

**2008 INDEPENDENCE MESSAGE FROM
HIS EXCELLENCY, DENIS G. ANTOINE
GRENADA'S AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES**



The Celebration of Grenada's independence remains one occasion when all Grenadians should take a moment to reflect on how far Grenada has come since 1974. Many obstacles and challenges have confronted our nation, but Grenada has defied detractors, and continues to move forward.

"Looking back to today" Grenada has achieved many milestones, therefore the commemoration of our thirty-fourth year of independence provides Grenadians with another opportunity to take the time to reflect and give credit and thanks to all who have sacrificed for the national good.

At this moment in our history, our efforts should transcend any special interest, but remain focused on the how far we have come in spite of all our setbacks. Promoting stability for continued progress and prosperity calls for the abandoning of old negative attitudes and embracing the new realities of going up and forward together.

The theme of this year's celebration bodes well at this period of our development. All Grenadians are encouraged to heed the call for the promotion of stability for continued progress and prosperity. Our history would show that in the thirty-four years of nationhood, progress was best achieved in the period of calm, which Grenada has enjoyed.

Grenadians in the Diaspora are encouraged to redouble their engagement efforts to reach back as they continue to give back to Grenada. "Reaching back" means taking advantage of the opportunities to close the gap between their native land and their current home in the United States of America (USA).

The financial and in-kind contributions you make are welcome, but please come home and build summer homes. I encourage you to participate in the nation's building by doing business in Grenada and sharing your story of personal achievement to inspire young Grenadians. Register with your Embassy in the USA for the "Speaker Series" to be a guest at your school, your church, the boys and girls club, and even the senior citizens homes. Register to do a summer seminar in your field of expertise. "Reaching back" means letting your light shine so a young Grenadian at home can see the trail you have blazed.

When you visit, let young Grenadians know about your line of work or profession. To Grenadians studying abroad when you visit home take time to discuss with your peers and your community, your learning experience and your course of study. When you come home, express appreciation to our brothers and sisters who continue to toil inside Grenada to reach where we are today. On this our thirty-fourth anniversary of independence, let us turn to each other in respect and congratulate each other for the part played in the shared responsibility for strengthening our nation.