

Question put and agreed to.
Bill read a third time and passed.

Clerk: A Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to introduce for its first reading a Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, Status of Children Bill, 2025.

Clerk: A Bill which seeks to provide legal certainty regarding the status of children and their parents, shortly entitled, Status of Children Bill, 2025.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that

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the relevant Standing Order of the House be suspended to enable the Bill to be taken through all its stages at this Sitting.

Question put and agreed to.

Relevant Standing Order Suspended.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

Question proposed.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this Bill, Status of Children Bill, 2025, is part of these spotlight initiative Bills, similar to the one that was just passed in this Honourable House, in seeking to address some of these gaps following the review that was undertaken here in Grenada. It also seeks to reform the law relating to children by providing equal status for all children and to remove all discrimination against children that are born out of wedlock. Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, the Bill will repeal and replace the Status of Children Act, Chapter 311A. The Bill is divided, Mr. Speaker, into five Parts and contain 20 clauses and one schedule.

Part I, Mr. Speaker, provides for preliminary matters and contains three clauses, clauses one to three. Clause 1, Mr. Speaker, provides for the short title. Clause 2 provides for interpretation provisions and definitions of key terms, including the definitions for "child" and "parent". Clause 3 provides for the scope of application of the provisions of the Act.

Part II of the Bill, Mr. Speaker, provides for the status of children and contains

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clauses four to seven. Clause 4, Mr. Speaker, abolishes the legal distinction in the status of children born within and outside of marriage, and the rule of construction whereby words of relationships signify only legitimate relationships.

Mr. Speaker, the rule of construction whereby in any instrument in the absence of expression to the contrary, words of relationship signify only legitimate relationships. This, Mr. Speaker, is here by abolished. For the purpose of constructing any instrument with reference to the relationship of a person, the use of the words legitimate, illegitimate, lawful, unlawful shall not, Mr. Speaker, of itself, prevent relationship from been determined in accordance with this section, subsection one.

Clause 5, Mr. Speaker, provides for the circumstances under which a person will presumed to be a father of a child and establishes that where circumstances exist that give rise to presumptions of paternity in respect of more than one father, no presumption shall be made in respect of paternity.

Clause 6, Mr. Speaker, provides the presumption of parentage where a child is born to a woman, or both a woman and a man, as a result of carrying out of an artificial conception procedure.

Clause 7, Mr. Speaker, requires that certain instruments pertaining to the acknowledgement of paternity will be filled by the Registry and empowers the Registrar to permit the inspection of such instruments.

Part III of the Act, Mr. Speaker, provides for the parentage and constraints, and it speaks to clauses eight to 12. Clause 8, Mr. Speaker, sets out the circumstances under which, and the persons by whom, an application for declaration of parentage may be made to the court.

Clause 9 provides for procedures to be used to determine the percentage and states that the court may, on the request of a party to the proceedings, or on the request of a person representing the child or his guardian.

So, Mr. Speaker, what this is attempting to do, is to remove all forms of inequity regarding lawful and unlawful in wedlock and out of wedlock. This is what this is attempting to address, Mr. Speaker, and to allow, Mr. Speaker, children who, as it were,

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were born out of wedlock to now have equal privileges and equal opportunities, Mr. Speaker, under the law, especially as it relates to the sharing of property or receipt of property from the parents and care.

And, Mr. Speaker, this also addresses whether or not somebody is actually the parent; in other words, it speaks to adoptive parents. So an adoptive parent, Mr. Speaker, presumed to be the parent in the circumstances as per the legislation.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is part of the gap that this legislation, Mr. Speaker, is seeking to address. The previous Act, Chapter 311A, is now repealed and replaced by this new legislation, which moves all of these inequities and allows our children to be treated equally under the law for the purposes of our family. So, with this, Mr. Speaker, I now commend the Bill to the House. Thank you. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker: Thank you very much, Leader of Government's Business. All right. The Honourable MP for St. John.

Hon. Kerryne James: Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to give my full support for this Bill, Mr. Speaker, though technical in its drafting, I believe that this Bill speaks directly to the fabric of our society to the meaning of family, of belonging and dignity in Grenada today. And it calls us, Mr. Speaker, to confront an uncomfortable truth that for decades the law itself has drawn a line between children born in and out of wedlock as if the circumstances of one's birth could be determined by the worth of one's life. And so this legislation or this Bill presented here today in this Honourable House, Mr. Speaker, finally erases that line.

Mr. Speaker, ours is a small society where family often takes many forms, certainly, so for my constituency and most of the constituencies in our country, we have grandparents raising grandchildren, we have partners building homes together without the formal of marriage construct or marriage agreement, we have mothers holding her holds together through share courage and sacrifice and we also have fathers as well, Mr. Speaker, who is also the head of their household as well.

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In almost every community, we know of children, and as we say in our local parlance, who carry their father's eyes or who have the bow foot like their father's lineage, but they don't have the father's surname or who grew up hearing whispers about who is legitimate or a bastard child and who is not. And so, Mr. Speaker, those words and the system that kept them alive, I believe in my humble opinion, have done harm not only to the child or the children, but to our collective sense of identity, fairness and decency.

And, so this Bill is therefore not merely a legal reform, but I think it's a social correction. It recognises that love, responsibility and parenthood cannot be confined to a marriage certificate. It ensures, Mr. Speaker, that every child, wherever they are born, stands equal before the law of this land.

Mr. Speaker, beyond moving this arcane distinction, the Bill does something equally important. It modernises how we define and how we prove parentage. In a time when science, medicine and technology have evolved, this Bill brings Grenada into the 21st century, recognising assisted conception, formalising acknowledgement of paternity and setting out fair and transparent ways to establish who a child's parents are. It also encourages or ensures that our courts, registrars and medical professionals work within clear legal boundaries that protect privacy and uphold human dignity.

Mr. Speaker, this is indeed about protecting rights, yes, but it is also about protecting relationships. It is about giving a child the right to know who they are, to inherit fairly and to carry both halves of their identity without shame or secrecy. It is about giving mothers their assurance, Mr. Speaker, that their child will not be treated as less than and fathers the legal volume or the legal avenue, rather, to acknowledge their children with pride and great accountability.

And so in many ways, Mr. Speaker, this Bill catches our law up to where our people are already, living complex, living blended, resilient lives that don't always fit the old templates of what the family looks like or what the family should be. And that, Mr. Speaker, is the beauty of a modern democracy that the laws evolve with its people.

Mr. Speaker, there are constituents whom I have consulted on this Bill for numerous reasons: those who are more religious than I am, those who are affected or

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will be positively impacted, and just to hear their views and opinions. And some of their concerns were what this will mean for property, for inheritance and for disputes. And so, having reread the briefing notes, I want to use this opportunity now to remind them that the law must serve justice, not convenience, and this Bill includes transitional safeguards to protect administrators and estates while also allowing fair inquiry into rightful heirs, but it does not open floodgates. I think that it opens doors to fairness.

And for those as well within my constituency who were also concerned about the testing and privacy, I think that the law sets clear rules that only approved laboratories under court supervision can conduct these procedures. And so I'm happy that this was spelt out in this Bill that has been presented. Children will not become subjects of what, you know, is one of our ways of life, which is gossip or misuse. I think that they're rights are protected within a dignified process, and it is clearly spelt out in this revision.

Mr. Speaker, in Grenada, I think that we are building... Or, in the Grenada that we are building, we are building one that is progressive, one that is compassionate and of course, one that is rooted in equality. There can be no first-class and no second-class child or children in this country. Every child, Mr. Speaker, is entitled to the same legal standing, the same recognition and the same opportunities. This is the kind of quiet, but powerful reform that shapes the soul of any nation, Mr. Speaker, and particularly so for small islands. It tells every young man and every young woman who grew up hearing that they were illegitimate or that they were bastards that the law now affirms, what we always knew to be true, that you are legitimate, you belong, and you matter.

So, Mr. Speaker, against all of the aforementioned, I am very much proud and honoured to support this Bill as presented not only as a minister, but as a daughter or an MP, but as a daughter of this soil who knows the realities of our communities and who believes that justice must reach into the very heart of family life, and also as one of those children who were labelled before as bastard child or an illegitimate child. **(Applause)**

So, Mr. Speaker, this is indeed a reform about equality. It is indeed a reform about dignity and, of course, about belonging. It is about ensuring that no child, absolutely no child, throughout Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique carries the burden of an

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outdated label again. So, with those few words, Mr. Speaker, I stand in support of this transformative Bill. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker: MP for St. Andrew North-West

Hon. Delma Thomas: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this Bill was derived from the spotlight initiative, as stated before, a partnership between the Government of Grenada, the European Union, and the United Nations, which focuses on ending violence against women and children. And, Mr. Speaker, you would appreciate that's because of the data we had, so that's where this set of Bill derived.

I had the privilege of serving as the minister responsible for that initiative at the time during a different dispensation. This legislation represents a significant step forward in building a stronger, more protective framework for every child in Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique.

It is with a deep personal conviction that I rise to support the Status of the Children Bill, 2025, a Bill that speaks directly to the heart of who we are as a people, as a society and who we believe every child has the right to be.

I was born out of wedlock as my sister said earlier, and a lot of our children in Grenada were born out of wedlock, and like so many others, Mr. Speaker, I know what it feels like to be labelled, as she said, bastard or illegitimate, not by your own actions, but by the circumstances of your birth. I know what it means to grow up hearing those words as we say illegitimate and bastard as though your life somehow has less value, your future fewer rights, your existence less dignity. But, I also know what it means to rise, and today I stand here not in shame but with pride as a Member of Parliament, adding my voice to the legislation that once and for all abolishes discrimination against children born outside of marriage.

The Bill does more than change words into law. It restores justice to thousands of Grenadian children, past, present and future. It affirms that every child is legal not by virtue of the parents' marital status, but by virtue of humanity. It replaces old colonial

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ideas of legitimacy with modern principles of fairness, equality and respect. It protects children's rights to identity, to inheritance, to dignity, and it sends a powerful message that no child in Grenada will be treated as a second-class citizen because of how they came into the world. I especially welcomed the repeal of the outdated laws like the Legitimacy Act, the Status of Children Act, and the reforms to other pieces of legislation that once codified inequality into our legal system.

Let me be clear, Mr. Speaker, this is not just legislative housekeeping. This is healing, this is retrace, this is the kind of leadership that says to every child, you belong, and to every adult who has borne the pain of discrimination, you are always worthy. The law just takes too long to see so. I support the Bill not just as a Parliamentarian, but someone whose life stands as proof that no label, legal or social, can limit the potential of a child once given a fair chance. This is our chance to write fairness into law. I support the Status of the Children Bill with my whole heart. I thank you. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker: Thank you very much, Honourable MP for St. Andrew North-West, and I now invite the MP for the Great South, it's called.

Hon. Andy Williams: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I must say that I don't know what it's like to be called a bastard child or an illegitimate child because I was born in wedlock, but I support this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express full support for the Status of Children Bill, 2025. This Bill is a bold step forward in our commitment to equality, justice and the protection of every child in Grenada. For too long, our laws have drawn painful lines between children born in and out of marriage. Those distinctions have no place in a modern and just society. Today, we are saying, clearly and confidently, that every child is equal under the law. No exception, no conditions.

This Bill gives effect to our obligations on the Convention on the Rights of the Child ensuring that our national laws reflect the principles of fairness, dignity and human rights. It modernises our family and law system addressing parentage through clear scientific

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procedures like DNA testing, recognising assisted reproduction, and guaranteeing the inheritance rights for all children. It balances compassion with accountability ensuring our courts, or registries, and our estates operate fairly and transparently.

Mr. Speaker, by repealing outdated laws such as the Legitimacy Act and the old Status of Children Act, this Bill replaces discrimination with equality and stigma with dignity. Mr. Speaker, in passing this Bill we affirm a simple truth, a child's worth is not determined by the circumstances of their birth but by their humanity. Thank you very much. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker: Thank you very much, MP for South St. George. I now invite the MP for the Town of St. George to make his contribution.

Hon. Peter David: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I won't repeat all that was said just to endorse what colleagues see as the spirit of this legislation. The question of illegitimacy, the psychological impact of all of this on the kids, again, addresses the issue of equality among children and opportunities for all of the nation's kids, but each generation will do.

And we sat here today, I remember Dr. Francis Alexis. Those of us old enough to remember, we used to call Doc, up to today, people call him Doc, "A child is a child", because he made some progress in that regard.

I think as we move forward, each generation will play its role. We are not at the end of history with this, but we certainly are making progress toward a better society for our kids. I want to commend all of the speakers who address that, but I just want to address technical issues that maybe we need to probe.

In the legislation, Mr. Speaker, particularly Part II, section 5... In that area, it talks about using a new standard, the standard of probability, and the issue of the balance of probabilities. You know, we are now opening up more possibilities for persons who are saying, "This is my father; this is my child". As we do that and increase accessibility, we also need to ensure that mistakes are not made. Therefore, I noticed that there is going

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to be additional work on the registry.

And again, I came back to the issue I raised in the previous piece of legislation. We must not just pass laws that are easy. We come here, and we pass laws, but we must also ensure that, in practice, we are able to provide what is necessary to these families. We need operational fairness, and in that regard, I see reference to central... A good idea... To centralise information in the registry. We need, therefore, to also have a provision which says, "The minister will allocate sufficient resources," whether or not it's done formally. I am just making the point again that we do need to make these actions, which increases the work to get it done, by, but we don't increase resources.

So I'm suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that either we put it in the legislation that the minister must allocate resources, including digital infrastructure, so that the registry can do its work properly. I make that recommendation simply on the basis of ensuring that what we aim to achieve here is actually achieved.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to that, we need to ensure that... And I think it's adequately dealt with here, but we need to look at it. There are going to be more issues with estates now. People are going to be saying, "This is my father. My father died". Therefore, there is going to be much increase in challenges in court for estates. It therefore means again that we need to ensure the provisions are there in the administration of this legislation, so that when these things increase, we have the infrastructure in place.

So the idea is fine, the legislation is fine, but the practice must ensure that children who will now be saying that, "Ron is my father, the MP for St. George North-East"... So all of the resources he has have to be distributed more than the two he says he has among five, it means that the infrastructure is there to take care of these problems. He is my friend, Mr. Speaker, I can say anything. He won't sue me.

The point I'm making, Mr. Speaker, is that as we pass this legislation, which I am in full support of, ensure that the registry, ensures that all the resources are made available to have justice done to these kids who are now going to be claiming their just peace.

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So, Mr. Speaker, I support the Bill. Again, it's a good piece of legislation to ensure equality among the kids. But as I started, I end by paying tribute to all of the legislators over the years who tried, who are trying, and working as this Parliament is doing to ensure fairness and equity, and equality among children of the nation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
(Applause)

Mr. Speaker: Thank you very much, Honourable MP for the Town of St. George. Honourable members, the question is that the Bill be read a second time.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Clerk: A Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, Status of Children Bill, 2025.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move that the House resolves itself into a Committee, the whole House to enable the Bill to be considered Part by Part. Thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

House in Committee.

House resumed.

Mr. Speaker: This Honourable House now resumes. Honourable Members, I have to report that the Bill was considered by a Committee of the whole House and passed without amendment.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

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Bills: Public Sector Employees (Pension Fund) (Validation and Indemnification) Bill, 2025

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move that the Chairman's Report be adopted.

Question put and agreed to.

Chairman's Report adopted.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move the third reading of the Bill.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a third time and passed.

Clerk: A Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, Status of Children Bill, 2025.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to introduce for its first reading a Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, Public Sector Employees (Pension Fund) (Validation and Indemnification) Bill, 2025. Thank you.

Clerk: An Act to validate and confirm as lawful, the addition of statutory bodies to Schedule I of the Public Sector Employee (Pension Fund) Act No.19 of 2024, shortly entitled, Public Sector Employees (Pension Fund) (Validation and Indemnification) Bill, 2025.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

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Hon. Philip Telesford: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the relevant Standing Order of the House to be suspended to enable the Bill to be taken through all the stages at this Sitting. Thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

Relevant Standing Order suspended.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

Question proposed.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Public Sector Employees (Pension Fund) (Validation and Indemnification) Bill, 2025. This Bill, Mr. Speaker, was enacted by Parliament by an Act No. 19 of 2025, which is the principal Act, to provide for the establishment of a contributory pension scheme for public sector employees and employees of statutory bodies.

Section 73, Mr. Speaker, of the Act empowers the minister responsible for Public Administration to amend Schedule I of the Act, by order, subject to affirmative resolution to be able to add statutory bodies to which the provisions of the Act will normally apply. Mr. Speaker, the minister exercises powers by making an Order, SRO 30 of 2025, to add the following institutions or statutory bodies: the Grenada Cultural Foundation, the Grenada Stadium Authority, the Planning and Development Authority, and the T. A. Marryshow Community College.

Notwithstanding this, Mr. Speaker, the Order did not receive the requisite parliamentary approval as required under section 73. Therefore, deductions and payments that were made for the months considered were inadvertently made without

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the necessary legal authority. This Bill, Mr. Speaker, seeks to address this oversight and to validate and confirm as law the addition of those statutory bodies so named.

Clause 1 of the Bill, Mr. Speaker, provides for the short title. Clause 2 validates and confirms as lawful the purported addition of the four statutory bodies identified earlier and all other Acts done during that period, including deductions and payments.

Clause 3, Mr. Speaker, identifies persons from indemnified... Sorry. Clause 3, Mr. Speaker, indemnifies persons from liability in respect of deductions and payments that were made during the period under S.R.&O 30 of 2025.

Mr. Speaker, the Public Sector Employees Pension Fund Amendment of Schedule 1 No. 2, Order No. 25, seeks to do the following:

1. It seeks to reinsert the statutory bodies purportedly added to Schedule I S.R.&O 30 2025, namely, the Grenada Culture Foundation, Grenada National Stadium Authority, Planning and Development Authority, and T. A. Marryshow Community College.
2. Secondly, it also seeks to insert two additional statutory bodies, namely, the Grenada Solid Waste Management Authority and the National Training Agency.
3. And finally, Mr. Speaker, the Bill seeks to reveal as SRO No. 30 of 2025.

Mr. Speaker, these legislative proposals will ensure that there is a seamless transition from the validated S.R.&O 30 of 2025 to the operations of the proposed new Order. With this, Mr. Speaker, I now commend the Bill to the House for consideration. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you very much, Leader of Government's Business. Honourable Prime Minister.

Hon. Dickon Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to support the Bill. The Leader of Government's Business has presented the Bill in its technical form, but in the Grenadian language, what this means is that these people who didn't have a pension before now have a pension. **(Applause)** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

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Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Clerk: A Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, Public Sector Employees (Pension Fund) (Validation and Indemnification) Bill, 2025.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the House resolves itself into a Committee of the whole House to enable the Bill to be considered Part by Part. Clause by Clause, Mr. Speaker.

Question put and agreed to.

House in Committee.

House resumed.

Mr. Speaker: I have to report that the Bill was considered by a Committee of the whole House and passed without amendment. Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move that the Chairman's Report be adopted.

Question put and agreed to.

Chairman's Report adopted.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move the third reading of the Bill.

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Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a third time and passed.

Clerk: A Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, Public Sector Employees (Pension Fund) (Validation and Indemnification) Bill, 2025.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to introduce for its first reading a Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, Agreement Establishing the Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management for Caribbean Small Island Developing States Bill, 2025.

Clerk: A Bill which seeks to give the force of law to the Agreement Establishing the Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management for Caribbean Small Island Developing States, shortly entitled, Agreement Establishing the Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management for Caribbean Small Island Developing States Bill, 2025.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the relevant Standing Order be suspended to enable the Bill to go through all its stages at this Sitting. Thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

Relevant Standing Order suspended.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

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Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

Question proposed.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Agreement Establishing the Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management (PISLM) for Caribbean Small Island Developing States (CSIDS) Bill, 2025.

The Agreement, Mr. Speaker, Establishing the Partnership Initiative for Caribbean Small Island States was signed by the duly authorised representatives of the participating Governments, namely Barbados, the Commonwealth, Dominica, Grenada, and St. Lucia. This was done, Mr. Speaker, April 11, 2024, and entered into force on May 22, 2024.

The effect of this PISLM Agreement was to establish an independent not-for-profit international organisation known as the Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management. The primary purpose of which is to promote Sustainable Land and Soil Management within the Caribbean.

Subsequently, Mr. Speaker, the Agreement between the Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management and the Government of Grenada, which is referred to as the PISLM Headquarters Agreement, was signed by duly authorised representatives of the Government of Grenada and the Partnership Initiative Organisation, respectively, on June 17, 2025. The purpose of the PISLM Headquarters Agreement was to provide for the establishment of the PISLM principal office in Grenada.

Notwithstanding, Grenada signatory to the Agreement because Grenada is a dualist state; both agreements, Mr. Speaker, the PISLM Agreement and the Headquarters Agreement, must be incorporated into the domestic laws of Grenada through an Act of Parliament. And this is exactly Mr. Speaker, what we are attempting to do today, notwithstanding that the documents were duly sent.

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Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, the Agreement establishing PISLM for Caribbean Small Island Development States seeks to incorporate the PISLM Management and PISLM Headquarters Agreement into law by giving them legal force and effect, and contains six clauses and two Schedules.

Clause 1, Mr. Speaker, of the Bill speaks to the short title, and it also speaks to the retroactive commencement date of May 2, 2024, save for clause 3(2), clause 5(3), clause 5(4), and clause 6(c) and Schedule II of the Bill, which shall be deemed to have come into force on the 17th day of June, when Grenada actually signed 2025, when we signed the Headquarters Agreement.

Clause 2, Mr. Speaker, provides for the interpretation provision and includes the definition of terms used throughout the Act.

Clause 3 provides for the PISLM Agreement as set out in Schedule I, and clause 2 provides for the Headquarters Agreement in Schedule II.

Clause 4, Mr. Speaker, exempts the Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management from the application of certain legislative enactments from the payment of specified duties and charges.

Clause 5 provides for the amendments of the PISLM Agreement and the revisions or supplementary agreements to the PISLM Headquarters Agreement, as agreed to by the parties, to be reflected in the respective Schedules to the Act, by Order published in the *Gazette*.

Clause 6, Mr. Speaker, empowers the minister to make regulations to give effect to the provisions of the PISLM Agreement, the PISLM Headquarters Agreement and the Act, on the recommendation of the Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management.

Schedule I sets out the text of the PISLM Agreement, and Schedule II sets out the text for the PISLM Headquarters Agreement.

Mr. Speaker, the PISLM Agreement is governed by the Constitution, consisting of 35 articles governing all relevant aspects of governance or embodying all aspect of governance of the agreement including; functions and powers of the council, voting by

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the council, procedures of the council, the executive committee, how it functions and how it operates, functions and powers of the executive committee, voting by the executive committee, procedures advisory committee, how it functions and who comprises it, the secretariat how it is staffed and appointment of an executive director and on and on and on. Mr. Speaker, I simply want to touch on a few of the articles; all are important, but I'm just going to map a few of them.

Article 13 of the PISLM Agreement, Mr. Speaker, speaks to an executive committee. The committee, Mr. Speaker, shall consist of up to seven members selected as follows:

- At least three members from ¹UNCCD Focal Points nominated by the Caribbean Sustainable Land Management Group;
- At least two from the Global Soil Partnership nominated by the Caribbean Soil Support Group;
- One chairperson appointed in accordance with No. 16 of the Agreement;
- One *ex officio* member appointed by the country which hosts the Headquarters of PISLM, and in this case, Grenada; and
- The Executive Director of PISLM as a non-voting *ex officio* member.

Article 3, Mr. Speaker, speaks to the financial obligations. The parties shall not be under any obligation, any financial obligations, to provide support to PISLM beyond voluntary contributions. The parties shall not be under any responsibility, individually or collectively, for any debts, liabilities, or obligations of PISLM. Financing of the PISLM, Mr. Speaker, therefore, shall be undertaken pursuant to article 23 of the Constitution.

Article 23 speaks to the operations of the financing of PISLM. The financial operations of PISLM shall be governed by financial regulations adopted by the Executive Committee, and the regular budget of PISLM shall be funded primarily by the Reserved Fund, as stated in article 35 hereof. In accordance with article 7, paragraph 1, and article 24, the PISLM may enter into financial agreements or arrangements with other sources

¹ United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

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to implement its programme. The budget of PISLM shall be subject to approval by the Executive Committee. A full financial audit of the operations of PISLM shall be conducted on an annual basis by an independent accounting firm appointed by the Executive Committee, and upon recommendation by the Executive Director, the results of such audit shall be made available by the Executive Director to the Executive Committee for its consideration and approval.

Article 35, Mr. Speaker, the Reserve Fund. The PISLM shall establish a Reserve Fund along the lines set out in this article. The resources of the Reserve Fund shall consist of the following:

- Grants from international donors and sponsors of PISLM;
- Grants from member and associate members;
- Grants from entities, public and private, which are not sponsors of PISLM;
- Unspent balances from the annual budget of PISLM;
- Revenues derived from the operations of PISLM; and
- Income from investments of PISLM.

So, Mr. Speaker, this speaks to where the financing of the PISLM will come from. The resources of the fund, Mr. Speaker, shall be employed to finance the current and capital budget of the organisation.

Article 14, Mr. Speaker, speaks to the Privileges and Immunities of PISLM Personnel, people who work within the organisation. The Executive Director, other senior officials of PISLM, notified to and approved by the government of members, members of the Executive Committee and council, and experts performing missions to PISLM shall be immune from legal process in respect of acts performed by them in their official capacity.

Secondly, they shall, unless they are local citizens or nationals, they accorded such immunities from immigration restrictions, alien registration requirements, and national service obligations, and such facilities as regards exchange regulations as not less favourable than those accorded by members concerned to the representatives, officials, and exports of comparable rank of any other member. They shall be granted

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such repatriation facilities in time of international crisis as not less favourable than those accorded by the members concerned to the representative officials and exports of comparable rank of any other member.

Article 2, Mr. Speaker, PISLM shall operate as a non-profit, autonomous organisation international in status and non-political in management, staff, and operations. PISLM shall be organised exclusively for the purpose of scientific research, information dissemination, and technology transfer in sustainable land and soil management. PISLM shall possess full juridical international personality and enjoy such legal capacities as may be necessary for the exercise of its functions and fulfilment of its mandate.

Article 4, Mr. Speaker, speaks to the membership. The membership of PISLM shall be open to the members and associate member states of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph three, the following organisations are hereby recognised as meeting the conditions to be admitted as observers and shall be invited by the council to participate in the work of the PISLM on mutually agreed terms and conditions the organisations are

- Caribbean Community (CARICOM);
- The Caribbean Development Bank;
- The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA);
- The Caribbean Institute of Meteorological and Hydrology
- Caribbean Agriculture Research and Development Institute Caribbean;
- Caribbean Youth Environment Network;
- Caribbean Policies Development Centre;
- University of the West Indies;
- The Association of Caribbean States;
- The Organisation of American States;
- The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture;
- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;
- United Nations Environment Programme;

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- Food and Agricultural Organisation;
- Global Environment Fund;
- Gesellschaft... Sorry. The German Society for International Cooperation; and
- Green Climate Fund.

So, Mr. Speaker, herein is, in a nutshell, the agreement, and I now commend this Bill to the Honourable House for discussion. Thank you. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Leader of Government's Business, and I now invite the MP for the Town of... The parish of St. John to take the floor.

Hon. Kerryne James: Thank you again. Mr. Speaker, I rise in full and strong support of the Agreement Establishing the other Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management, which we call the PISLM, for Caribbean Small Island Developing States of 2025.

Mr. Speaker, this initiative is one that is particularly close to my heart. Through my ministerial portfolio, I had the privilege of working very closely with the then Director of PISLM, Mr. Calvin James, and I recall very vividly on the margins of the United Nations Environmental Assembly, or UNEA, in Kenya in 2023, discussions were held, and we championed the need for Caribbean SIDS to establish a unified framework for addressing land degradation and promoting restoration and the possibility of hosting such a secretariat in Grenada. I was happy that my OECS colleague supported that move as well back then.

So, Mr. Speaker, that vision almost two years now has now materialised into this formal partnership initiative, and so I stand ready to action its mandate with the newly installed Director, Dr. Roland Francis, who has also given us support as well to one of our initiatives in Carriacou last month, as well as the "Carry a Tree" initiative. **(Applause)**

So this Bill, Mr. Speaker, represents far more than an act of legal domestication. It is a declaration that CSIDS do have good leadership and that innovation is something

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that we have embedded in sustainable land management and in building our climate resilience agenda within our respective countries.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill does three essential things, and you heard the breakdown from the Leader of Government's Business, but to summarise it... First, it gives domestic legal effect to the regional Agreement Establishing PISLM and its Headquarters Agreement. The second is that it provides retroactive commencement, ensuring the seamless legal continuity between Grenada's signatory, or signature, and the regional entry into force on May 2, 2024, and, of course, the Headquarters Agreement of June 2025. Third, Mr. Speaker, it clarifies the privileges, the immunities, and exemptions necessary for hosting the principal office in Grenada, standard practice for international organisations that are already being followed but transformative in positioning Grenada as the epicentre of Caribbean Land Resilience Policy and Coordination.

So, Mr. Speaker, we in small island developing states are, of course, no strangers to the harsh realities of land degradation, drought stress, coastal erosion, and soil fertility loss. If I were to draw the memory of this Honourable House back to 2024 and to put it into context... From the beginning of the year last year, we experienced tremendous rainfall, then we went to an extreme drought, then we had Hurricane Beryl. So the climatic events and distress that come with the climate crisis are nothing new to small and developing states. Mr. Speaker, we are oftentimes on the frontline during the brunt of these challenges, and so to be able to have such an initiative specifically positioned as well for Grenada, it is something that we must be commended for, and it shows great leadership for our country.

Mr. Speaker, over 75% of our arable land across the Caribbean is classified as either degraded or at high risk of degradation due to extreme weather, unsustainable agricultural practices, and climate-induced hazards. So these impacts compound the existing vulnerabilities such as food insecurity, biodiversity loss, and rural poverty.

So it is in this context, Mr. Speaker, that the PISLM framework stands as a regional solution to a regional crisis. It is a home grown mechanism rooted in a small island solidarity, collective expertise, and adaptive capacity or, in other words, it is about making

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sure our land can keep producing food, supporting livelihoods, and protecting communities from floods, landslides, and droughts even as the climate changes.

So by domesticating this agreement, Mr. Speaker, Grenada is indeed asserting itself or asserting our role as a regional convener of science, of policy, and a key component of financing for climate-resilient land systems. This initiative is fully aligned, of course, with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the global goal of achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) by 2030, which is not too far.

It also operationalises, Mr. Speaker, multiple sustainable development goals, and has my pin on today it drew my attention to make that comparison because oftentimes in this House we don't necessarily align some of the Bills that are being presented here to the sustainable development goals. The first one, being Climate Action (SDG13), Mr. Speaker, also ensures that there is an operationalisation occurring for life on land, as the SDG15 and SDG2, which is zero hunger.

By hosting the Headquarters of the PISLM in Grenada, Mr. Speaker, we elevate our nation as regional service and innovation hub for sustainable land management training and extension services, data collection and monitoring, something that's a challenge for us, but we're working on it, from soil carbon baseline to erosion mapping, and Project Pipeline development for access to the Global Environment Facility (GEF), Green Climate Fund (GCF), and ²IFAD and other climate financing instruments. So this institution, building for resilience, Mr. Speaker, is ensuring that Caribbean solutions are conceptualised, coordinated and financed from within the region.

Oftentimes, and as traditional climate financing and organisation and preparations of Project Pipeline, it has often been done outside of the region, and most times, when these consultants come in, Mr. Speaker, the entire document is not fit for context and purpose so to have such an institutional building for resilience, having been bred, really and coordinated and conceptualised within the region it is something that we must be

² International Fund for Agricultural Development

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commended for as Eastern Caribbean States. **(Applause)**

So, Mr. Speaker, this Bill is not only about governance, it is about empowerment and livelihoods, as I mentioned. It translates environmental stewardship into tangible socioeconomic benefits for our farmers, our foresters, women and youth, those who work the land and depend on it for their survival. So by restoring our degraded landscapes, we are restoring dignity, we are ensuring food security and economic opportunity in rural Grenada; things are happening. **(Applause)**

So the Ministry of Climate Resilience, Mr. Speaker, together with the Ministry of Economic Development, Agriculture and Lands, in collaboration with the PISLM Secretariat will ensure to finalise a national sustainable land management work plan, identify and map 10 pilot communities for erosion control and drought-smart agriculture and begin training of over 100 local farmers, wardens and extension officers in Integrated Sustainable Land Management Techniques.

So, the overall aim, Mr. Speaker, we intend to submit one multi-country funding proposal under the ³LDN, under the ⁴UNCCD framework, and establish a baseline for hectares under sustainable land management practices. So our goal in a nutshell is to restore at least 300 hectares of priority catchments and publish an annual sustainable land management dashboard tracking land restoration, soil conservation, and gender and youth participation.

So this Bill, Mr. Speaker, the provision of it, privileges and immunities are not giveaways, but I think they are strategic enablers. These exemptions are minimal compared to the inward flow of technical cooperation, innovation funding, and expertise that Grenada will now attract because the secretariat is located in Grenada. Similarly, the retroactive commencement clause shows legal continuity between the regional agreements' entry into force and our domestic adoption, avoiding any legal vacuum or interpretive uncertainty.

So this legislation, Mr. Speaker, reflects Grenada's continued thought leadership

³ Land Degradation Neutrality

⁴ United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

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within CARICOM and within the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), in addressing the existential threats of climate change through a home-grown, evidence-based institution. It also embodies the principle that CSIDS are not helpless victims. Oftentimes, even within our ministerial capacity, we speak about our vulnerabilities, we speak about our challenges, but we do not often speak enough about the opportunities and the innovation, and the level of intellectual thoughts and people, resources, human capacity that we have within our region. So it gives opportunities for that and transforming vulnerability into opportunity through partnership oversight, and of course, collective will.

So by supporting this Bill, Mr. Speaker, we are not just hosting an institution, but we are hosting hope, we are hosting hope for sustainable agriculture, we are hosting hope for climate-smart livelihoods, and for a Caribbean region that manages its land wisely and manages its seas as well.

So with this, Mr. Speaker, I give full support to the Bill. I know it will indeed have a rippling effect, a positive effect, and an impact on the rural economy. Oftentimes, we face the most brunt of the climatic events, so I'm happy that we are at this stage, and I give full commendation to the Government of Grenada for supporting this initiative.

(Applause)

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Thank you very much, Honourable MP, for your contribution to the Bill.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Clerk: A Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, Agreement Establishing the Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management for Caribbean Small Island Developing States Bill, 2025.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

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Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you. Thank you Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the House resolves itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider this Bill Clause by Clause. Thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

House in Committee.

House resumed.

Mr. Speaker: Honourable Members, I have to report that the Bill was considered by a Committee of the whole House and passed without amendment. Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move that the Chairman's Report be adopted.

Question put and agreed to.

Chairman's Report adopted.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move the third reading of the Bill.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a third time and passed.

Clerk: A Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, Agreement Establishing the Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management for Caribbean Small Island Developing States Bill, 2025.

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Bills: Eastern Caribbean Citizenship by Investment Regulatory Authority Agreement Bill, 2025

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I beg to introduce for its first reading a Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, Eastern Caribbean Citizenship by Investment Regulatory Authority Agreement Bill, 2025.

Clerk: A Bill which gives domestic legal effect to the ECCIRA Agreement by conferring force of law upon the Agreement, shortly entitled, Eastern Caribbean Citizenship by Investment Regulatory Authority Agreement Bill, 2025.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move that the relevant Standing Order be suspended to enable the Bill to go through all its stages at this Sitting.

Question put and agreed to.

Relevant Standing Order suspended.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

Question proposed.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Eastern Caribbean Citizenship by Investment Regulatory Authority Agreement Bill, 2025.

The Bill gives domestic legal effect to the Eastern Caribbean Citizenship by Investment Regulatory Authority Agreement by conforming force of law upon the Agreement, authorising implementation measures, and establishing a coherent penalty and administrative fine framework to support ECCIRA's, which is an acronym for the

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Eastern Caribbean Citizenship by Investment Regulatory Authority (ECCIRA), Regulatory Authority remit makes over Citizenship by Investment Programme, and market participants.

This Bill, Mr. Speaker, contains five parts and 32 clauses. Part I, Mr. Speaker, speaks to the preliminary part of the Bill and contains clauses one to three. Clause 1 deals with the short title and commencement date of the Bill. The commencement date of the Bill shall not be automatic, but rather, on a date appointed by the minister. This form of commencement will allow the enactment of the Bill, but where there are necessary steps to take to implement or to give effect to the Bill, such as adopting, accepting, ratifying, or ratifying the Agreement, and other appropriate technical matters, technical and operational matters. So, Mr. Speaker, this allows for own necessary measures to be put in place before the Bill actually comes into effect.

Clause 2, Mr. Speaker, contains the interpretation provisions of the Bill and sets out key terms and definitions used throughout the Bill.

Clause 3 provides for the purpose of the Bill, which includes the following:

- To give effect to the agreement establishing the authority with responsibility for general oversight, and the regulation of all persons operating in the Citizenship by Investment Programme;
- To provide for offences and penalties to be imposed for contravention of the Bill or regulations made pursuant to the Bill;
- To provide the authority with enforcement powers to enhance public confidence and integrity within the CBI Programme; and
- To provide transitional provisions for the executive for the effective exercise of the functions and powers of the authority in accordance with the agreement.

Part II, Mr. Speaker, speaks to the enforcement of the Agreement and contains clauses four to six. Clause 4 of the Bill provides that the agreement shall have the force of law within the State of Grenada and shall enter into force in accordance with article 95.

Clause 5, Mr. Speaker, provides that in the event of any inconsistency between the provisions of the Act and the operations of any other law, the provisions of this Act

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shall prevail.

Clause 6 of the Bill provides for the financial provisions for giving effect to the Bill.

Part III provides for offences and penalties, and is captured in clauses seven to 22. Part IV, treats with miscellaneous and it is captured in clauses 23 to 24. Mr. Speaker, I just want to treat with some important matters as captured within the agreement.

Financial provisions within the agreement, Mr. Speaker... The government shall contribute to the following: the financing of the authority as provided under article 30, and payment of fees and charges arising from the provisions of services by CARICOM IMPACS-JRCC, under article 81, which is the Joint Regional Communication Centre, some agency of CARICOM IMPACS.

The Eastern Caribbean Citizenship by Investment Regulatory Authority Agreement, the agreement, Mr. Speaker, governs the operation of the CBI Programme within member states. The agreement is divided into 10 parts and has 99 articles. I'll just treat with some of the articles.

Article 4, Mr. Speaker, speaks to the establishment of the authority. There shall be established a body corporate to be known as the Eastern Caribbean Citizenship by Investment Regulatory Authority (ECCIRA) for the purpose of regulating and maintaining public confidence in the CBI Programme of each participating member state. The authority shall have the capacity, rights, powers and privileges of a corporate body for carrying out its functions in accordance with this agreement.

Article 8, Mr. Speaker, treats with the functions of their authority. The functions of the authority include, but they are not limited to the following:

- the development, implementation and enforcement of uniform standards and procedures governing the operations and regulations of the programme;
- the regulation of the operations of the unit and other competent authorities, agents due diligence service providers, developers and promoters operating within the programme.
- the establishment of minimum due diligence standards;

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- the issuance of standards, guidelines, directives, recommendations and enforcement notices consistent with international best practices;
- the conduct of independent audits, and assessment and ongoing monitoring of the operations of the units or other competent authorities, agents developers, partners so on operating within the programme.

Article 12, Mr. Speaker. There shall be a Council of Ministers which shall consist of the Ministers with responsibility for the CBI Programme operating within the region. These are the Ministers, Mr. Speaker, that are appointed by the relevant states, and each Minister appointed under paragraph 12.1 shall designate and alternate who shall be another Minister to serve on the Council during the period of absence or temporary incapacity of the Minister. There shall be Minister and an alternate.

The Council of Ministers shall meet not less than twice each year to carry out its responsibility and to receive from the Chairperson of the Board the reports of the board on the regulatory actions of their authority, including actions taken by the authority to ensure compliance with this agreement. The Council, Mr. Speaker, shall establish its own procedures and shall elect one of the Ministers to serve as a Chairperson and shall serve for a period of one year.

The responsibilities of the Council of Ministers, article 13. The Council of Ministers shall be responsible for

- providing to the board, policy directives and guidelines that and it's decisions on matters relating to regulation to enhance the integrity of the programme in each participated member state,
- will also give directive guidance and decisions of the council on matters relating to regulations to enhance the integrity of the programme throughout the region.
- there shall be a board of directors captured on the article 14 and the functions and powers of the authority shall be vested in the board of directors, which shall be responsible to the council for the development and implementation of uniform standards to give effect to the policies relating to the regulation of the programme and for the general administration of the authority.

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- the board shall comprise no less than nine nor more than 11 directors, and they shall be appointed as follows:
 - one director nominated by each participating state;
 - one director nominated and the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank;
 - one director nominated by the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS);
 - one director nominated by CARICOM IMPACS-JRCC; and
 - one director nominated by the other person appointed as director of the board.

The director shall be appointed on such terms and conditions as specified in the instrument of appointment.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, it might be worth noting that the office for this authority shall be located in Grenada. **(Applause)**

Article 23, Mr. Speaker, the Advisory Committee. The authority may, for the purpose of exercising its functions pursuant to this agreement, have an advisory committee. Mr. Speaker, the authority may appoint as Members of the Advisory Committee as established under paragraph 23.1 persons possessing appropriate expertise in a number of different skill sets, including Marketing, Finance, and Law, as the case may be.

Financing of the Authority, Mr. Speaker. The operating budget of the authority shall be funded from an initial contribution from each participating member state on a formula agreed on by the participating state. Secondly, by fees payable to the authority on the disagreement and subsequent regulations. Thirdly, compliance levies and administrative fines imposed pursuant to this agreement or the regulations. Fourthly, any other source approved by the Council of Ministers. One would understand, Mr. Speaker, that it is important that this authority be properly financed and properly run and have the necessary independence to be able to function effectively within the region as a supervising body.

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There shall be a reserved fund, Mr. Speaker, and surplus. So article 13 speaks to that reserved fund and what can be done with the surplus. Mr. Speaker, the surplus shall be distributed, if any, in an equitable manner or based on member states' investments or contributions, I should say, within their authority.

Article 38 speaks to the register. The authority shall maintain an electronic register of applicants for a licence containing, in respect of each applicant considered by the authority pursuant to article 36, and shall include:

- the name which includes the full legal and trading name, and the name of the beneficial owners of the applicant;
- the business address;
- the nature of the authorised activity or service;
- the date of issue and expiry of the confirmation of pre-qualification or no-objection notice, or refusal to confirm or pre-qualification; and
- the status of any suspension or revocation.

So all of this, Mr. Speaker, will be captured online on the website. A summary version of the register will be available on the website of the authority.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, Grenada is privileged to host the headquarters and this can only happen, Mr. Speaker, when our regional heads, regional governments recognises Grenada as a peaceful, well-managed economy, stable and managed economy. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be part of a government that is hosting, not just this headquarters, but the previous one, also. So two regional headquarters are coming to Grenada: the Headquarters for the Agreement Establishing the Partnership Initiative (PISLM), and also for the regional CBI Regulatory Body. This again, Mr. Speaker, speaks to the confidence.

So, Mr. Speaker, they might say that we are young, but we are well able. **(Applause)** So, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity to present this Bill, and I now commend it to the Honourable House. **(Applause)** Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you very much, Leader of Government's Business. I now

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invite the Honourable MP for the constituency of St. George North-East to take the floor.

Hon. Ron Redhead: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the Agreement Bill, 2025, as presented by the Leader of Government's Business. It represents a major step towards ensuring the integrity, sustainability and long-term success of Grenada's CBI managed by the Investment Migration Agency (IMA).

The programme, Mr. Speaker, remains a vital contributor to the national development, providing essential revenue for infrastructure, social programmes and certainly other economic transformation that is taking place throughout the length and breadth of our islands. Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the benefits that the programme is bringing to Grenadians, they need to further strengthen the safeguards against abuse and maintaining the accountability and transparency of the programme becomes crucial, not just in a local situation, but against the external pressures and threats of ending such a programme in the region.

So, it is because this administration understands the importance of the programme to our economy, we are actively promoting and enhancing the framework as we go forward. Mr. Speaker, the public may recall that the National Democratic Congress, during the 2022 campaign season, took the position that we were not against CBI, however, we were certain against the misuse of such a programme by the former administration and would diversify its impact and improve it once we took office and so what we see now, in addition to all the other things that have been implemented thus far, is such a promise being fulfilled within the context now of the Eastern Caribbean Citizenship by Investment Regulatory Authority Regional Agreement.

The purpose, Mr. Speaker, as mentioned by the Leader of Government's Business, of the authority is to regulate and maintain public confidence in Citizenship by Investment Programmes throughout the region. The agreement aims to promote cooperation, harmonise standards, regulate the programmes effectively and enhance transparency and accountability in the administration of all programmes in the participating states.

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So I would just use one example, which is the harmonisation of such an agreement throughout the region, Mr. Speaker. One, it allows us to cast in a sense a wider net, whether we accept it or not. It is better to market these programs as a region as opposed to individual countries and nations doing their own thing, and secondly, countries that are in the region that may not have been involved in it prior and do not have the experience now can rely on a well-established framework when entering the market, which essentially helps reduce the propensity to fail.

So with these few words, Mr. Speaker, I would like to state for the record I support this Bill and look forward to its implementation. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker: Thank you very much, Honourable MP, for St. George North-East, and I now invite the Honourable MP for the town of St. George to take the floor.

Hon. Peter David: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, great words. In the establishment of the original institution, I'm not as optimistic as my friend is because there are many regional institutions where we agree on the issues, and they still don't function. In other words, you know, we're trying to get honey into Trinidad for many years and we had free movement of goods, free movement of persons. I am optimistic about the future of Caribbean integration. I'm an integrationist. I'm a Caribbean man, but...

Mr. Speaker, you see CBI... I agree with my friend. Its critical to the economy, but there is not consensus on that in the region, so I pause to think, is the establishment of this going to change that? You see, your... Mr. Speaker... I nearly say, "Your Honour". Mr. Speaker, we know that there are entities outside of the region that don't want a CBI Programme. That has... And I, in previous administrations and in other administrations... Let me tell you. CBI is again a bipartisan issue. Let us not separate it into the tribes, again, and everything goes into the tribes.

This is an entity, an institution, a project that crosses administrations. CBI has functioned to assist us in a lot of what has been done over the years, and there have been

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valid criticisms of CBI. It's not something that I'll stand here and say everybody has done it well. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I would say that it is under threat now, not because of anything we have done, and this is the regional discussion. This is not a local discussion. There are entities that are mightier than us, that are worried about, and this has gone on for years, that are worried about persons in their countries moving capital into our country. Anytime we, as small island states and developing countries, attempt to do something, we get pressure, which is why I welcome a regional approach. Mr. Speaker, it always happens.

You know, America has a CBI Programme. Canada has a CBI Programme. They don't call it that. All of these countries have their own forms of CBI Programme, but yet they find ways to pressure us and talk about corruption and laws and this and that. Those are red herrings set up to keep us underdeveloped because we found a way to get some income outside of having to go begging. So I welcome this. I'm not speaking against it. I welcome it.

I'm worried that the more demands... I remember the Europeans making demands years ago. You would, well, maybe, you would not have been in Government, but demand upon demand upon demand, every time we do something but they ask us to do, when we complete that there is something else to be done. I'm just alerting us to that. I'm not criticising it. I'm not making any comments against doing it. I'm simply saying we as a people...

That is why I am worried sometimes about tribalising these issues. I worry about one side taking a position and the other side taking a position because it weakens us as a people, it weakens us as a region, when we see it purely in tribal forms. I agree we have to do everything possible, and I support the government in it. I supported the previous government in this, that we have to find ways of increasing income; this is one of them, and we have to set up these institutions.

My worry is this. In terms of the Caribbean, we turn... The institutions tend not to work because each, despite the fact that you remember those old enough, what was it, one from 10 equals zero in Federation. Start with Federation... We've tried Caribbean

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Integration and we... It unravel sometimes because each either looks for its own advantage and that is what worries me.

I do hope, I do hope... I welcome it being situated in Grenada. I'm good with that. I hope that doesn't put an additional burden on us. I hope it doesn't mean that we end up holding everything, because, you know, there are islands where the government supports CBI now, but the Opposition doesn't, so you're running risks because if things change in any of these islands, you never know where it goes. We have to safeguard that, and that is why we must address these issues as a people, not as a party or opposition or government, because as things change, it can unravel the entire project. If two or three governments change hands and then the CBI Programme falls apart, we're left holding this. I'm saying, therefore, let us not do it in Grenada, and let us not do it regionally, because it can end up as a problem. CBI needs to have the people together on this issue; it benefits Grenada, period.

Mr. Speaker, with your respect to the future of CBI, a couple of things I just want to repeat that I said over the years. Our people must be educated more about CBI, our people, not this person or however it is. Our people must understand the importance of CBI to us. We still hear people talk about selling passports. CBI is attracting... People who are attracted, there are people who want other citizenships for several reasons. So we must do that, as a people, you must educate more.

I noticed the IMA has been doing a lot with respect to getting information. For example, you must have more CBI projects in agriculture. We must have more CBI projects in sports. All of the CBI projects, thus far, successful ones, have been in tourism, which people see as a sound thing, which people see as big businesses benefiting from CBI, but not the people. That is why I was happy when I saw a sign go up by the road, what you call it, Mt. Kumar. So the Mt. Kumar Road was built by CBI.

My friend, Redhead, is again doing stuff that shows that CBI is reaching the people. Agree with me when I say that a lot of this was caused by the people who opposed the government and used it as a tool, and that's the history of our politics. We must change history by changing the way we go forward. We must agree on that. You see, I am

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optimistic if we work together. I am pessimistic if we don't.

I like the fact that at no time did the Member for Parliament, Member for South-East, say there will be more time because there are things to be put in place, and I would have liked it if I were asked the question, should we bring it to Parliament now, I would have given it first reading and involve the people more in this. I would have done that, but we're here, but we still have time because the Member said based on the things that need to be done, it's a very detailed Bill, based on the things that need to be done, it's not going to happen tomorrow, it's not going to happen next week, it may not even happen next year, but at least we're working towards the regulatory authority.

Now, a regulatory authority is only as good as the people regulating it. Meaning, if it's a Caribbean or OCES, just the member states that are in CBI, we need to ensure the regulatory authority is solid, which means there are high expenses because you need to get good people. It's only as good as the people regulating it, and I know that those powers that be will be skimming through all of the books.

The truth is, the great powers don't want our CBI Programme, so they are going to push further. So they've told you to come. They've said they agree, maybe with these, but who knows where we're going next? The point is the attacks on CBI have gone on for so many years, not this administration, not that administration. We have to come together, and that is why I urge that we work together, we maintain unity in the regional entity, and we have our people understand the importance of CBI.

You know, there is a decline, and there are reasons for the decline. There are going to be ups and downs with CBI, people must understand why. There are some downs now because of wars, because of... I don't want to spend, I know we've been here for quite some time.

I don't want to go on forever, but I'm simply saying that there needs to be some discussion with players. We need to have some discussions with the farmers, with tourism vendors, with everybody to talk about CBI, because I fear that one day we're going to wake up, just as we're waking up now to all kinds of news internationally when people are doing things, and hear that you can't have CBI anymore or else. I am not sure

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if you can take visas for CBI, maybe they might just do that too. I don't know.

I am saying, let us come together to do this, but let us involve our people. I've always believed the best defence for all of us is a united people, united on this issue, and all issues that challenge us, if we pull our people together. **(Inaudible comment by a Member)** Well, I have four vacancies here. **(Laughter)** I don't have vacancies for you. **(Laughter)**

Mr. Speaker, I do believe that it's a good idea. I do believe it's a necessary idea, but I do believe the only way this will work is if... And this is another point I want to make, that we must ensure that our regional partners are with us every step of the way. When we look back, we don't realise we are alone, left with a CBI building somewhere in St. George's, and everybody is doing their own thing.

I saw it with Grenada. As Agriculture Minister, I tried my best to get honey out of Trinidad, and my dear friend Mr Rowley kept saying yes, we know, we have to do it, you know, but the honey kept out of Trinidad despite all of the free movement of goods and all the free movement of persons.

I have people in the court every day. They lock up a "Vincy man" for coming in Grenada under the free movement and what they say, they say well, yes, yes, yes you have to do it the right way. Well, I'm not sure about the right way, so...

Mr. Speaker, I do support this. I think we need it regionally, but I do believe that our people need to get more involved and our technocrats need to get more involved in getting this done. Please, keep it as Grenada project. It has nothing to do with you or me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, Honourable MP, for the Town of St. George, for your contribution. Honourable Members... Sorry. Honourable Prime Minister. I didn't see.

Hon. Dickon Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I am happy that the Honourable Member for the Town of St. George has put in half a day's work by remaining for the entire duration of Parliament, which should be documented. **(Applause)** I think

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it's Marilyn Monroe who says, to her husband, that she intends to divorce, "I shall not keep you long". I appreciate the Member might be hungry, so, I will do my best to be succinct.

Mr. Speaker, as the Minister responsible for citizenship, I think it's incumbent that I speak to this, and as the Prime Minister, and one of the Co-Prime Ministers, and one of the Prime Ministers who signed the Agreement Establishing the Eastern Caribbean Citizenship by Investment Regulatory Authority, I think it's important that I lend my unequivocal support to the Bill which seeks to enact the agreement into law in Grenada, and to establish the authority to be based in Grenada.

I first wish to speak because it may seem quiet, but it's actually quite a historic day, Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that the Bill which went before also permitted the establishment of a regional entity in Grenada, and this Bill seeks to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, between 1979 and 1983, all of the regional institutions which were headquartered in Grenada, particularly the OECS Supreme Court, took flight and left Grenada. So, since 1983, Grenada has not hosted any regional institutions. The Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court relocated to Saint Lucia and is now headquartered in St. Lucia. The Eastern Central Bank is located in Saint Kitts and Nevis, and the Eastern Caribbean Secretariat and the OECS Secretariat are headquartered in Saint Lucia. The Eastern Caribbean Civilisation Authority, which regulates civilisations throughout the OECS, is headquartered in Antigua. The Eastern Caribbean Home Mortgage Bank is located in Saint Kitts and Nevis.

So, Mr. Speaker, the Southern Caribbean, Grenada, St. Vincent, Dominica generally do not have any regional institutions that are headquartered, and so the Prime Ministers of the other OECS territories graciously agreed to our recommendation that this new regulatory authority should be set up in Grenada, and I wish to go on record for thanking them for agreeing so **(applause)** readily to allow Grenada to host.

We believe that we are ideally placed to do so because of our location, our hospitality, our amenities and importantly, because we have always taken a very robust regulatory approach to our Citizenship by Investment Programme and have always

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sought to exercise very stringent due diligence when it comes to the management of the programme.

Mr. Speaker you would recall that as a prelude to this that the Member States of the OECS signed an Agreement entitled, "Five Principles Pertaining to the Operation of our CBI Programmes", with the United States Government and in particular the Treasury Department, which set out some core principles by which all of us in the OECS would abide to, these included sharing of information about applicants particularly applicants who would be denied ensuring that our respective Financial Intelligence Units were involved in the process of getting applicants and that where these applicants were deemed on suitable bio FIU's and the JRCC that we would abide by those recommendations and it's included a principle and agreement to ultimately set up a single regulatory authority for the CBI territories.

The agreement extends, Mr. Speaker, as well to cooperation with the European Union and United Kingdom, and I also want to go on record and place our appreciation to our partners in the United States, the United Kingdom and the European Union in this endeavour. It is critical, Mr. Speaker, to place on record because I am not too sure my friend has been following. He's a latecomer to the CBI practice, so I will forgive him because he may not be aware that there's been extensive consultation on this matter throughout the length and breadth of the OECS. Public consultations were held, not by the Government of Grenada, but by the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, led by a Grenadian, Governor Timothy Antoine and the OECS Secretariat, who went up and down the length and breadth of the five territories, meeting with the public, the practitioners, with the banks, with the government and with our partners multiple times. That's the first thing.

Second, the draftswoman who drafted this Bill and Agreement was also part of the team and had the opportunity to engage directly with all stakeholders before the agreement was settled and brought, and there were multiple revisions. The draft Bills were shared, the draft agreement was shared, and feedback was received both from practitioners and our partners in relation to this process.

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My friend may or may not also be aware that the Prime Ministers actually agreed with the Central Bank and the OECS to already set up an interim regulatory authority, and Grenada's representative on that interim regulatory authority is Miss Julia Lawrence of high and impeccable repute. **(Applause)**

So, Mr. Speaker, we have, in fact, contrary to all who is... What happened as their excuse for not coming to Parliament and work about consultation, consultation... If you want to open a consultancy firm, Firm Consultancy Inc.com and go consult. But in this case, there were expensive consultations, extensive discussions, both public and private, with technical people and laypersons about the agreement.

It's important to emphasise this, Mr. Speaker. We are not setting up the regulatory authority because the Europeans, the Americans, or the Brits are forcing us or asking us to do so. We are doing so because, as independent states, we appreciate, in varying degrees, the economic contribution that the Citizenship by Investment Programmes and this migration investment industry, and I want to emphasise what the industry brings to our economy. When you have an industry just like insurance just like banking, industries have to be regulated, and in this context with five or four of us having the same industry, it makes perfect sense for us to pull our resources together, share those resources, engage in the type of efficient behaviour, because we are small, that would allow us to ensure that we can properly regulate our industry to the highest international standards for ourselves not because of pressure from anyone. I want to emphasise that even before this came along, we were already conducting and using shared resources, so the JRCC, for example, Mr. Speaker, is a regional body that our respective Immigration Investment Migration Industry uses for the purpose of getting resources.

The sharing of information is something that we engage in. The hosting of joint continuing education, seminars, and symposiums is ongoing. In fact, the Grenada Cooperative Bank, our home grown bank which has benefited significantly from the investment migration industry every year puts on a significant public education forum that speaks to the Investment Migration Industry its importance, the challenges, the future prospects of the industry; it's attended by practitioners, it's attended by experts and from

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international guest and visitors all over the world.

I want to go on record and compliment the Investment Migration Agency, chaired by Mr. Richard Duncan, also of high and impeccable repute, and the Committee Members and the Chief Executive and Management of the Investment Migration Industry for engaging in extensive public consultations and education about what the Investment Migration is and means to Grenada. They have gone out from Carriacou to St. Patrick in the north, to St. Andrew and St. David in the east, to St. John, St. Mark in the west, holding public consultations for CBI and Investment Migration, demystifying. I don't know if my friend, again, as a latecomer, is not aware that these things have been taking place.

The Investment Migration Industry Agency has been sponsoring events, pan, cultural events throughout the length and breadth of Grenada, so the sign in my good friend's constituency is just really the tip of the iceberg. Substantive connections and links between the Investment Migration Industry and our domestic economy have been taking place.

It is also important to note, Mr. Speaker, and I think this it is important partly in the context of Grenada. There is no overreliance on the Investment Migration Industry. There is none. In the Budget Debate, the Minister for Finance and his team will demonstrate that. The revenues obtained, save for the period where you had the outbreak of the Russian Ukraine conflict, and in light of the impending position of sanctions on Russian citizens, there would have been a rush, I called it the Russian Rush of applicants. Save for that, the Grenadian Investment Migration Industry has always been slow and steady, and that pattern remains.

So the IMA revenues do not amount to more than 10 or 11% of the government's total revenue base. So, Grenada's economy is not going to collapse, or all of a sudden, doomsday, if there were declines in the revenue from the Investment Migration Industry. We obviously do not wish for that to happen, and that is why we are going over and above to ensure that we protect and strengthen the regulatory oversight of the Investment Migration Industry.

I want my friend from the Town of St. George to be able to earn some additional

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income when he retires from the House, whenever the next election is called. **(Laughter)** **(Applause)** And note I said, Mr. Speaker, retires. **(Laughter)** Note, I said retired. There implies a certain voluntariness to it.

So, Mr. Speaker, we are confident because we've already done significant background work in terms of establishing the regulatory authority. The draft budgets have been prepared by the Central Bank, and the Prime Ministers, as we expect, would agree to this. We have a funding mechanism that is automatic, so that when someone applies under a particular jurisdiction, there's an automatic fee that will go through the regulator that will fund it, because we are trying to ensure that we don't have to depend on Central Government revenues to fund the regulatory authority.

As pointed out by the Leader of Government's Business, if there is a surplus after the regulatory authority has met its commitment for the year, then there's an opportunity for that to be paid back or distributed to governments for what we carried forward for the following years operations. Importantly, by establishing the regulatory authority, it is an opportunity for the employment of people in Grenada and in the region to work in this regulatory space.

We expect the Investment Migration, Mr. Speaker, to continue to evolve and while the concept thus far has been driven largely by financial investment, it is important to appreciate there are wider investment migrations skills that seek to target skills, acumen, expertise and connection and there's an opportunity for us to expand our investment migration space specifically target some of those areas because we have some significant gaps and shortages in our human capacity in certain specific areas when it comes to things like technology and skills and so on and therefore there's an opportunity for us to do so.

But I also wish to emphasise that in our world of constant geopolitical uncertainties, challenges, and tensions, there will always be a need for safety and for a second home because what drives Investment Migration, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that people who work hard and who manage to save some money or some wealth, wish to protect it. And so, if you have political instability, economic instability, and as we see these days, climate

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refugees, people look for a second home, people look for a place where their values can align with their way of life, and we in the Caribbean are perhaps the most tolerant. If you think of the history of the Caribbean and how forgiving and welcoming and tolerant we are, we can teach the world about lessons in tolerance, lessons in living together. People who come from any part of the world, and they're accepted in our spaces.

So, Investment Migration is not just about financial recourse, but it's about an opportunity for diversity, an opportunity for us to share our little bit of paradise with the world. So I assure the public and assure the lone Independent Member sitting in the House today, that this measure is in fact an attempt to strengthen and bolster the survivability, and I would dare say the prosperity of the Investment Migration Industry and we look forward to welcoming the regulatory authority being hosted here in Grenada. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker: Thank you very much, Honourable Prime Minister.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Clerk: Eastern Caribbean Citizenship by Investment Regulatory Authority Agreement Bill, 2025.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider the Bill, Part by Part. Thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

House in Committee.

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House resumes.

Mr. Speaker: Honourable Members, I have to report that the Bill was considered by a Committee of the whole House and passed without amendment. Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move that the Chairman's Report be adopted.

Question put and agreed to.

Chairman's Report adopted.

Mr. Speaker: Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move the third reading of the Bill.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a third time and passed.

Clerk: A Bill for an Act, shortly entitled, Eastern Caribbean Citizenship by Investment Regulatory Authority Agreement Bill, 2025.

Deputy Clerk (Ag.): Item 16 – Request for leave to move the adjournment of the House on matters of urgent public importance.

Mr. Speaker: Honourable MP for the Town of St. George. I saw his light first. Honourable MP are you speaking on the Adjournment?

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Hon. Peter David: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Okay. It has to be moved first.

Hon. Peter David: Yes, I know. I was waiting.

Mr. Speaker: All right. You have to move the adjournment. **(Inaudible comment by a Member)** Leader of Government's Business.

Hon. Philip Telesford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the House be adjourned sine die. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Honourable MP for the Town of St. George.

Hon. Peter David: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make some brief comments on the Adjournment. Mr. Speaker, before I speak, I would like to circulate... I would ask your lead to read a statement into the record, and we're not allowed to read unless the Speaker gives the lead, and what I'm reading is distributed, so I'm asking for it to be distributed.

Mr. Speaker: Granted.

Hon. Peter David: Mr. Speaker, may I proceed?

Mr. Speaker: Please do. Please do.

Hon. Peter David: Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me start by echoing the Prime Minister's solidarity to the people of Jamaica, Haiti, Cuba, Bahamas and any others affected in the Northern Caribbean. We know the impact of a hurricane and Jamaicans

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will know it too and Cuban's, but we know the kind of devastation, and I'm sure that we as a people will find ways in which to show solidarity through some material assistance, but, I just wanted to on behalf of my constituency and the people of Grenada extend solidarity to them at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to read a statement in the record. It is my statement that has already been made public on the issue of the US request that was referred to this morning by our Prime Minister. I've made my position clear. I made it clear on October 13, but I believe it is important for future generations when they're going to the Handsard, they see that we have said something on an issue that may have very serious consequences in the future, and it would certainly be reflected very badly on us if there is no comment in the Parliament on something that the crisis we are steering down at the moment, and those of us who've lived through crisis before know the kind of impact that it can have on us. So, Mr. Speaker, I proceed to read the statement, and I'll have some comments after it.

“National Statement – MP for the Town of St. George

The United States' request to have what has been described as military assets installed in Grenada has been an issue of intense debate, not just here in Grenada, but throughout the Caribbean and even further afield.

This is important amidst the growing tensions in the Southern Caribbean and in the wake of what the United States has said is a new war on drug trafficking in the region. Successive Governments of Grenada, including the current administration, have promoted deep relations with both the United States and Venezuela, and we continue to enjoy good neighbourly relations with both. Any genuine efforts to fight the drug trade in our region are both desired and welcomed, but can only be successfully done through cooperation amongst states. Unilateral action, especially one perceived by other countries as a list with hostile intentions, will be both counterproductive and destabilising.

For generations, our people have always insisted that a region be recognised and maintained as a zone of peace. As an Independent Member of Parliament and a former Foreign Minister, I appreciate that diplomacy is a fine balancing

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act, which must be grounded in mutual respect and dialogue.

I also appreciate the role of longstanding partners, including the United States, that have played in supporting security cooperation in our region, but that cooperation should never come at the cost of our independence. Grenada's longstanding position on non-interference and dialogue amongst states makes us uniquely positioned to contribute to constructive engagement on efforts to lower existing tensions and offer diplomatic leverage accordingly, where applicable.

Given that position, it would be both problematic and undesirable for Grenada to accede to the US's request to have its military assets stationed in Grenada in the current context. If we do, it will only exacerbate the current tensions in the Southern Caribbean and will not lend itself to the efforts of peace.

Telegramming or inability to accede to the US request does not mean any hostile intent to the United States on our part. It means instead that we hold true to our commitment to peaceful resolution. The Grenadian people must rally with the government on this matter. We must band together in the interest of our nation's sovereignty and our dignity.

This is not the time for patriotism and national honour; this is not the time for division and taking political pot shots. There will be a different time in a different season for waving particular flags. At this defining moment in history, it is time to raise one flag, our National Flag. The government needs the support of all its people in defence of our sovereignty and in promoting both regional solidarity and peace. I call upon all local political, social and religious leaders to stand together in this moment. Grenada needs us all, and for me, and my household, count us in.

I end with the words of our National Anthem, '... Being proud of our Heritage, May we with Faith and Courage, Aspire, Build, Advance As one people, one family.' End of statement.

Mr. Speaker, I am more convinced today than I was when I made that statement publicly. I am more convinced of that position today after seeing what is happening in our waters. At the time, there was a lot of talk about drug interdiction, which is no longer the agenda item. Warships are in the region. War seems to be on the horizon. Mr. Speaker,

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when two elephants start fighting, the mouse has to find cover.

We must not, I repeat, we must not take a side on that issue. And I said to my friends, my colleagues, you are the people's representative. You listen to the people because you are here to represent the people. My family lives just a few yards from the airport, my dear brother in the south. The airport is in your zone; do not make a target on Grenadians' backs.

Mr. Speaker, the Zone of Peace is not a political issue; it is a development issue. Our waters are what the tourist ships use to come to give our vendors money to put bread on our people's tables. Our waters are where our fisherman find fish, and the area where they earn their living. That area must be kept as a Zone of Peace.

Mr. Speaker, the Architects of CARICOM that we spoke of a while ago, people like Michael Manley, Eric Williams, Forbes Burnham, Cheddi Jagan, Gairy, Bishop and all of the leaders since and recently, former ministers have endorsed what I'm saying. We are the people's House, expected to express the views of the people. Some people say their country first, I say Grenada first. Who comes second and third is not our business; we come first.

Mia Mottley said recently, "We need to negotiate on these issues", and I commend our Prime Minister for offering his position as mediator, and as she so eloquently repeated what has been said by leaders way back, "We are friends of all, but satellites of none... Friends of all but satellites of none".

My dear brothers, I urge us to speak up. I urge us to say very respectfully that we have friends, but we also have our interests and every government, every people pursue their interests. Our interests are peace.

And I want to say to my colleagues, as you have discussions with the US, and this is another issue I raise in closing, Mr. Speaker, another related, but vexing issue. I know there's a drug trade heading north, and I know we need to curb that, and we have worked as the Prime Minister indicated we have worked with the US on curbing the flow of drugs north, but we have a flow of something south, don't we? We have a flow of guns into the Southern Caribbean. I know of not a single Caribbean country that produces guns.

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As you have discussions with your colleagues, I urge you, Mr. Prime Minister, to raise that vexing issue, raise the vexing issue of guns coming into our region. We don't produce guns, nor do we have the Second Amendment; we don't. What we have is a younger generation that seems to be very much attracted to guns, and you sat here, all of us, legislation was passed to deal with the issue; that is the only one side. That legislation kicks in much longer after the guns have arrived at our ports.

I urge you, my brother Prime Minister, to raise with our friends to the north that our cooperation on drug interdiction going north must be reciprocated by gun interdiction on the way south, because we want a peaceful nation. Peace is not a political issue for us. **(Sound of time bell)** Peace, Mr. Speaker, is a development issue. Were we to move away from a peaceful Southern Caribbean, I dare say that our economy and our people will suffer tremendously.

So, Mr. Speaker, in closing, I just want to thank you for the time for me to make these remarks and to say to my colleagues, when you speak, speak on behalf of the people you represent, who all agree that we need to keep this area as a zone of peace. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, MP for the Town of St. George.

Question put and agreed to.

The Sitting of the House of Representatives adjourned sine die at 2:07 p.m.

PREPARED BY

HANSARD REPORTERS

Ms. Shanta Joseph

Ms. Carlyn Pierre

Ms. Terry-Ann Thomas

Ms. Zaria Skeete

EDITORS

Mr. Andrew Augustine (Clerk)

Ms. Leasha Francis (Senior Hansard Reporter, Ag.)