

# ON THE MOVE: THE ARGYLE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

by

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**PRIME MINISTER OF ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES**



**[Address Delivered at the Ground-Breaking Ceremony of the  
Terminal Building for the International Airport at Argyle on  
Sunday, August 07, 2011]**

**- *"Whoever watches the wind will not plant; whoever looks at the clouds will not reap"*: Ecclesiastes Chapter 9 Verse 10**

*Office of the Prime Minister  
Kingstown  
St. Vincent and the Grenadines*

*August 07, 2011*

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Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines**

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**[FORMAL GREETINGS]**

## **INTRODUCTION**

On August 05, 2005, I delivered a speech at the Methodist Church Hall in Kingstown which sketched all the relevant issues regarding the construction of an international Airport at Argyle and, at the same time, outlined a comprehensive plan for its construction. That was the first time ever that any Head of Government in St. Vincent and the Grenadines had so coherently addressed this subject. I urge all Vincentians, at home and abroad, to re-read that speech. If you do, you would see that my government has implemented its plan and pursued its strategic focus on international airport development. Others have wavered; we have not.

On August 13, 2008, we commenced actual construction on the international airport by way of the earthworks for the runway. Interestingly, the start-up, physically, of this project occurred a mere one month after the international price for fuel had climbed to an unprecedented high of US \$148 per barrel; interestingly,

too, one month later, in September 2008, the global financial giant Lehman Brothers of New York collapsed, an event that sparked an international financial crisis which swiftly metamorphosed into the worse global economic depression for eighty years, the consequences of which still adversely affect us in the Caribbean and elsewhere. Yet, we in St. Vincent and the Grenadines have continued, without interruption, save and except for excessive rain and annual holidays for the Cuban volunteers, to construct the largest capital project ever in the history of our country with an estimated price tag of roughly EC \$650 million or just under one-third of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. This is an amazing achievement thus far.

### **FAITH, SOLOMON'S TEMPLE AND THE AIRPORT**

In the Book of Hebrews (Chapter 3, Verse 4) a simple, truthful maxim is taught to us: “-----*Every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything.*” We are building this airport through our efforts and with help from our many friends overseas, but it is truly the handiwork of God. His grace, and our faith in, and faithfulness to, Him will see us through. These are precisely the same qualities, impulses, and beliefs which occasioned the construction of the Temple of Solomon, with one overwhelming condition in our favour: The certain knowledge and understanding that since the coming of Christ and His resurrection,

He is our very Temple with His promise for our redemption. Our Living Temple at the right hand of His father is our refuge, our strength, our salvation, our rock.

Solomon's Temple took a long time in coming; so, too, has our international airport. Indeed, some of the similarities and contrasts are striking and illuminating. Solomon commenced the construction of his Temple for the Ark of the Covenant, 480 years after the Israelites had come out of Egypt's bondage. Before that the Ark was being housed in tents hither and thither. Solomon's father, the great King David, had planned to build the Temple but was not allowed to because of the blood of war on his hands. But David left detailed plans and immense resources for the enterprise of building the Temple. Still, it was Solomon's divine destiny to effect its construction. What God has divined, no mortal man can unravel.

After nearly 500 years of European conquest and settlement, colonization and imperialism, St. Vincent and the Grenadines attained internal self-government in 1969, and independence in 1979, without an international airport; indeed, without even a jet airport. For nearly 50 years, from adult suffrage to independence and beyond, politicians in power promised international airport development but it failed to arrive. To be sure, studies upon studies were conducted on the matter during all this time but nothing was ever done by any government to move forward practically to build an international airport until the ULP administration

came to office in March 2001. We not only had the vision and the dream; we possessed the faith and the will; and we set about with a practical, creative strategy to do what was thought by most persons to be impossible. We have been at it successfully, thus far, with God's grace.

In the Book of Chronicles (1, Chapter 28), the actual architectural plans for the Temple are spelt out not only for features such as the Temple's portico, buildings, state rooms, upper rooms, inner rooms, and place of atonement, but also specifics regarding furnishings, including forks, sprinkling bowls and pitchers. It is utterly amazing the extent of the materials and resources that David bequeathed to Solomon for him to build the Temple. Among other things, he left him one hundred thousand talents of gold (3,450 metric tons), a million talents of silver (34,500 metric tons), quantities of bronze and iron too great to be weighed, and wood and stone. David also left Solomon workmen, stonecutters, masons, carpenters, skilled workers, and craftsmen beyond number. David's injunction to Solomon was emphatic: *"Do not be afraid or discouraged. Now begin the work, and the Lord be with you"*.

My predecessors left me nothing for this airport project but few studies which badly needed updating. Nothing else. Not one nail; not one farthing; no plans! Indeed, they bequeathed to me confusion, dissension, and a lack of wisdom on the

matter of international airport development. Sir James Mitchell has so confessed all this to us in his autobiography, Beyond the Islands.

Both the Books of Kings (1, Chapters 5 – 8) and Chronicles (2, Chapters 2 – 5), recount in detail, Solomon's preparations for building the Temple and the actual construction. Solomon realised that he did not have all the necessary skilled personnel and materials from his people and nation, so he proceeded to obtain them from elsewhere. For example, at the outset, he contacted Hiram, King of Tyre, with a request for cedar of Lebanon, and pine and algum logs and made arrangements for appropriate recompense. Solomon was very clear on all this. He said to Hiram, King of Tyre:

*“Give orders that cedars of Lebanon be cut for me. My men will work with yours, and I will pay for your men whatever wages you set. You know that we have no one so killed in felling timber as the Sidonians”.*

Hiram was very positive in his response to this request. He even went further and set him a number of skilled persons, including one trained to work in gold, silver, bronze, iron, stone and wood, and with purple, blue and crimson yarn and fine linen.

No one in Solomon's time was heard to say that he was bringing foreigners to do work which locals could do. None said he was seeking help from dictators, autocrats, communists and the like. Not a single individual among the Isrealites pejoratively stated that he was going around the world seeking help with a "begging bowl". Instead, Solomon's nation was grateful for all the assistance other nations accorded them in building their temple. And we must remember that Solomon's kingdom stretched huge distances, with large populations, from Dan to Beersheba, across the land of the Philistines, up to the borders of Egypt. Our St. Vincent and the Grenadines by comparison is a mere dot on the map of 150 square miles with a tiny population of 110,000 persons; our St. Vincent and the Grenadines has limited resources, no gold, silver or bronze, no cement , no pine or al gum, no cedar of Lebanon! And we are in the midst of a compelling, on-going international economic crisis.

Solomon took seven years to build his Temple. We are taking five years to build our international airport at Argyle. His nation was united behind his enterprise: Judah and Israel were one. It is high time that the handful of oppositionists to the Argyle International Airport Project stopped their hemming and hawing and line up unequivocally behind a project which I am fully satisfied has the blessings of Almighty God! They must cease their mocking and their folly. These oppositionists ought to turn their ears to wisdom and apply their hearts to understanding. Our nation, our St. Vincent and the Grenadines, has not been

cursed for any duplicity like the Gibeonites in the time of Joshua. We are not to remain forever as hewers of wood and drawers of water. We deserve, and will have, our international airport, an overriding socio-economic necessity. And whatsoever we do on this project, and others, whether in word or deed, we do it all in the name of our living God, giving thanks to Him through his beloved Son. Paul's letter to the Colossians (Chapter 3, verse 17) so advises us; and we solemnly heed that advice.

It is this approach, this faith, this belief, this certainty, which has led our nation over the past ten years to chalk up other outstanding achievements. That has been the foundation, the head corner stone of our success, for example, in building the bridge over Rabacca, the construction of the jet airport at Canouan, the unfolding of the historic Education Revolution, the unprecedented gains in poverty reduction, job creation, and the impressive Low-and-No-Income Housing Programme. The naysayers, the faint-hearted, the conspirators against the public good, the modern-day Sanballats and Tobiahs of the Ammonites, thought all of these herculean endeavours were impossible pipe-dreams. But we stood firm, as constant as the Northern Star, in our faith and trust in God, our vision, our people's creativity, our capacity for noble achievements, and the unbreakable solidarity of our friends and allies overseas. In standing firm we have prevailed and we are prevailing!

## **JOURNEY TOWARDS ACTUAL CONSTRUCTION**

Between August 2005 when I delivered the historic address on international airport development and August 2008 when the actual construction commenced, a tremendous amount of work had to be preliminarily accomplished. I shall not recount the details of those preparatory years save and except to remind you of some of the salient highlights.

By August 2005 we had already established the International Airport Development Company (IADC), installed Dr. Rudy Matthias as the Chairman and Tyrone Ballah as Project Coordinator, studied all the relevant data, updated the appropriate airport analyses, elaborated the strategic framework for the airport's construction, and mapped creatively the financing arrangements.

Between August 2005 and August 2008, I spearheaded consultations with the homeowners at Argyle; we provided them with generous concessions; the IADC purchased, sub-divided, and developed lands at Harmony Hall, Carapan and Diamond to enable the 134 displaced home-owners, at reasonable cost, to rebuild their homes; the IADC compensated the home-owners; and the home-owners relocated. This was a massive exercise which was executed with good sense, maturity, and skill. The Government and people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines continue to thank the home-owners for their kind cooperation.

Similarly, we thank the 370 owners of vacant parcels of land which lands have had to be acquired for the purpose of the airport construction. The process of compensation for this land acquisition is on-going.

Further, four main aspects of the pre-design phase of this airport development project had to be undertaken, namely, the topographic surveys of the airport zone; soil testing; wind studies; and the final alignment and airfield design. The governments of the Republic of Cuba and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela were most generous in their assistance successfully addressing one or more of these pre-design elements. The titans of internationalist solidarity, Fidel Castro and Hugo Chavez, are eternally in our gratitude and debt. Successive governments in Mexico, led by President Fox and Calderon, provided expert consultants to work with their Cuban counterparts in fine-tuning the final alignment and airfield design of our international airport. In the vital pre-design work, the International Civil Aviation Authority (ICAO) and the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority (ECCAA) had to be engaged, and were indeed successfully engaged.

I pause, in the recounting of the story of this monumental enterprise, to provide some details of the properties, built and vacant, which had to be purchased.

There were 134 built properties and 370 vacant parcels of land in the zone earmarked for the airport. Regarding the 134 built properties, the status is as follows:-

- (a) 125 built properties already paid for in the sum of \$50.249 million;
- (b) 4 built properties still to be paid for, in the sum of \$1.768 million;
- (c) 3 remaining built properties at Mt. Pleasant valued at \$4.002 million;
- (d) 2 home-owners temporarily relocated.

In all the built properties cost \$56.2 million in compensation.

In respect of the 370 vacant parcels of land, estimated in value at \$56.016 million, the relevant details are as follows:-

- (a) 305 parcels have deeds submitted, estimated in value at \$49.968 million;
- (b) Payments made thus far for 131 parcels valued at \$22.802 million;
- (c) 174 parcels still to be paid for; estimated to cost \$25.166 million.

Negotiations with some property-owners in this latter group are continuing between them and the IADC,

On May 19, 2008, the first 13 pieces of heavy earth-moving equipment arrived as a gift from the government and people of Venezuela. This was the first batch of 37 pieces of heavy equipment, and spares, costing EC \$27 million (US \$10 million) donated by Venezuela.

In June and July 2008, a total of 47 Cuban engineers, technicians, drivers, and heavy equipment operators as well as a team doctor arrived in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. These Cuban volunteers joined 50 Vincentians to form the workforce, called the Chatoyer-Che Contingent, to do the earthworks, starting on the first kilometer of the runway. Today, we employ at this project by the IADC 199 persons, of whom 152 are Vincentians and 47 are Cubans. Later this year and next year, IADC will employ another 50 persons for work on the pavement of the runway. The construction of the terminal building will employ several dozens of Vincentians, directly and indirectly.

On July 13, 2008, a ground-breaking ceremony was held here at Argyle to signal the start of the Argyle International Airport. Thousands of Vincentians gathered here at that time to witness the symbolic blast at Johnson Hill and to commemorate with their government and overseas friends the formal launch of this noble venture, which contains so much of our dreams and hopes for a better and much improved St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

## **THE CONSTRUCTION ITSELF**

With the preliminary works being completed, and the final designs for the runway in hand, I mounted a bulldozer on August 13, 2008, to signal the start-up of the earthworks. Initially, the Chatoyer-Che Contingent focused on clearing and grubbing the area, demolishing the vacant structures on the site, and removing the topsoil. Later, the workforce concentrated on the three main activities of the earthworks: excavation, transportation, and creation of embankments.

In 2010, the Contingent focused on (a) advancing the work on the excavation and embankments in the first and second kilometers of the runway and (b) preparing the area for the construction of the terminal building. When unusual and persistent rains affected much of this work last year, the Contingent advanced their efforts into the third kilometer to maintain the momentum and the targets of our work plan. Work also began on the culvert in the first kilometer for the conveyance of water from one side of the runway to the other. The work on this huge drainage culvert is expected to be completed later this year.

Over the 37-month period of August 13, 2008 to July 31, 2011, the Chatoyer-Che Contingent has completed nearly three-fifths (3/5) of all the earth and site works to be done for the airport. In the process, 1.156 million gallons of diesel and 206,025 kilograms of explosives have been used thus far on the site.

Additional heavy equipment for the earthworks had to be sourced. So, in 2009, the IADC purchased, from its own resources, 25 pieces of heavy equipment costing EC \$12 million, namely: 17 Articulated Trucks; 2 Motors Scrapers; 2 Bulldozers (1 – D8 and 1 – D9); one Caterpillar 345 Excavator; one Caterpillar 330 Excavator, with Hydraulic Hammer; one Wagon Drill; and one Kobelco Crane. Further, in 2010, IADC purchased another six pieces of Caterpillar equipment costing US \$1.977 million or almost EC \$5.4 million, namely: 2 – D8 Bulldozers; one D6 Bulldozer; 2 – Caterpillar Compactors (1 new; 1 used); and one Caterpillar Wheel Loader. This purchase was financed partly by a two-year loan of US \$1.582 million at 6.3 percent from Caterpillar Credito S.A. DE C.V. The funding was secured by a Bill of Sale on the six items of equipment.

Thus, at the close of work on July 30, 2011, there were 68 pieces of heavy equipment employed at Argyle. Of these, 43 pieces were in good condition; 18 in fair condition; and 7 in bad condition. The 7 pieces in bad condition include 3 Terez trucks, 3 CAT 250 E trucks, and the 345 BL Caterpillar Excavator. There is a workshop on the site to carry out repairs and to reduce equipment downtime. A fuel station was also erected from very early so as to eliminate the long frequent trips for fuel and to have a guaranteed supply of fuel on site.

To enhance the capacity of the workshop, IADC has requested earlier this year, technical assistance from Rimco for the Caterpillar machines, Nextran for Mack dump trucks and Kane Caribbean for Komatsu bulldozers. More recently, IADC contracted a specialist from Atlas Copco to repair the drill and to train operators and mechanics.

### **QUALITY CONTROL**

A range of quality control tests are carried out daily by technicians at the Soil Laboratory, established at Argyle, and donated by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. For example, compaction tests have been carried out, equivalent to one test for every 120-150 m<sup>3</sup> of embankment compacted to maximum density. By comparison, the United States' Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) established a standard of one test for every 300 m<sup>3</sup> of soil compacted. IADC has therefore adopted and implemented more stringent standards than those internationally accepted.

### **BLASTING**

Controlled blasting at Fort Hill has continued sporadically on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, since construction began. All residents in the areas close to the operations were informed, and persons within a 400 meter radius were

asked to leave their homes during the periods of blast. Arrangements have also been made to transport and temporarily accommodate those who need this kind of support.

Reports from residents regarding damage to homes as a result of our blasting operations continue to be recorded and investigated. Before the blasting operations began, property conditions surveys were carried out on all properties within a 400 meter radius of the blast site. In response to these reports, IADC has visited the homes and has found some of the reported cracks to be cosmetic, while others appear more serious and can probably cause structural failure.

One of the early measures the IADC took, as a risk management procedure, was to put in place an All Risk Insurance policy to cover, among other things, damage to people and property as a result of our blasting and other construction activities. Under the All Risk Insurance policy, IADC has lodged a claim through CGM Gallagher, the insurance broker, for compensation to be paid to several homes for which there appears to be strong evidence of damage due to the blasting operations. IADC is therefore now evaluating the reports of damage to properties and working with CGM Gallagher, the insurance broker, to arrange for compensation to be paid for assessed damages to properties.

## **WIND STUDIES**

IADC began collecting wind data from March 2006 and plans to continue doing so for the duration of the construction period. So far, wind data have been collected and analysed for just over 4 years from 3 wind stations installed within the airport zone. These stations are located at the Northern and Southern ends of the runway, and at the midpoint of the runway close to the IADC's offices. The data collected are being analysed by meteorologists at the E.T. Joshua Airport.

The results from the analysis of the data for the earliest 3 ½ years show that the predominant winds at Argyle are from the East-North-East and East, with an average intensity that does not exceed 15 knots. This wind speed and direction represent an even smaller cross wind component that favours the take-off and landing operations of aircraft, given the 02/20 orientation of the Argyle airport runway.

In essence, therefore, the analysis of the data over 3 ½ years suggests that there is no significant crosswind component to necessitate the construction of a crosswind runway. However, as required by the ICAO, the wind studies at Argyle will be carried out for at least 5 years, and will therefore continue for the duration of the construction phase of the airport. Indeed, by December 2013, the proposed date for completion of the airport project, we would have collected more than seven (7)

years of data. If, at any stage, the results of our wind studies suggest the need for a “crosswind” runway for the smallest planes that are affected by high wind gusts, one will be designed and built in accordance with our policy decision and in consideration of the safety of any small aircraft that will be operating at the Argyle Airport.

### **SEA DEFENSES AND FUEL FARM FACILITY**

Design work for the sea defences were commissioned and completed during the year by Maritime Engineering Services (ASTIMAR) of Cuba. A five-member team of Cuban designers, surveyors and an environmental specialist visited the State from June to August 2009 to perform oceanographic studies at the North-eastern end of the runway (020). On Thursday, September 09, 2009, a member of ASTIMAR presented the findings of bathymetric studies carried on the Argyle coast and the designs for the protection of the North-eastern end of the runway from coastal degradation. The Bathymetric surveys carried out by the firm also allowed them to suggest to IADC possible locations for the docking of a fuel tanker to supply the fuel farm that would be constructed for the operational phase of the airport. Discussions are currently being held with a Cuban firm, with a view to entering into a contract with them for the designs for the fuel facility. Before year end 2011, IADC will seek to enter into a joint venture arrangement

with a private firm for the financing, construction and operation of the fuel farm facility at the Argyle Airport.

### **HYDRO-GEOLOGICAL STUDIES**

During the period January 20 to February 03, 2009, a two member team from CITMA conducted some geology and hydrology studies in the areas of Yambou, Rawacou, and Peruvian Vale. These studies were done to provide additional information and to propose solutions to some outstanding issues. These issues will be addressed in 2011 and 2012.

### **IN-HOUSE DESIGN TEAM**

An in-house team was created by IADC to assist with the designs of new projects such as designs for the concrete pavement for the runway, river canal, navigational aids and lighting systems, and other projects that arise as a consequence of modifications to the previous designs done by the Cuban designers. This design team will also comment on designs provided by other hired consultants.

## **NEW AND IMPROVED ROADS**

### **Argyle By-pass Road**

Work on the 3 kilometer Argyle bypass road and bridge (new segment of the Windward Highway) began on July 16, 2007, and was completed in August 2010. The construction of this by-pass road allowed for closure of the segment of the Windward Highway that crossed the airport runway. Government applied for and received an additional loan of US \$5.3 million (EC \$14.4 million) from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), plus local counterpart funding, to finance this re-alignment of the Windward Highway. The road was designed by an overseas consultant, and supervised by engineers from the Ministry of Transport and Works.

### **New Access Roads**

In the near future, two new access roads will be built leading to Mt. Pleasant/Rawacou and Argyle Gardens. Every effort is now being made to provide comfortable temporary access roads to residents of these areas, consequent upon the removal of a segment of the Windward Highway. In 2011, IADC would provide the required assistance to the Ministry of Transport and Works to improve the access road for residents of Argyle Gardens (that is, persons

residing in the area North of the Terminal Building site). The designs for this road have been completed and construction will begin in the latter half of 2011. Work on the access road to Mt. Pleasant that traverses the Southern end of the runway will also resume in the first half of 2012, when the excavation at Fort Hill is expected to be substantially complete.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND PROTECTION**

In late 2007, IADC contracted the German firm, Kocks Consult GMBH, to carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the Argyle International Airport Project. Kocks Consult submitted its draft report in March 2008. This draft was reviewed professionally and through public consultations. The comments by the IADC Review Panel were submitted to Kocks Consult for appropriate incorporation in the final EIA report. The recommendations/proposals of the EIA have been scrupulously followed by the IADC day-to-day and in the engineering designs, plans and works.

IADC has been most sensitive to the environmental and conservation issues arising from the construction of the international airport. IADC's sensitivity in this regard are manifest in its focused and practical endeavours touching and concerning dust mitigation, bird studies, the establishment of the Rawacou Recreational Facility, the preservation of our national heritage and archeological

investigations, the quest to protect the sugar mills and petroglyphs, and its mutually-beneficial partnership with the Roman Catholic Church on the church, cemetery, and shrine at the airport site.

Huge sums of money have been spent by the IADC on environmental protection and monitoring and the preservation of our national heritage at the airport site.

### **AIRPORT MASTER PLAN**

IADC's in-house design team has also been making the necessary modifications to the designs done by the Cuban design team to incorporate, from the Airport Master Plan those ideas approved by the Board of Directors and the Government for immediate implementation. Work on the Airport Master Plan began in June 2008 and was completed in December 2009, and handed over to the IADC as a grant to the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines from the Government of Mexico.

Government secured the assistance of Professor Federico Dovali of the Airport and Auxillary Services (ASA) of Mexico to assist the IADC with the preparation of the Airport Master Plan. ASA is a government owned company that designs, builds and operates about 20 airports in Mexico. The support from ASA is part of

the assistance promised by the Government of Mexico to the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines on the Argyle Airport project.

This Master Plan will guide the development of the Argyle International Airport over the next 30 years and beyond, in a way that meets demands for growth in local industries, environmental protection and the growing demands for aviation services. The airport must also grow in a way that is consistent with the broader national development plans.

As work progressed on the long-term oriented Master Plan, IADC seized the opportunity to modify the plan with which it had been working to incorporate some of the ideas contained in the Master Plan. One of the ideas taken from the Master Plan was to increase the area for the Terminal Building and Other Landside facilities, to allow for a more spacious layout of these facilities to accommodate for growth in a more structured and cost-effective way over time.

The adoption of the Master Plan also means that, at some stage, government would have to buy additional lands, to cater for the long term development of the airport. Clearly, from a national point of view, the decision to buy lands around the airport is a good decision for future growth and development, for at least two reasons. First, government can buy lands around the airport at a much cheaper price now than it would be able to do in the future. Secondly, if the government

buys land around the airport today, it would be much better able to control the kind of developments that take place outside the airport fence.

Perhaps the clearest example of our failure to do proper long term planning of our airport infrastructure is the experience at E.T. Joshua Airport, where virtually no land was set aside for a cost-effective expansion of its facilities.

The Argyle International Airport Master Plan calls for the first stage construction of the facilities listed below:

❖ Runway

- Length – 2,743 meters (9,000 feet)
- Width – 45 meters (148 feet)
- Landing distance available – 2,623 meters
- Take off distance available – 2,743 meters

❖ Aprons

Three distinct interconnecting apron areas will be provided and are categorized as Commercial, General Aviation and Cargo Aprons.

Commercial Apron: This apron will serve international passengers, with one position for aircraft such as B 747-400 and B 767-200, one position for small to medium aircraft such as B 737-800, and six positions for DHC-8 or similar aircraft. The apron is 136 m x 262 m = 35,632 m<sup>2</sup> (or 446 ft x 860 ft = 383,560 ft<sup>2</sup>). In the Airport Master Plan, space to the North of the apron has been earmarked for its future expansion.

General Aviation Apron: This apron is located South of the Commercial apron, with dimension 136 m x 344 m x = 46,784 m<sup>2</sup> (or 446 ft x 1,129 ft = 503,534 ft<sup>2</sup>). Space has been earmarked in the Master Plan for expansion westwards. In the first phase of construction, the General Aviation apron will park a mixed fleet, such as executive jets (Global Express, Challenger), DHC-6 twin otters and islanders. The general aviation apron will be flanked on the North by four (4) hangars, one of which is earmarked for a Fixed-Base Operation (FBO).

Cargo Apron: These facilities, located immediately South of the General Aviation facilities, will allow for simultaneous parking of 2 aircraft of the size of the B 727 jets. The apron is 88 m x 90 m = 7,920 m<sup>2</sup> (or 289 ft x 295 ft = 85,255 ft<sup>2</sup>).

## ❖ Land Use Plan

As we worked on the Airport Master Plan, we have also been working on a Land Use Plan for the airport zone. This Land Use Plan calls for the establishment of proper zones and uses of land parcels around the Argyle Airport and is being done in collaboration with the Physical Planning Unit. A draft land use plan has been prepared and is now being reviewed. It is expected that this plan would be submitted for Cabinet's consideration and approval before year's end.

## **PROJECT COST AND FINANCING**

### **Overall Project Cost**

One may recall that the original estimated cost of the Argyle International Airport project was EC \$480.6 million (or US \$178 million). This estimate was provided in 2005 by the Canadian consultants, Marshall Macklin and Monaghan (MMM), as an update of the cost contained in their 1998 report entitled "St. Vincent Airport Development, Phase 1, Final Report". Based on MMM's analysis, the Argyle Airport was to consume about 278 hectares of land, with a runway pavement of about 2,743 meters (9,000 feet) in length and 45 meters (150 feet) in width and the

passenger terminal and other buildings were to have about 5,000 square feet) of floor space.

Having received the final designs for the airfield in December 2007, IADC was able to revise the cost of construction of the airport in late 2009, arriving at a revised total cost of EC \$589 million (US \$216 million). Since then this total cost has increased to EC \$652 million (US \$240 million), due mainly to the higher cost of construction of the Terminal Building and Other Landside Facilities. This overall project cost can be divided among five main components of the project, as discussed below.

### **Component One: Site Acquisition**

IADC will incur a total cost of EC \$112.2 million to purchase/acquire all of the built properties and vacant land parcels on the site on which the airport is being constructed. The process of negotiations and settlement was discussed above.

#### - Land sales

As spelt out in my August 08, 2005 speech on the airport project, the source of financing for the acquisition of the properties on the airport site was

from land sales to be done by National Properties Limited (NPL), on behalf of IADC.

In 2005, Government transferred to the IADC approximately 825 acres of land, with an estimated value of over US \$100 million, most of which was to be sold to raise funds. These land parcels were as follows:-

- (a) Spring Estate, Bequia, estimated 45 acres;
- (b) Crown Point, Bequia, estimated 55 acres;
- (c) Park (Industry), Bequia, estimated at 600 acres;
- (d) St. Hillaire, Bequia, Survey Plan Gr 858, 16.4 acres;
- (e) Friendship Bay, Bequia, Survey Plan Gr. 5/26, 32,564 sq. ft.;
- (f) Friendship, Bequia, estimated at 22 acres;
- (g) Cane Grove, about 23 acres;
- (h) E.T. Joshua Airport, Arnos Vale, 61 acres;
- (i) Ministry of Works site, Arnos Vale, 2.3 acres.

With the exception of the E.T. Joshua Airport, Arnos Vale and the Ministry of Works, Arnos Vale sites, IADC appointed National Properties Ltd. as sole land sales agent for all other land parcels. The two properties at Arnos Vale (62.3 acres) were transferred to National Properties to be held for development largely of a commercial centre in a new or extended city.

While National Properties was able to generate land sales amounting to EC \$24 million over the period 2006 to 2008, the recent credit crunch and global recession have largely thwarted their land sales effort. In 2010 and 2011, NPL was able to generate only EC \$1.0 million worth of land sales.

Going forward, the continued weaknesses in the global economy (note the current problems in many European economies and the required cuts to the USA federal budget) portend a sluggish world economy in the foreseeable future. This bleak outlook suggests that land sales may not recover to pre-2008 levels. Hence, IADC cannot rely, as it had one in the past, on income from NPL's land sales.

For this reason, government approved the inclusion of the Argyle Airport Project in the Capital Budget for 2010, 2011 and 2012, for EC \$54, EC \$22 and EC \$25 million respectively. By the end of December 2010, IADC had received from the consolidated fund, EC \$33.5 million: EC \$13.5 million from ALBA Bank loan, and EC \$20 million, from the proceeds of sale of the majority shares in the National Commercial Bank.

| <u>Sources of Funding</u>                | <u>Amount</u>  |
|--|----------------|
| Government Grant (ALBA Bank)             | \$13.5 million |
| Government Grant (Sale of shares in NCB) | \$20 million   |

These transfers are to finance IADC's activities, until the world economy recovers and NPL can generate enough revenues from land sales to support IADC's work.

- Bridging Bank Loans and Other Funding

As it is well known that land sales take time, the airport financing plan called for the use of bridging loans to meet other project related expenses and to apply the revenue from land sales to repay the bridging loans, both interest and principal.

At the end of July 2011, an amount of EC \$97 million was borrowed as bridging loans, by or on behalf of IADC, for construction of the Airport.

The amounts and sources of these loans are as follows:-

| <u>Sources of Funding</u>          | <u>Amt. Originally Advanced</u> |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| National Insurance Services        | \$40 million                    |
| First Caribbean International Bank | \$30 million                    |
| PetroCaribe (SVG) Limited          | \$27 million                    |

The \$40 million provided by the National Insurance Services (NIS), was made available to IADC indirectly through NPL as part payment by NPL to the IADC for a 600 acre parcel of land at Park/Industry, Bequia, bought by NPL from IADC for EC \$125 million. This EC \$40 million loans is therefore owed by NPL to NIS. This NIS loan to NPL is secured by lands at Park/Industry and by a government guarantee.

The EC \$30 million borrowed from the First Caribbean International Bank (FCIB) was reduced, though repayments over the years, to EC \$6 million. This balance is repayable in one instalment due on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012. This loan is secured by a legal mortgage over several parcels of land on Bequia, and by a government guarantee.

IADC has also borrowed from PetroCaribe (SVG) Ltd. part of the funds accumulated under the fuel supply arrangements that Venezuela has established with St. Vincent and the Grenadines and many other Caricom

countries. These funds (40 percent of the amount payable for fuel purchased from the Venezuelan government, through its wholly-owned agency, PDV St. Vincent Limited, are held by government's joint-venture company, PetroCaribe SVG Ltd. and are available for use by government in social and developmental projects, such as the Argyle International Airport. With Cabinet's approval, PetroCaribe (SVG) Ltd has so far made loans amounting to EC \$27 million to IADC for airport construction. In recent months, IADC has repaid EC \$2 million of this amount, reducing the balance on loan to EC \$25 million.

## **Component 2: Earth and Site Works**

### **- Contribution of Cuba and Venezuela:**

President Fidel Castro of Cuba, and his successor President Raul Castro, and President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela together gave their firm commitment to assisting with the airport and have followed through on their commitments. Both countries agreed to collaborate on the design, supervision and earthworks component of the airport. These grant commitments amount to approximately US \$112 million, (US 102 million for earthworks, plus US \$10 million for designs and preliminary studies). The grants from Cuba and Venezuela are mostly in kind, in the form of

technical expertise, manpower and machinery. Direct financial support has also been pledged by Venezuela.

- **Coalition of the Willing:**

In addition to Cuba and Venezuela, several other countries joined the Coalition-of-the-Willing to assist St. Vincent and the Grenadines with its airport. These include:

- Trinidad and Tobago, which made a cash grant of US \$10 million or EC \$27.0 million to the Government in August 2008;
- Austria made a payment of EC \$502,000 to RIMCO, the regional supplier of Caterpillar equipment, as part payment on 3 compactors for earthworks;
- Iran paid over US \$2 million (EC \$5.4 million) as a grant to the government;
- Libya contributed US \$1 million as a grant to the project; and

- Mexico has assisted by providing the Airport Master Plan free of cost.

One may recall that the earthworks component of the project is value at EC \$279 million. With 2/3 of the work having been completed, it means that the value of earthworks completed so far is about EC \$180 million. Over this same period, IADC expended EC \$28 million (i.e. expenditure excluding interest costs), mainly on earthworks. This expenditure includes administration, labour, materials and supplies, and fuel and spares. When one relates the value of work done to the expenditure or cost for the work, one gets a cost to value ratio of 0.15. What this means is that for every dollar spent on earthworks, IADC created value of EC \$6.67 on the project.

This cost to value ratio underlines the real contribution made by our friendly partners: Cuba, Venezuela, Trinidad and Tobago, Iran, Libya, Austria and Mexico, all of which have contributed, in cash or kind, towards the earthworks for the airport project. As a result of grants from these countries of the Coalition of the Willing, St. Vincent and the Grenadines does not have to spend EC \$279 million to get the earthworks done.

### **Component 3: Runway, Apron and Taxiways**

In February 2009, IADC made a formal request to the Caricom Development Fund (CDF) for grant and loan financing of US \$16.7 million (EC \$45.1 million) to finance the Runway, Apron and Taxiway component of the airport project. After the governing rules and procedures for the operation of the CDF were approved in August 2009, the CDF contracted a consulting firm, Antigua Profiles Inc., to do a review of the Argyle airport project, in consideration of IADC's request for funding.

Based on the CDF's terms of reference, the consultants were asked, among other things, to identify and quantify, to the extent possible, the main externalities that would arise from the implementation and operation of the Argyle International Airport project. This review was completed in May 2010. In their report, the consultants made several recommendations. Two of the most important were:

**Recommendation #15:** The Argyle International Airport Project is deserving of financial support from the Caricom Development Fund. It is recommended that the structure of funding by CDF should consider a split in funds in a grant/loan proportion of 50/50 or 75/25. The presentation of an updated Financial Plan should be one of the conditions precedent to the disbursement of CDF funds.

**Recommendation #16:** Since under present guidelines CDF is unlikely to fully fund the Runway, Apron and Taxiway component of the project, the CDF may wish, subject to its mandate and operating guidelines and the concurrence of the GSVG, to provide moral and technical support to GSVG by assisting it in identifying other funding sources that provide concessional financing for infrastructural projects.

The CDF accepted the report and recommendations of the consultants. At their Board of Directors meeting in September 2010, the Board approved a grant and loan of US \$4.2 million to the government for the Argyle International Airport project. Earlier this year, I signed the financing agreement between the CDF and the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

In providing this funding, the CDF was guided by its lending guidelines, which requires, among other things, that *“the level of grant financing available to each Member State must be in accordance with Annex III of the Agreement relating to the operations of the CDF, which limits each Member State to its contribution to the Fund for the relevant contribution and subvention cycle. Consequently, in the first Contribution and Subvention Cycle, the total amount of grant funding available to the LDCs and Guyana is US \$17.5 million”*.

Another of the CDF's lending guidelines stipulate that: "*the financial exposure in any one Member State must be restricted to 12 percent of paid up contributions in the relevant funding cycle, with exposure in any one project limited to US \$4.0 million*".

Although the CDF's guidelines prevent it from providing to the government the requested amount of US \$16.7 million for the airport project, the CDF has indicated its willingness to assist the government and IADC in finding the additional amount of concessionary finance necessary to meet the cost of the runway, apron, taxiway component of the airport project.

It should be noted that the government of Turkey has assisted indirectly through its contribution to the CDF.

The funds approved have been earmarked for stone crushing plant and base-laying equipment, and airfield lights and generators. IADC has prepared proposals for these equipment and, with the approval of CDF, has requested proposals from the private sector for the supply of these equipment.

IADC intends to do the pavement works in-house and to set up its own industrial complex complete with stone crusher, asphalt and concrete batching plants, with

supporting equipment. In June 2011, a team from IADC visited Cuba to begin the recruitment process of engineers, operators and technicians to work on the plans and to do the pavement works, which are due to commence by mid-2012.

**Component 4: Terminal Building and Other Landside Facilities**

In 2010, IADC finalised its design objectives for the Terminal Building and Other Landside facilities and awarded the contract for the design and supervision to a Taiwanese Firm, CECI Engineering Consultants, Inc., after a competitive bidding process. This contract is valued at US \$3,913,038 million. The landside facilities designed and to be construction under this component of the project are as follows:-

**Landside Facilities Floor Areas and Construction Cost (est.)**

|   | <b>Square meter</b> | <b>Square Feet</b> | <b>Cost US \$</b> | <b>Constructi on Firm</b> |
|---|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Passenger Terminal Building             |                     |                    | 22,742,179        | OECC                      |
| Ground Floor                            | 7,869               | 84,703             |                   |                           |
| First Floor                             | 3,717               | 40,006             |                   |                           |
| Mezzanine (third) Floor                 | 479                 | 5,160              |                   |                           |
| Electrical Sub-Station                  | 572                 | 6,157              | 2,206,544         | OECC                      |
| Signage (internal and external)         |                     |                    | 367,277           | OECC                      |
| Preliminaries                           |                     |                    | 1,184,000         | OECC                      |
| Cargo Terminal Building                 | 2,385               | 25,670             | 2,697,788         | To be determined          |
| Fire and Rescue Station                 | 450                 | 4,844              | 1,003,904         | To be determined          |
| Control Tower                           | 428                 | 4,608              | 955,751           | To be determined          |
| Site-works, Roads, Drainage and Parking |                     |                    | 9,574,992         | IADC                      |
| <b>Total</b>                            | 15,900              | 171,148            | 40,732,435        |                           |

The passenger terminal building will have 3 floors, with 12,065m<sup>2</sup> (129,879 f<sup>2</sup>) of floor space. The other buildings, making up the landside facilities, will altogether have 15,900 m<sup>2</sup> (171,148 f<sup>2</sup>) of floor space.

The total floor area of all the buildings at Argyle will be more than 3 times the floor area proposed by Marshall, Macklin and Monaghan (MMM) in their 1998 study on airport development. Clearly, MMM's proposals for the landside facilities fell far short of what is actually needed and what is going to be built at Argyle.

The passenger Terminal Building is designed to accommodate approximately 1.5 million passengers per year. This is more than 7 times the number of passengers currently passing through the E.T. Joshua Airport in any one year. The Argyle Airport passenger Terminal Building is therefore sized to accommodate the expected growth in passenger traffic over the medium and long term as the country develops.

A tender for the landside facilities was issued on June 07, 2010 with tender submission set for July 09, 2010. An extension of time was granted to August 16, 2010, following queries and a request for extension of time by all tenderers. An additional 10 to 12 weeks extension was further requested for information and queries after the deadline for submission. This last extension could not be

justified, and was not granted. No tender was received by the appointed time for submission of tender and such the tender process failed.

This failure delayed the contract procurement of the landside facilities. Hence, at a special meeting on November 30, 2010, the Board of Directors approved the awarding of a contract for the construction of the terminal building to the Taiwanese Firm, Overseas Engineering and Construction Company Ltd. (OECC). This contract is worth US \$26,500,000 (EC \$71.5 million) and covers construction of the terminal building, electrical sub-station, internal and external signage, and related preliminaries. On July 12, 2011, IADC and OECC signed the contract, which requires work to begin within 30 days of the signing of the contract, and for all construction works to be completed within 28 months, before a financial penalty is levied on the contractor. This is the huge component of the airport project which we are symbolically inaugurating today.

IADC has decided to do the site works, and construct all internal roads, drainage, and parking areas using resources at its disposal. This means that IADC will at some stage this year enter into contracts with other private firms for the construction of the Fire and Rescue Station, Cargo Terminal Building and Control Tower. These facilities are estimated to cost another US \$4.6 million (EC \$12.4 million).

The Government of Taiwan has pledged an amount of US \$30 million (EC \$81.5 million) for the design and supervision and construction of the terminal building and other landside facilities for the project. On January 07, 2008, IADC drew down US \$2.5 million (EC \$6.7 million) of these funds towards preparation of the area for the terminal building. The contract with CECI Engineering Consultants, valued at US \$3,913,038 million (EC \$10.6 million), is being met from the funds provided by the Taiwanese government. This means that IADC has already allocated US \$5.8 million of the funds provided leaving a balance of US \$24.2 million available for the construction of the terminal building and other landside facilities.

Clearly, the funds provided by the Government of Taiwan are not now sufficient to meet the full cost of all the landside facilities. One may recall that in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed on June 07, 2006, by the President of the Republic of China on Taiwan and myself, the Government of Taiwan pledged a grant of US \$15 million and a soft loan of US \$10 million to the airport project, to finance the designs and construction of the Terminal Building, Control Tower, Roads and Support Systems component of the airport project. On July 31, 2007, in another signed MOU, Taiwan pledged a further US \$5 million in grant to this project, bringing its total financial contribution to the project to US \$30 million.

Further, in the last MOU signed on July 21, 2008 with the new government of President Ma, the Government of Taiwan reaffirmed its commitment to assist the Argyle International Airport project with a grant and a soft loan and promised, if the situation requires, to give *favourable consideration to providing an additional grant or soft loan*, to help St. Vincent and the Grenadines with the higher cost of the building.

### **Component 5: Project Management**

Since the project started in September 2005 to the end of June 2011, IADC has incurred Project Management expenses of EC \$37.9 million. This means that, on average, IADC has incurred only EC \$6.9 million per year in project expenditure. This overall expenditure includes EC \$9.5 million in interest expenses on the bridging loans.

## **PROMOTION AND MARKETING**

### **Promotion of IADC's work**

Over the years, IADC has used all medium to promote the work on the international airport project, with a view to effecting positive changes in the attitude of Vincentians towards the Argyle International Airport. IADC's

promotional efforts were also geared at ensuring that Vincentians of all walks of life appreciate how the Argyle International Airport can benefit them, and to help them prepare to take positive measures to reap the potential benefits from this new facility.

➤ ***Argyle Airport Contributory Fund:***

As a way of showing Vincentians' commitment to and ownership of the project, IADC launched its Argyle Airport Contributory Fund in July 2009. Through this Fund, Vincentians at home and abroad can make monetary donations, however small, if only as a symbol of their support for it. The Fund serves both as a means of raising money for the project as well as a promotional tool.

➤ ***Website:***

In January 2010, IADC launched its new website, as part of its overall strategy at public information dissemination and public relations. Since then, the website has become one of the main mediums through which Vincentians abroad, and other interested persons, get up to date information on the project, at their convenience. The site is easy to navigate and has all the pertinent information so that anyone can use it as their main point of information on the international airport project.

Indeed, the site has become so popular that many persons are using it as their homepage.

➤ *Other promotional activities:*

In addition to those raised above, IADC has been engaged in a series of continuing public relations activities. These include:

- ✓ Launching a Community and School Outreach programme, which started in May 2010 and reached the communities of Layou, Stubbs, Rose Hall, Fitzhughes, Kingstown, Chopins, Barrouallie, Questelles, Cane Hall, Marriaqua, Sandy Bay, South Rivers, Dauphine, Chester Cottage, and Biabou. The schools covered included, the Girls High School, Emmanuel High School Marriaqua, Dr, J.P. Eustace, and Mountain View Academy.
  
- ✓ Producing monthly newspaper centre-spreads, informational brochures, and newsletters, distributed locally and by email to Vincentians at home and abroad;
  
- ✓ Producing television documentaries to track the progress of work on the airport project and the transformation taking place at Argyle, and more

- recently, television advertisements to promote and provide information on the work on the airport;
- ✓ Producing advertisements and slide shows for local electronic boards and screens placed in Kingstown, respectively;
  - ✓ Producing regular updates for the API programme;
  - ✓ Participating in several radio talk shows and television interviews on SVG TV and IKTU;
  - ✓ Sponsoring news, advertisements, radio jingles and a calypso (for a competition organized by Projects Promotion) in support of the project;
  - ✓ Covering (mainly for news purposes), important events, such as visits by the Hon. Prime Minister, ministers of government, dignitaries and other important visitors;

- ✓ Assisting with the launch and promotion of the AIA Contributory Fund and associated fund raising activities, such as that by Rose Hall Cultural Organization;
  
- ✓ Arranging public displays of the IADC's work as well as coordinating over 40 tours of the airport site for interested students, churches and communities; and
  
- ✓ Coordinating the search for an appropriate Logo through a competition sponsored by IADC, although some issues have arisen that have affected our use of that logo.

### **Marketing of the new airport**

Late in the year 2009, IADC began the process of marketing, or perhaps more accurately, building awareness of the new airport. This effort continued the thrust started in December 2007, when we convened a symposium for airlines and travel executives to update them on our plans for the construction of the Argyle Airport. At that forum, there was representation from several airlines as well as tour operators.

In continuing this drive, IADC's representatives began attending travel related conferences to build awareness of the new airport. Two conferences were attended in 2009: the World Travel Market (WTM) held in London, November 8th – 12th, and (b) Network Latin America held in St Maarten 6th to 8th December, 2009. At these two conferences, representatives from the IADC, Ministry of Tourism and Harlequin—at WTM—met and held potentially fruitful discussions with representatives from Virgin Atlantic, British Airways and Monarch Airlines at the WTM, and with US Airways, Delta, Jet Blue and GOL, at the Network Latin America conference.

This marketing effort was intensified in 2010. During that year, a Marketing Team, comprising representatives from the Ministry of Tourism, Tourism Authority, Invest SVG, and IADC, met and finalised a marketing plan to promote the Argyle International Airport along with St. Vincent and the Grenadines. As part of this plan, careful research was done to target those airlines from the USA, Canada, United Kingdom, Caribbean, and Latin America that can be convinced of a business case for adding St Vincent as a new destination to their routes.

As part of the marketing plan, the Tourism Authority, with the approval of IADC, entered into a Professional Services Agreement with the ***Boyd Group International***, an aviation research and advisory firm of Colorado, USA, to develop and execute Air Service Recruitment Strategies for St Vincent and the

Grenadines and the Argyle Airport. This Air Service Recruitment Strategy includes, among other things:

- (a) Developing an air service blueprint for the Argyle Airport;
- (b) Building airline awareness through meetings at international conferences;
- (c) Arranging guided tours of the Argyle Airport and key resorts and attractions for airlines and tour operators; and
- (d) Assisting with negotiations of air service agreements with targeted airlines.

In September 2010, the Minister of Tourism, Hon. Glen Beache, accompanied by representatives from *Boyd Group International*, continued the marketing effort at the World Routes 2010 International Conference held in Vancouver, Canada. From their meetings at this conference, several airlines, most notably, British Airways, expressed strong interest in adding St. Vincent to their routes when the Argyle Airport becomes operational. This kind of marketing and promotion is continuing.

## **WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2011**

For calendar year 2011, IADC will focus on the following projects:-

### (a) **Technical Works – Air and Land Side**

1. Continue earthworks on the runway, aprons and taxiway, and begin work on the sea defences at the North-eastern end of the runway;
2. Purchase or lease additional heavy equipment for earth and pavement works;
3. Prepare the sub-grade and base levels for the pavement in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> kilometers, in accordance with the work programme;
4. Install stone crushing plant and commence production of crushed stones for pavement works;

5. Negotiate purchase of the ARMCO structures for the Yambou River crossing project;
6. Improve the soil testing laboratory to enable testing of hydraulic and asphalt concrete;
7. Begin construction of the terminal building and finalise negotiations for construction of the other landside facilities;
8. Prepare the areas for construction of the other landside facilities, internal roads, drains, and the areas for vehicular parking areas;
9. Resume construction of the Stubbs-Rawacou-Argyle access road;
10. Complete construction of the access road to Argyle Gardens;
11. Prepare living quarters/barracks for Cuban workers of the Contingent;

12. Equip workshop with the necessary machines, such as a lathe and other mechanic tools, to carry out repairs on the equipment more cost effectively;
13. Update the wind/meteorological studies, and begin radio and navigation studies;
14. Prepare tender and complete negotiations for purchase of runway lighting equipment;
15. Set up just-in-time consigned inventory system to reduce down time of equipment;
16. Purchase and set up a concrete batching plant, and commence construction of Tetrapods for the sea defence work and prefabricated elements for drainage.

(b) **Design Projects**

17. Complete designs for drainage of Yambou River for use of ARMCO systems;

18. Prepare designs and the area/platform at Mt. Pleasant Hill for the VOR-DME;
19. Prepare general and detailed plans/designs for the fuel farm and develop a business plan for investment into and operation of the fuel farm and associated facilities;
20. Prepare the detailed designs for navigational aides and airfield signage;
21. Prepare designs and negotiate the purchase of D-VOR/DME;
22. Prepare designs for hangars for the General Aviation Platform;
23. Complete designs for the pavement works;
24. Prepare designs for the aerodrome fencing;
25. Prepare designs for the perimeter road of the aerodrome;

26. Prepare designs for vertical and horizontal signage for airfield;
27. Hydraulic projects associated with the airfield;
28. Prepare survey of obstacles according to limitation surfaces;
29. Review and update meteorological studies;
30. Prepare designs for the internal access roads;

(c) **Environmental Protection and Monitoring**

31. Continue to update and monitor effects of blasting operations and complete condition reports for properties in the Stubbs/Mt. Pleasant/Argyle area that are affected by blasting operations;
32. Complete work on land-use plan for Argyle airport and make recommendations for approval to the Board of Directors and Cabinet;

33. Collaborate with SVG National Trust, Ministry of Culture and National Parks and Rivers Authority on the archaeological investigations and development of a Heritage Park at Escape for relocation of sugar mill ruins and affected Yambou petroglyphs;
34. Provide technical supervision services for the construction of the new Roman Catholic Church;
35. Assist with preparation of an environmental monitoring plan for the airport;

(d) **Communications and Marketing**

36. Continue promotion of IADC's work using all appropriate media and fora;
37. Continue work on television documentaries to track the progress of work on the international airport and the transformation taking place at Argyle;

38. Promote the designs of terminal building to gain public support for the project;
39. Put out request for proposals (tenders) for commercial space in the terminal buildings;
40. Put out requests for proposals (tenders) for other airport associated facilities and installations by private operators on the airport compound;
41. Establish rental rates/schemes for shops and other private commercial activity in the terminal buildings and rates for other services to be provided by the airport company;
42. Collaborate with the Tourism Authority, Invest SVG, and large hoteliers on a marketing programme targeting selected airlines;
43. Adopt a new logo and produce souvenirs for sale for fundraising and project promotion;

44. Update the IADC's website as a useful public information and marketing tool;

(e) **Human Resource Development**

45. Complete man-power and training needs assessment plan;
46. Continue to select and initiate training for persons who would work in the airport;
47. Prepare and implement an Employee Code of Conduct and an employee manual;
48. Review all evaluation/appraisal forms to make them more suited to the evaluation of staff at all levels of the organization;

(f) **Finance, Administration and IT**

49. Coordinate the sale by National Properties of Crown lands vested in the IADC;

50. Prepare detailed budget for Fiscal Year 2010, and proposals for 2011 and 2012;
51. Develop a three-year business plan (2013-2015), for the operational phase of the airport, with clear projections for revenues, costs and investment in the new airport;
52. Continue with negotiations and settlement for vacant land parcels and arrange for proper documentation and accounting for all properties acquired and paid for;
53. Implement the new Cost Accounting system and produce regular management reports for Management and Board of Directors meetings;
54. Evaluate the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of an in-house e-mail system;
55. Develop and implement a maintenance schedule for equipment, e.g. Air condition units, washing machines, stoves, etc; and

56. Implement measures to ensure the safe and proper use of all IADC's heavy equipment and light vehicles.

## **CONCLUSION**

We expect the construction of our Argyle International Airport to be completed by the end of 2013. The naysayers, the conspirators against the public good, those with anti-Ralph neuroses and hang-ups, the modern-day Sanballats and Tobiahs of the Ammonites rejoice every time there is a delay or challenge touching and concerning the construction of our international airport. They fervently wish this project to fail. I have never in my life seen people as destructive and malicious as these. Voicing an honestly-held objection to the building of the airport or genuinely questioning this or that matter in its construction is one thing, but it is an entirely different issue altogether to mock it, to conspire against it, and to wish it to end in incompleteness or failure. Some of these mockers, conspirators, and plain envious, evil, malicious ones actually hold positions of supposed influence. I am truly sorry for them; I pity them.

I know that the overwhelming majority of our people, at home and abroad, welcome this airport. They understand that from time to time there would be unavoidable delays and unforeseen challenges. They have patience, hope, faith, and love. Indeed, love is patient, kind, and not envious. Our people read the

Psalms (Chapter 37, verses 7, 9) and take courage and learning from these divinely-inspired words:

*“Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him, do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.*

*“Refrain from anger and turn from wrath;  
Do not fret – it leads only to evil; For evil men will be cut off,  
But those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land.”*

Thank you!