

## **BUDGET STATEMENT 2012/13**

### *Securing a Sustainable Future for Montserrat*

#### **INTRODUCTION**

In presenting the 2012/13 budget we are eternally grateful to the people of Montserrat and our international partners for their continued confidence in the extensive programmes and targets we are undertaking in pursuit of the development of our island and our people.

This budget is presented in a challenging but hopeful time not only locally but more so globally. We cannot deny that economic uncertainty is looming around us and will linger for some time. However, we are committed to an economic programme that will require major changes in the way we do business and one which will auger well for the long term benefit of all of our people.

#### **CURRENT POLICY ENVIRONMENT**

Last year, our development strategy was underpinned by five pillars, namely:

- a clear set of policy commitments designed to stimulate economic growth and reduce reliance on budgetary aid.
- Agreements with our development partners on the provision of key economic infrastructure to attract and facilitate investment and trade.
- Strong and effective leadership and governance within the institutions of government, the financial services and the private sector.

- Efficient, cost effective and targeted social policies to build, sustain and encourage social integration and development for all the people of our society.
- Appropriate and responsive legal systems and a flexible internal security framework.

We have defined the key success factors and we are working assiduously and systematically to ensure that every man and woman on this island can play his or her part as we build a strong, successful economy, in which we all can be proud and live with dignity. We have delivered on all of the pillars as outlined above. We have built the foundation for the transformation of our economy into a thriving one that will provide the necessary benefits to all of the people of this island.

## **OVERVIEW OF THE 2012 BUDGET**

We remain committed to:

- A private sector led economy,
- A strong governance framework,
- Appropriate and relevant infrastructure development, and
- A vibrant economy based on a GOD fearing society where we will stamp out crime and violence to maintain a society free from poverty and crime.

This budget statement therefore:

- Outlines the government's plans to counter the impacts of a global environment that is economically uncertain.
- underscores Government's intention to create a local economy that can show sustained growth and development over the next five years as a result of expanding infrastructure and targeted investments in key productive sectors.
- shows how we will continue to strengthen our relationships internationally and regionally to ensure assistance and support of our development agenda.
- will demonstrate Government's intention to provide a stronger and more focussed leadership, aimed at creating an enabling government environment and support for the private sector
- addresses issues relating to healthcare delivery, education, and poverty reduction programmes in our communities.
- will ensure that we have a friendly and stable society that will be a distinguishing feature in name branding Montserrat.

## **ECONOMIC CONTEXT**

The recovery in the international economy during 2011 could be described as moderate. The global economy is estimated to have expanded by 3.8% in 2011. This growth performance continues to be led by developments in the emerging economies, in particular China and India. The performance of the USA, the main trading partner for the Caribbean region, continues to lag behind the global growth rate, and according to the IMF, is estimated to have grown by 1.8% in 2011. The UK economy, which is critical to our development, has continued to have a depressed economy that has been estimated to have grown by 0.9% in 2011. The economies in the Euro Zone were depressed as governments toughened the austerity measures to contain a major fiscal and debt crisis. GDP in Germany, Europe's largest economy, rose by 3%. France, the other leading economy in the Euro zone, expanded by 1.6%. At the same time, the economies of Italy grew by 0.4% and Spain by 0.7%.

The Caribbean economies continued to feel the lingering effects of the slow growth in the advanced economies. Within the CARICOM States, preliminary estimates for some of the non-Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU) countries indicate that growth was modest in Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago at less than 1% but stronger in Belize, Suriname, Guyana and Haiti. Among the countries of the ECCU, five member countries experienced contractions in economic activity during the period January to September 2011 namely: Antigua and Barbuda (6.0%), Anguilla (3.0%) St Kitts and Nevis (1.2%), Saint Lucia (1.2%), St Vincent and the Grenadines (0.4%).

The decline in economic activity for the Currency Union was influenced by developments in the international global environment.

## **Local Economy**

There was an overall increase in the level of economic activity on Montserrat, preliminary growth estimate of 4.1% was recorded in 2011. This was a marked improvement over the decline of 8.3% recorded for the same period in the previous year.

## **Sectoral Analysis**

The major contributors to growth in 2011, were Real Estate & Housing 1.8%, Financial Intermediation 8.2%, Transport, Storage & Communications 13.3% and Construction 35.2%.

The economic environment in which we find ourselves is volatile but not hopeless. It is for this reason that we cannot abandon the pillars on which we intend to build this economy. Through appropriate policies, strong and mature leadership, access to targeted finances we can find a niche on which to build sustainable growth and development thus ensuring we can support the less fortunate in our society. We must make the best use of the opportunities that will assist us to shape a sustainable future for Montserrat.

## **STRENGTHENING THE PILLARS 2012 AND BEYOND**

Government has a long term vision of developing a sustainable and diversified economy which generates employment opportunities for its people. To deliver this vision we must develop of a private sector that will be the engine for growth and a public sector that facilitates this. To achieve this we must create a conducive and enabling environment. In addition, it is important for government to have: (i) the flexibility to respond to external shocks (ii) the capacity to create the appropriate enabling environment, and (iii) the capacity

to provide and maintain public goods and services in the most efficient, effective and economical manner.

GoM does not, on its own, have the financial resources to make its vision possible neither does the island have all the capacity necessary to address some of the specialist inputs required. We therefore need assistance to implement the ambitious agenda that we have set ourselves. Hence, the timing and level of support from the UK and EU will be critical to GoM's success in achieving its goals.

Our ultimate goal is to have private sector activities that contribute at least 50% of GDP by 2020. This transformation will not happen overnight, and will require us to initiate some reforms in many areas. In the short term, with support from our development partners, we will continue to invest in a wide range of infrastructure projects, for example additional government accommodation buildings, road improvement, a new hospital and geothermal development. These projects will continue to provide jobs and stimulate economic activity.

### **The Investment Plan**

It has long been recognised that to transform the local economy, we will need to make significant investments in our economic infrastructure and the business environment to build the confidence of the investing community. We are in the process of providing justification to Her Majesty's Government for public sector investments in the following areas:

- Development of key infrastructure in creating a commercial and tourism port at Carrs Bay

- Development of our town centre around Little Bay
- Development of a first class tourism resort with associated amenities
- Development of renewable energy and ICT related industries
  - Resolving the air and sea access issues and
  - Improving the policing system

Significantly, during this past fiscal year, Government made arrangements to revive the Little Bay project. Our intention was to review the previous Little Bay Master Plan in terms of its components, phasing and revenue streams, and identify how best to develop Little Bay in a manner that will maximise the business opportunities for local and international entrepreneurs including members of our Diaspora. The net impact will be the creation of well paid quality jobs, that will lead to improved standards of living and security for the people of this island.

### **The Investment Implications**

The design creates five hubs of economic activity – the port and support services, the commercial area within the town, the hotel and residences, berthing facilities for yachts and an area where locals and visitors can sample local produce in a unique Montserratian experience. It is estimated that this will create a revenue stream to government of approximately \$19.3 million annually when completed and employment of well over five hundred. The combined private and public sector investment within the Little Bay and Carr's Bay project is estimated at \$1.3 billion. This level of investment will not come if we do not fundamentally reform how we do business in Montserrat.

There are still some hurdles that must be crossed. One of the key issues for investors, raised at the Charrette, is the matter of insurance. In November, we arranged a study to examine the options for providing insurance cover against events that might arise from the Soufriere Hills Volcano. That study has provided us with a roadmap to progress with regional insurers and global reinsurers and we are hopeful of putting in place a workable insurance instrument that will encourage local and international investments in Montserrat.

The finalization of the Master Plan, will be complemented with an Investor Prospectus and a Marketing Strategy. These are largely complete and also include a fresh branding for Montserrat and for Little Bay and Carr's Bay. A number of additional studies have been carried out in the past few months that have provided information to feed into the Investor Prospectus. These include: a land divestment study, a Special Planning Zone study, a Special Economic Zone study, and a review of domestic regulations.

### **The Promotion Strategy**

The next steps to carry us forward into the new fiscal year and get us "sales ready" for beginning the development of Little Bay and Carr's Bay, will include the production of promotional material and attendance at a Caribbean Hotel and Resort Investors' Summit in Miami in early May. This will let the region and the world know that we are ready to launch Montserrat as a new and distinct destination for tourism and business in the Caribbean.



In July, we intend to hold a local launch of the detailed plans and investment packages to commence sale of property within our new capital.

It is, of course, not possible to say how long it will take to complete the resort and town at Little Bay. This is dependent on the rate of uptake by local and international investors. But it is quite realistic to state that in just three years from now our new port should be nearing completion, and this would be the catalyst for the other developments such as the town centre to take shape. The resort and other private property development should also be well underway. These programmes will require significant finances to implement. We therefore have to work with our development partners, who are quite willing to assist us in transforming our economy. Reforming the way we do business is vital steps in our ability to demonstrate that we are serious about making that transition from a public sector dominated economy, to one that is led by the private sector. One of the key areas of focus is the development of an open and transparent investment policy that will set out very clearly our incentives regime and our investment promotion strategy. We have to place ourselves in a position where we can attract investors. We must therefore ensure that we are competitive and have an investment climate that allows investors to enter, live and work in Montserrat.

- We will be setting up special economic zones which will have a specific incentive regime.
- We will review our immigration; investment and work permit policies to facilitate investment.
- We are in the process of setting up an online visa application system, so that those who wish to visit and possibly invest in Montserrat, can do so.

As Montserratians, we must be mindful of the fact that we now live in a global village. The world is our market. We are not confined to our physical borders. These initiatives therefore are not to be feared, since there is much to gain by opening up our borders. These actions are designed to stimulate growth and development, because we cannot do it by ourselves. We have to have partners who will assist us in our endeavours.

Underpinning our development thrust, will be the need to review our capacity constraints to ensure that we have the skills to support the achievement of our development objectives.

We will be conducting a labour market survey to identify skills and training needs for key sectors. We will ensure that there are strong institutional support for our growth initiatives.

We will have a strengthened Montserrat Development Corporation (MDC).

We will set up the relevant institutional framework to oversee the implementation of the geothermal project and other key investment initiatives. We will review the regulatory framework in key areas to encourage investment in telecommunications, utilities, sea and air access.

### **Tourism as a Catalyst and lead Economic Sector**

In addition to the foregoing investment promotion strategy, we will be putting in place a clear tourism plan that also drives economic growth and provides another platform for sustained development. This will be fully enunciated in a tourism strategy document to be produced by September this year. Part of the approach we have adopted will see the appointment of a professional marketing and promotion team who will be charged with promoting Montserrat with clear targets in terms of increasing the number of visitors.

We must ensure that our access arrangements assist us in driving our development agenda. We will continue our initiatives to fully engage the private sector in air and sea operations. By the end of June, we hope to have developed prospectuses to invite the participation of the private sector in our access arrangements. An important component of this initiative will be the continuation of our efforts to finalize our negotiations with the Government of Antigua to secure the use of the ferry Pier to facilitate our ferry operations. A key feature of the tourism strategy is our plan to re-brand Montserrat. We have engaged the services of a professional firm to develop a logo and design the message that best conveys the Montserrat experience. Montserrat remains an attractive investment and tourism destination. Further financing for tourism development is proposed to be undertaken under a revised Tourism Project Development Plan (TDP3).

We are systematically developing our tourism product. As part of the DFID funded Tourism Investment Plan we have added the newest attraction, our National Museum at Little Bay, which was recently completed and was opened by Their Royal Highnesses the Earl and Duchess of Wessex on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2012. The museum not only represents a preservation of our heritage but is also a source of pride for Montserrat. This, when twinned with the Volcano Interpretation Centre will provide a virtual experience of Montserrat in the past, documenting challenges faced by Montserrat over the last 17 years, and will record the future as it unfolds.

**Cultural Tourism**

We are committed to putting Montserrat's diverse cultural experiences at the core of cultural and tourism promotion and development in Montserrat. We have advanced work on the revision of the National Cultural Policy with a view of strengthening our tourism product.

The expressions of Montserrat's culture are especially highlighted during our year-end Festival, the St Patricks and Calabash Festivals. This year, marks the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of year Festival and I am happy to report that the national plans, supported by government, have been published and Festival 2012 promises to be an impressive expression of Montserrat's best on display.

We propose to work with all of our people to ensure maximum participation in Festival 2012. We anticipate and encourage the inclusion of cultural troops and groups from Montserrat organisations in the Caribbean, UK, USA, and Canada. Sports tourism will also be promoted as a significant feature as well.

**THE FISCAL FRAMEWORK**

A key policy outcome of this budget is bringing transformative investment to the island. It requires funding for key physical infrastructure, financing enabling institutions, marketing and promoting Montserrat.

We have utilized the collective wisdom and will of our government and people in making prudent decisions that kept our fiscal situation at a sustainable level. Our institutions have felt the impact of BAICO and CLICO and the debt restructuring programmes of regional governments.

Our exposure in these institutions is approximately \$77 million which we are systematically addressing. We have engaged the services of the International Accounting Firm, KPMG to examine Montserrat's exposure and will design a plan to resolve the problems with minimum risks. We will certainly learn from our experiences and create more opportunities for our local institutions and private sector to invest locally.

### **The Overall Budget**

The total recurrent and capital budget for 2012/13 is just over \$126 million of which \$101 million is for the normal operations of the public service. We currently have approvals for \$52.1million for projects of which approximately \$25 million has been approved but the rest of the major capital projects for port, town development, access, geothermal, tourism and development of the local business environment are in various stages of the approval process. We will include these by Supplementary Appropriations as they are approved. During the year DFID paid just over \$17 million to cover outstanding arrears due to the Social Security Fund by GoM, \$23 million towards the development of our power project, \$3 million toward underground ducting for utilities and \$2.6 million toward rebuilding the road to silver hills and the refurbishment of hurricane shelters. These are funds additional to the initially approved capital program at the commencement of fiscal 2011.

**Recurrent Revenues and Tax Proposals**

The total estimated local revenue that is expected to be generated in fiscal 2012 is just over \$45 million. We expect that as the tax simplification measures are implemented that it will build greater confidence within the business community. We are also currently revising a number of fees and where necessary eliminate any of those fees that may be considered nuisance charges. We had promised to modify the income tax structure and most persons have already seen a slight reduction in their income tax bill equivalent to a salary increase of approximately \$1,200 per annum. We have provided opportunities for tax payers to negotiate the resolution of their tax arrears. For those who did not come forward a lawyer has now been placed in the tax department to ensure that those persons who deliberately refuse to make adequate provision to clear their indebtedness are taken before the courts. We must all contribute to the local costs of running the island.

**Budgetary Grants**

Over the next three years budgetary grants are expected to remain fixed at \$55.8 million annually. Of the \$55.8 million, \$3 million is allocated for transport subsidies. As planned economic activity increases we expect that local revenues will improve which will enable us to have greater capacity to fund our local budget and reduce our requirement for budgetary aid.

**Public Debt**

The total external debt stands at \$7.7m and is comprised of central government and government guaranteed debt. Central government accounts for 23 per cent (\$1.8m) while the remaining 77 per cent (\$5.9m) is attributed to government guaranteed external debt.

The total external public debt is held with the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). The government guaranteed debt comprises two loans which were contracted for port development in the 1990's while the loan to the central government represents a consolidated line of credit. There are also a number of outstanding amounts arising from successful litigation against government along with outstanding arrears to UWI totaling \$14 million which we will seek to pay down from any savings from efficiency gains in delivering public services.

### **EXPENDITURE ESTIMATES AND POLICIES**

There is increasing pressure on our financial resources arising from a number of outstanding litigations and substantial arrears from prior years. We will have to settle and manage these during the year. As a result, tighter scrutiny on the management of public funds will be necessary, whereby Accounting Officers will be required to submit quarterly reports to Cabinet on the performance of their programmes and allocations. In turn we will provide quarterly updates to the Legislative Assembly on the performance of the various Ministries.

We now have in place the medium term expenditure framework. The budget for this year 2012/13 will be considered the base year. Any changes going forward will be as a result of policy decisions agreed by Cabinet, including adjustments for inflation and statutory requirements. Therefore, the amounts for the two forward years 2013/14 and 2014/15 are similar to the base year.

We have introduced an element of a simple programme format to provide a rough indication of where public funds are being spent and over time it will show changes in GoM's spending priorities. For this purpose the number of programme areas have been compressed leading to a reduction of accounting officers from 21 to 14. The Format of the estimates has been improved by including GoM's strategic goals, outcomes and output performance indicators for each programme. This will help the citizens of Montserrat to critique and indicate areas to which public funds should be applied. We want an open and participatory government. It is your government and we will keep you informed about the mandate you have entrusted to us.

We have for the first time asked Accounting Officers to provide saving options. This is to ensure that whenever, there is an emergency and we need to divert funds, we can do so with the least impact on the provision of public services.

Therefore, the programmes have been grouped together based on functional areas so that it would be possible to see how funds have been allocated to the various policy areas.

### **Governance and Leadership**

As indicated earlier, a key objective is to strengthen the areas of governance and leadership. The new constitution provides for a number of Commissions to be established to make public officials more accountable.

The new Audit Act will not only increase the independence of the Auditor General but also seek to ensure that the Public Accounts Committee and by extension the Legislative Assembly has more information to perform its role.



We have established a Cabinet Secretariat, whereby policy and planning coordination functions have been strengthened. This will ensure that these functions are more focussed to provide the necessary information and policy advice to Cabinet. This, we expect, will increase the effectiveness of Cabinet in managing public policies. In 2011/12, \$17.6 was allocated to these functions. With the coming into force of the new Constitution and reorganization of certain offices the allocations have changed to \$25.6 million in 2012/13 and provide an indicative amount of \$26.4 million in 2013/14 and \$26.5 in 2014/2015 to this high level function. This function include expenditure on programs related to the Legislature, Audit, Governor's and the Deputy Governor's offices, External Affairs and Labour Management Services.

#### **Strategic Management & Administration**

We allocated \$14.9 million to strategic management and administration in 2011/12. This increased to approximately \$16.8 million in 2012/13, \$15.2 in 2013/14 and \$14.2 in 2014/15. This includes expenditure on policy development, administration and management of the public services including the Human Resource Management services. A common problem identified is the lack of capacity to support the intentions of the Sustainable Development Plan. We have included approximately \$6 million for training and technical assistance support over the period 2012 - 2015.

**Planning, Information & Policy Coordination**

Montserrat is a part of the international community. It is a part of the United Kingdom, the European Union, CARICOM and the OECS and as such there has been an increasing demand for information. There is also the need to align our policies and regulations to ensure that we maximize the benefits that will accrue from these relationships but also to monitor and minimize related risks. For instance, it was important for us to comply with a number of international financial regulations in order for our banks to be able to do business internationally. Notwithstanding our small size, we cannot be complacent and must comply with these international obligations. To this end we have introduced and strengthened a number of our regulations. We have brought together functions relating to national planning, policy coordination, information and e-government services. The intention is to improve policy and information management and to use technology to drive the way the public service conducts its business. In this regard, we allocated \$3.3 million in 2011/12 million to fund development planning and policy coordination, information and broadcasting and e-government services. These programs under this cluster were reorganized so that the allocation increased in 2012/13 to \$4.2 million and \$3.7 in 2013/14 and 2014/15 respectively.

**Economic and Financial Management**

Globally, the competition for resources is greater than it has ever been and the need to manage what is available must be a priority. Therefore, we have brought together macro-economic policy with financial management to respond to the challenges of the local environment and to the demands of the ECCU of which we are an integral part. The Government of Montserrat signed up to an 8 Point Stabilization and Growth Program aimed at responding to the challenges of the financial crisis. Consequently, a number of financial and economic programs must now be coordinated across the ECCU and we must position ourselves to participate fully in these areas.

Our development partners are seeking greater justification and evidence of progress on areas where they have provided financing. We see a strong economic and financial management program as critical to our future development. The 2011/12 budget for this policy area was \$21.1 million. Due to the reorganization, the allocation has been revised downwards to \$7.6 million in 2012/13 and \$7.5 million for 2013/14 and 2014/15 respectfully to fund treasury and budget management, customs, revenue and statistical services.

**Infrastructure and Resource Development Services**

We have made available \$31.5 million in 2012/13 compared to \$28.3 in 2011/12 and \$21.7 and \$22 million in 2013/14 and 2014/15 respectively to fund the areas covered by the public works (physical infrastructure), agriculture services, land administration, environment and airport operations. This budget is expected to increase substantially as costs related to geothermal, port, town development and access projects are approved.

**Administration of Justice & Internal Security**

We have allocated \$8 million in 2012/13 to cover areas related to the administration of justice. The amount was reduced from \$9.3 in 2011/12 as the administrative components were shifted to Strategic Management and Administration. The allocation for 2013/14 and 2014/15 is approximately \$8 million. The same as the base year. This covers the Attorney General's Chambers, Director of Public Prosecution, Magistrate and Supreme Court Services.

This is the first year that a provision has been made in the budget for supporting the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, enabling the separation of public prosecution from the Attorney General Chambers. In an addition to this, we need to ensure that our reputation as a low crime jurisdiction is maintained. We are reviewing the process, the structure and functions of the police services to enable it to respond to the crime and security challenges that we face.

**Education, Youth & Sports**

The implementation of the education development plan and the participation of our young people in every aspect of the development process are critical to the success of our sustainable development thrust. The allocation for education in 2011/12 was \$4.8 million. This has been increased to \$6.4 million in 2012/13 and \$6.3 for the forward years.

With the implementation of the youth and sports programs we anticipate greater involvement at the local, regional and international levels.

We are also pleased that our students continue to perform creditably well in regional examinations at the ordinary and advanced level secondary education program. We applaud the teachers and the students in making Montserrat proud.

The Community College will expand and develop partnerships with other institutions to improve its programme delivery capacity, enrolment and revenue. These partnerships will see the establishment of relations with external institutions which offer the potential for a joint CAPE Associate Degree and Pre-Med program to be rolled-out in September 2012. Government is also exploring partnerships with Kentucky State University for collaboration in Nursing Education, and the University of the West Indies for the establishment of a teacher training program at the College. These initiatives will not only contribute to the growth of the College, but will also contribute to the national economy.

### **Health and Social Services**

The Ministry of Health is in the final stages of developing a health plan which will see improvement in infrastructure, personnel development, and the introduction of additional services. Work is being done to establish a telemedicine system within the hospital to enable the medical professional to access external specialist advice in a range of areas. This will be supported by an electronic system to ensure improved clinical care and confidentiality. Consideration is being given to outsourcing hospital catering, cleaning and laundry services. Cabinet has already agreed to the merger and outsourcing of the care of the Elderly.

The investment in Health and Social Services is \$26.6 million for 2012/13. The total covers public assistance, public housing, and care of the elderly. A major part of this budget also covers the cost of operating the hospital and community health services.

The indicative amounts allocated for 2013/14 and 2014/15 are \$26 million and \$26.5 million respectively.

### **Significant Financial Policies**

**There are no significant financial policies that will be included in this budget as they will come as a result of the studies currently being conducted and will be available by September 2012.**

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Our efforts at establishing and re-enforcing our pillars of development have not been without the assistance and support of many people, institutions and Governments.

In this regard, I acknowledge the support of Her Majesty's Government who continue to work with us, particularly DFID and the FCO in continuing to facilitate our improvement in good governance and economic development. We continue to work as a team.

I must also specifically thank DFID Minister Allan Duncan and the Secretary of State for International Development, Andrew Mitchell for their timely visits to Montserrat and their personal keen interest in our development momentum.

We recognise the continued development support received from the European Union and acknowledge the efforts of the commission to facilitate our special development needs with

emphasis on building up the infrastructure in Montserrat. As a key partner in our own development, we are keen to improve the dialogue with the EU and to work with their technical team. We continue to work with our OCT partners to improve the mechanisms and administrative structures that underpin the delivery of aid and support to our people. We thank the Overseas Countries and Territories Association (OCTA) for providing the forum within the EU system in Brussels as well.

I also extend heartfelt gratitude to the Indian High Commissioner in Port of Spain, H.E. Malay Mishra and by extension the Government of India for maintaining a close working relationship with Montserrat. We have concluded a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with India and have since had our technicians and local producers interacting with the Indian High Commissioner on moving forward in a number of areas. These are technology, support for food preservation, technical cooperation in areas of cultural promotion, small business development, sports, energy and healthcare. We also thank India for continuing the Indian scholarship program, which benefits Montserrat.

We thank the OECS Director-General and her staff, the Secretary General and staff at all the agencies of CARICOM, Governor Sir Dwight Venner and staff of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB), members of the Monetary Council, and the organs of our regional bodies for their continued support. We are also grateful to the technicians and staff at the CDB, CEHI and CARTAC for general development support and their technical visits to Montserrat.

Last but not least, our Government is grateful to all our local technicians, private and public, who continue to work along with all our public servants to make life as comfortable as possible on Montserrat.

## **CONCLUSION**

There are many pessimists in the world. So many people will never see a successful future because they are blinded by doubt. Louis Brandeis said that “Most things worth doing in the world had been declared impossible before they were done.”

Our single task is to secure a sustainable future for Montserrat. We have the vision, we have the strategy, we have the partnerships that matter and interests in the possibilities. All that is needed is the will and courage to make the dream a reality. We have that will and courage.