

Salutations

Thank you Mr Chairman

1. I bring greetings from the Honorable Prime Minister, the substantive co-chair of GLISPA, who is unavoidably absent this evening. It is an honor for me to represent him at the forum and to share this podium with the distinguished representatives of Palau and Seychelles as co-chairs of the Global Island Partnership.
2. Grenada recognizes Palau for its leadership of the Micronesia Challenge and in-fact credits Palau and the Micronesia Challenge for inspiring us. For inspiring us to lead the charge for a similar challenge in the Caribbean way back in 2006.
3. We indeed owe a debt of gratitude to Palau as we now witness the great progress achieved through the Caribbean Challenge Initiative. Mr President, we continue to be inspired by your leadership. We thank you.
4. We are pleased to see the mushrooming of other similar challenges around the world and today we congratulate and extend best wishes to the proponents of the West Indian Ocean Challenge and the Hawaii Aloha Challenge.
5. Grenada also recognizes Seychelles for its leadership and inspiration on the issue of sea level rise which was actively pursued over 10 years ago. Many in this audience will recall the Sea Level Rise Foundation which was then innovative, ground breaking, cutting edge and became a precursor for several initiatives.
6. In the aftermath of Hurricane Ivan which devastated Grenada in 2004, with damage estimated to exceed 200 percent of its gross domestic product, Grenada was inspired to assume the role as chair the Alliance of Small Island States from 2007 to 2011.
7. We are now honored to partner with Palau and Seychelles as co-chairs of GLISPA as an effective and innovative partnership model for promoting conservation of island biodiversity and sustainable livelihoods on islands.
8. During this Third International Conference on SIDS as we focus on stakeholder partnerships we are reminded of the relevance and pioneering nature of GLISPA to build resilient and sustainable island communities by inspiring leadership, catalyzing commitments and facilitating collaboration. GLISPA's record of achievements over the years is not contested.
9. We therefore take this opportunity to call on all partners to invest in strengthening the GLISPA construct as we assure every one of our full commitment to the ideals of the Partnership. We do appreciate the commitments made here today.

10. The flagship product for the Caribbean is the Caribbean Challenge Initiative, for which Grenada has the honor to host the interim secretariat. The associated Caribbean Biodiversity Fund geared to ensure a sustainable flow of funds has been launched.
11. In the Caribbean, we recognized the need to manage our near shore coastal resources and to enhance marine biodiversity in line with the strategic plan for biodiversity. Grenada joined forces with regional Governments to launch the Caribbean Challenge Initiative (CCI) with the goal of building capacity and synergies to enhance management and conservation of coastal and marine resources within the region.
12. While other regional Governments pledged to protect 20% of their near shore marine and coastal environment by 2020, Grenada went further and pledged to protect 25% of our near shore marine and coastal environment and 25 % of its terrestrial ecosystems by the year 2020. This declaration was made at a GLISPA high level event held in 2006 in Curitiba, Brazil.
13. The Grenada Government is committed to ensuring that Grenada's marine biodiversity is maintained in a healthy state, and has been promoting the use of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) as a management tool to achieve this objective.
14. The CCI has contributed to raising awareness on the importance of protecting our marine and coastal environment. This is a necessary ingredient as we seek to involve all of our citizens on the journey for the benefit of enhanced livelihoods.
15. Currently, along with a number of terrestrial protected areas, three marine protected areas have been established and a fourth is expected to be declared by the end of 2014.
16. Particularly, the CCI promotes collaboration among public and private sector agencies and institutions at the international, regional, national and local levels. This approach fosters synergies and strengthens cooperation and is an excellent example of the theme of this conference – partnerships.
17. Through the partnerships we now have the political leadership as represented in the CCI 20/20 goal.
18. Through the partnerships we now for \$42 million committed to the Caribbean Biodiversity fund.
19. Through the partnerships we now have leadership and commitment from the private sector, where fifteen companies have signed a *Corporate Compact* containing key commitments to marine and coastal conservation, funding, and changes in business practices.

20. In addition, as a private sector initiative, the “Defend Paradise” campaign was launched to generate funding for marine conservation in the Caribbean and raise consumer awareness of the marine environment. Defend Paradise will generate support through:
 - a. selling co-branded products (where a portion of each sale goes toward conservation);
 - b. providing exclusive discounts (where donations unlock escalating discounts on products and travel-related services); and
 - c. raising awareness through experiential marketing.

21. For us in the Caribbean, we are convinced on the imperatives of enhanced cooperation and collaboration across all SIDS and across all islands.

22. We are convinced that working together across all boundaries is the surest way to bring benefits to our peoples, to enhance livelihoods and to protect and conserve the planetary assets that ensure life on earth.

Let me therefore end by thanking everyone that makes this happen, particularly, the partners, The Nature Conservancy, Kate Brown and the management and staff of GLISPA and extend best wishes to all.

I thank you