

## **GRENADA**

### **39<sup>th</sup> session of the General Conference of UNESCO 3 November 2017**

Madam President of the 39th Session of the General Conference,

Mr. Chair of the Executive Board,

Madam Director-General,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Madam President,

I am pleased to join esteemed colleagues before me in congratulating you upon your election as President of the 39th session of the General Conference and I wish you every success during your presidency.

As a Member State of the Caribbean Community, I must first of all convey Grenada's heartfelt sympathy to all the victims in our Caribbean region, and across the world, who are presently suffering adverse effects of the recent monster Hurricanes, Irma and Maria. This is the first time

we have had two category five storms ravaged the Region in one season, within weeks of each other.

*Caribbean Centre*

This has brought into sharp focus the issue of climate change and the issue that as Small Islands Developing States we face a potential threat to our humanity. It is therefore urgent and of vital importance that we strengthen our capacity as SIDS to adapt and mitigate its effects.

Small Island Developing States like Grenada, already disadvantaged by small economies of scale, climate impacts, and high indebtedness only seek a level playing field that takes into account our disadvantages and recognizes our unique vulnerabilities

Grenada supports the UNESCO SIDS Action Plan which outlines many of the steps to build resilience. However, we urge UNESCO to give greater consideration to the special circumstances of SIDS and allocate adequate resources for implementation of the Action Plan.

*Suppose we need to meet future*

We believe in climate-smart development and as such we need augmented support in policy reforms focused on Climate Adaptation and Mitigation; Disaster Risk Reduction; Protection of Coastal and Marine Ecosystem; and institutional and other reforms to promote environmental sustainability and build resilience to environmental shocks. We look forward to the adoption by this session of the General Conference of the Declaration on Ethical Principles Related to Climate Change.

Grenada recognizes the importance in working at all levels of education to promote access, quality and innovation. We are committed to providing Technical and Vocational Education Training and lifelong learning opportunities targeted to our young people, which will increase the productivity of our workforce.

As reflected in our national development plan, the Government of Grenada believes that education is the main driver of development and in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through

education, we can stimulate productive capabilities to drive growth and combat rising levels of unemployment among youth while nurturing innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship.

At its 38th Meeting, the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM, has approved a Human Resource Development 2030 Strategy and Action Plan, intended to form the basis for converged action by Member States in unlocking Caribbean human potential. At the heart of the strategy is globally competitive innovative and seamlessly integrated education systems to drive inclusive sustainable development in our Region.

The concept of Knowledge Societies is founded on the notion of sharing of knowledge, mainly through information and communication technologies (ICTs), which has the power to transform economies and societies. Through its Chairmanship, Grenada is committed to the Information for All Programme (IFAP) to increase our efforts to promote the Internet for peace and dialogue, and teach young people how to think critically,

live together peacefully regardless of their religious, ethnic, cultural and other differences.

Madam President,

Grenada, is firmly committed to UNESCO's ideals and mission and is actively participating in the implementation of the Organisation's programmes and activities, notably through its active commitment in the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), and the International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC).

By presenting its <sup>candidature</sup> candidature this year to the Executive Board, Grenada aspires to continue working with all Member States of UNESCO for strengthening the Organization's role for the attainment of peace and sustainable development. We count on your support.

I thank you.