



Address by Prime Minister Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell
at the ceremony marking Grenada's 34nd Anniversary of Independence
7 February 2008

Fellow Grenadians, within the thirty-four years since we gained as a sovereign nation from Britain in 1974, we have made considerable strides in our efforts to build a prosperous nation and shape a quality society.

During the last twelve years, in particular, even after two hurricanes in 2004 and 2005, we have been able through grit and determination, to achieve levels of growth, peace and prosperity, of which every Grenadian, at home and abroad, can feel justly proud.

This sense of national pride is appropriately reflected in this year's Independence Celebration theme of "Promoting Stability for Continued Progress and Prosperity".

As we reflect, evaluate, celebrate and re-dedicate ourselves to continue the progress with positive change into the future, we should also be mindful not to take for granted the gains we have made in the development of our infrastructure, productive capabilities, social services, educational opportunities, the prospects for training of our young people, health, sporting and agricultural facilities, our tourism product and economic growth.

The challenge for my Administration of managing very complex imperatives of development in a fast changing world over the past twelve years has not been easy. But we have endured. As a nation, we are associated with excellence in our quest for industrialisation and development.

Grenada today has been remarkably successful in operating in a world order in which we have no enemies. No country regards us as unfriendly or hostile. As a result, we should remain open to all countries that are willing to contribute to our development.

This is not a simple matter. For if we are unable to build and sustain a culture of excellence in our country then we have nowhere going as a nation. The quest for excellence begins with the quality of our thoughts. And the quality of our thoughts has everything to do with our prospects for maximising returns from multi-million dollar foreign direct investments, building a quality educational system, and building a first rate work force which will prepare us for global competitiveness.

My Administration values excellence in all that we do; and we are well on our way to developing an addiction to it.

My hope is that this year's Independence celebrations will serve to remind us all that we are united in a single fabric of unity, weaved together by the shared desire to succeed and take our rightful place in the world as a brand of quality, attractive enough to our young people who will be stirred to purchase our example of excellence as down-payment for a future of stability, peace and prosperity.

I therefore invite all Grenadians, at home and in the Diaspora, young and old, to use this, our 34th year in Independence, to build on our sense of meaning and patriotism, set good examples of leadership for our young people, and demonstrate sustained love and loyalty for the land of our birth and the liberties we currently enjoy.

Let the progress continue. Happy Independence everyone.