

PRESS RELEASE

ARD Closes but Build Back Better lives on

**An agency that started from scratch in the middle of a crisis has served Grenada well.

This was the sentiment expressed at the final press conference of the Agency for Reconstruction and Development (ARD) on Thursday, December 6, as the ARD closed its doors after three years of operation.

Referring to the occasion as one of mixed feelings and sadness, Prime Minister Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell expressed appreciation to the ARD Deputy Chairman Richardson Andrews, former members of the Board of Directors and the staff for contributing to the coordinating role of the ARD in the recovery process following the devastation caused by Hurricane Ivan.

The Prime Minister said Grenada has recovered from Hurricane Ivan with comparatively less assistance and resources than other countries that experienced similar disasters; and made particular mention of the extensive work the ARD conducted in the area of psychological recovery.

Mr. Andrews credited the ARD's flexibility and the ability to "bring good sense" to the decision-making process, thereby saving the Government and people of Grenada both time and money.

Noting that the number of Service Providers at the ARD peaked at 41 in 2006, of whom 27 were Grenadian, Mr. Andrews said the Agency also employed Service Providers from Trinidad and Tobago, Dominica, Jamaica, Canada, England, Guyana, USA, Wales, St. Lucia and Barbados. Additionally, several experts were commissioned to conduct short-term consultancies as part of the ARD research, training and development work. These consultants included six from Grenada, five from Trinidad and Tobago, two from St. Lucia, one from Barbados and one from New Zealand, as well as personnel from the University of the West Indies.

The ARD ceased operations on November 30, 2007 and, for the past several weeks, has handed over a variety of projects and other activities to several Government Ministries and statutory bodies. (See attached Chart).

Official registration of this Government-owned non-profit corporation was recorded on November 12, 2004 under the Companies Act of 1994. The ARD was structured to facilitate the physical, psychological and economic recovery of Grenada.

Established as a temporary agency with an anticipated lifespan of three to five years, the ARD geared its operations to coordinating the international donors, coordinating local activities of domestic agencies, providing institutional strengthening and capacity building for Government Ministries and bringing technical expertise to many structural issues under the motto Build Back Better.

Mr. Andrews expressed appreciation to the Government of Grenada for the courage to establish the ARD; the Canadian International Development Agency for \$10 million (EC) in grant funds to operate the ARD for three

years; USAID for providing technical and financial support; the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation for providing technical support in several key areas both at the ARD and in the Public Service; the United Nations Development Programme, the Organisation of American States, the Canadian Institute of Planners, the Pan American Health Organisation, the Grenada Chamber of Industry and Commerce, the Marketing and National Importing Board and other statutory bodies for supporting several initiatives of the ARD.

Although the ARD is closed, the website www.ardgrenada.org <<http://www.ardgrenada.org/>> will be maintained through 2008.

December 6, 2007

Agency for Reconstruction and Development

Website: www.ardgrenada.org

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