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PRESS RELEASE

FORMER AMBASSADOR, DR. DESSIMA WILLIAMS, ELECTED AS PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

September 2, 2022 – The Government of Grenada welcomes the appointment of former ambassador, Dr. Dessima M. Williams, as President of the Upper House of Parliament, the Senate. Dr. Williams was elected to the post during the First Sitting of the Eleventh Parliament on August 31, 2022.

“Ms. Dessima Williams has served Grenada with distinction, exhibiting marked leadership and dedication, particularly in the areas of climate change resilience and the sustainable development of small island states,” Prime Minister, the Honourable Dickon Mitchell said, highlighting the former ambassador’s extensive experience as a diplomat and negotiator.

“Ms. Williams’ significant contributions, not only on the international stage but also to social and rural development in Grenada, serve as a reflection of the important role women play in nation building.”

Dr. Dessima Williams was appointed as Grenada’s Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the United Nations in 2009. She served in this capacity for over four years, three of those concurrently as Chair of the Alliance of Small Island Developing States, leading a 40-island global climate change effort that recorded the high ambition of keeping average global temperatures to 1.5 degrees.

Prior to this, in the 1980s, Ms. Williams served as Grenada’s representative to the Organization of American States, Deputy Governor to the World Bank and Deputy Permanent Representative to the Inter-American Commission of Women. At the Organization of American States, she shepherded resolutions such as the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, Development and Independence.

Ms. Williams is the fourth woman to serve in the role of President of the Senate, following Senator the Hon. Joan Purcell (2008-2013); Senator the Hon. Leslie-Ann Seon (2004-2006); and Senator the Hon. Margaret Neckles (1990-1995).

“It is a particular honour and challenge to serve as a woman, standing on the shoulders of women before me,” Dr. Williams said. “Access to state power by women must both signal a commitment to intentionally increasing the numbers and impact of Grenada’s

women in decision-making, as well as enabling women and men the opportunity to bring about positive change for society.”

Dr. Williams has penned publications that include “Bringing More Women into Leadership (2000), and “Women in Politics in Latin America and the Caribbean” (2005); and has served as a Special Advisor and Consultant on various United Nations initiatives that cover the Sustainable Development Goals, Climate Change and Gender Matters. She founded the Grenada Education and Development Programme in 1996, which supports Grenada’s students as emerging leaders.

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Note to Editors:

Parliament consists of the Queen, represented by the Governor General; the Senate (Upper House); and the House of Representatives (Lower House).

The Senate consists of thirteen (13) Members. All bills must be passed by the Senate before they can become law and the Senate has the constitutional right to reject any bill as often as it sees fit. The Senate can also amend any bill, although it cannot initiate or increase the amount of any bill dealing with taxation or expenditure. The Presiding Officer of the Senate is the President.

Learn more at gov.gd.