



PRESS SECRETARY

Prime Minister's Office
6th Floor, Ministerial Complex
Botanical Gardens, St. George, Grenada
Email: pmpressesec@pmo.gov.gd
Email: pmpressesecretary@gmail.com
Phone: 473-440-2255 ext 22910
Mobile: 473-534-2003

PRESS RELEASE

GRENADA'S PRIME MINISTER JOINS CARICOM COLLEAGUES FOR EMERGENCY MEETING WHICH AGREES ON COLLECTIVE APPROACH IN THE REGION'S FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

April 16, 2020 – Grenada and other member states of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) have agreed on a collective approach to international financial institutions as they seek to access assistance to meet fiscal challenges brought about by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

This was one of the decisions taken at a Special Emergency Meeting on Wednesday, held via video conference, at which regional leaders discussed the regional response to COVID-19.

Grenada's Prime Minister, Dr. the Right Honourable Keith Mitchell was among CARICOM Heads of Government attending Wednesday's meeting where agreement was reached on the way forward for CARICOM's battle against the COVID-19 pandemic.

A press release issued by CARICOM after the meeting said the Heads of Government "urged that the criterion of GDP per capita not be the sole consideration in assessing the needs of the Community and that an understanding of each country's vulnerability is a far better measurement to determine need especially as we face multiple challenges."

The CARICOM leaders agreed that "additional technical work would be undertaken in specific areas to be presented for their consideration at another meeting within two weeks. They would be presented after the relevant ministerial councils would have reviewed the proposals."

These include a Common Public Health policy, proposals for which will first be presented to the Ministers of Health; a proposal for a protocol on re-opening borders and proposals for building a robust digital architecture, including governance, to facilitate digital commerce.

Elaborating on his contribution to Wednesday's discussion, Dr. Mitchell said he made the case for "more debt relief, faster disbursement of aid, less bureaucratic hurdles and debt cancellation".

These measures he said will bring faster and much-needed relief to Grenada and other CARICOM countries in the midst of their battle against COVID-19.

Dr. Mitchell said, “Governments throughout the region are investing significant resources in the fight against COVID-19. Countries are grappling, not only with the health challenges of this global pandemic but also, the extensive economic fallout. We do not have the luxury of time in negating the effects of the pandemic, therefore we need innovative and speedy solutions.”

As the Lead Head for ICT in the CARICOM Quasi-Cabinet, Dr. Mitchell said, “In every crisis, there is an opportunity and herein lies a significant opportunity for the region to foster the development of digital commerce, ensuring that the smaller enterprises are not left behind. This is an area we must quickly address as we adapt to our new normal.”

At Wednesday’s emergency meeting, CARICOM leaders received presentations from the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), the University of the West Indies (UWI), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and Archbishop Jason Gordon of Trinidad and Tobago.

###