

CARICOM pledges to pile on the pressure for Haiti

ST GEORGE'S, Grenada, Wednesday January 12, 2011 – Chairman of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Prime Minister Tillman Thomas of Grenada, has promised the people of Haiti that the regional grouping will keep on the pressure on the international community to hand over what they have pledged for the rebuilding of the French-speaking nation.



*Chairman of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM),
Prime Minister Tillman Thomas of Grenada. (File photo)*

He made the commitment in a message to mark the one-year anniversary of the deadly January 12th, 2010 earthquake.

“It has been the role and thrust of the other Member States of the Caribbean Community since that fateful day to work to provide the fulfillment of that hope. The inspiration provided by the will and determination of the Haitian people has served to spur on the rest of the Community in its drive to ensure the reconstruction of Haiti. The Government and people of Haiti can be assured that their Caribbean Community will continue to demand from the international community that they honour their financial pledges made in various fora to rebuild the country,” Thomas said.

For CARICOM’s part, he added, the integration of Haiti into the CARICOM Single Market and Economy is a key element of the rebuilding process, as it offers a ready duty-free market for Haiti’s products.

Late last year, agreement was reached for a number of those products to enter the CARICOM Single Market in a non-reciprocal basis for three years – an indication, Prime Minister Thomas said, of the Community’s desire to assist in resuscitating the Haitian economy.

“I assure you that your brothers and sisters will not waver in their support and will stand side by side with you as together we move to rebuild and reconstruct Haiti to take its place in a viable, prosperous, secure and sustainable Caribbean Community,” he said.

The CARICOM Chairman also paid tribute to those who lost their lives, families, parents, and friends and those who suffered injuries in the disaster, as well as those who risked their lives and spent sleepless days and nights in rescuing survivors from the rubble.

He said it was those first responders who epitomised the spirit of the Haitian people to rise above the trauma of the event and forge for themselves a future filled with hope.