

Tel: (473) 440 -5347/2061



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## **Statement by the Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation** **April 17, 2020**

The Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation reaffirms that the borders of Grenada remain closed to all incoming passenger traffic. You would recall that the Maurice Bishop International Airport was closed in March and all approved traffic since then, have been cargo flights bringing in goods and medical supplies; repatriation flights to return persons from Grenada to their respective home countries and medical evacuations, as announced previously.

The closure of the airport is in keeping with Government's decision to protect public health and safety during this pandemic. As you would recall, all confirmed cases of COVID-19 recorded in Grenada were imported or import-related. Therefore, the MBIA will remain closed to all incoming passenger traffic until such time that the Government is reassured that it is safe to re-open.

The level of misinformation that continues to be prevalent, especially in this period of crisis and heightened public sensitivity, is quite alarming. We cannot be expected to refute each reported inaccuracy, but in this case, it is important to reassure the citizens of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique that Government continues to put the interests of this country and its people first.

Therefore, to reiterate, there will be no resumption of flights until Government makes an informed decision based on the advice of the health experts. We have done an excellent job over the last few weeks, managing the potential spread of the virus and safeguarding public health and safety. No decisions will be taken that will endanger the lives of our people.

The economic impact of the pandemic is quite widespread and although many are eager to reclaim some sense of normalcy, actions cannot be premature and consequences must be thoroughly examined. While we look forward to working with our international carriers and partners on making the tourism industry thrive again, as a Government, we still maintain a very cautious approach, with respect to the resumption of business.

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The Ministry can confirm that a request was received from American Airlines to resume service to Grenada on May 7, 2020, if the restrictions imposed as a result of the State of Emergency are lifted. While the correspondence was acknowledged by the relevant authorities, there was no approval of the request because quite frankly, any deliberation on the resumption of incoming passenger traffic, is premature at this point.

Again, the Ministry assures the population that no approval has been granted for the operation of any passenger flight, from any origin, for any date in the near future. The re-opening of Grenada's borders will be done only after broad-based consultation and on the advice of medical experts. Any announcement of this will come from an official Government source.

**GOVERNMENT OF GRENADA**