



REAL CHANGE

A DEVELOPMENT AGENDA FOR SAINT LUCIA

MANIFESTO OF THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT MOVEMENT - 2011

MESSAGE FROM THE POLITICAL LEADER

Fellow St. Lucians, Friends:

No amount of political rhetoric can hide from the eyes of Saint Lucians the situation of economic and social decline that is being presided over by a United Workers Party Administration that has abandoned the development vision and betrayed the principles of political conduct exemplified by its legendary leader, Sir John Compton.

Now, every citizen and resident of this country personally experiences in one way or the other the economic distress, the loss of the feeling of personal security and national pride and the lack of confidence in the future engendered by the mediocre performance of the current United Workers Party administration.

Neither the UWP, nor the St. Lucia Labour Party under the leadership of Kenny Anthony, have proposed credible solutions to the immediate problems that confront the country or have set out a long-term vision or strategy to address the challenges that lie ahead.

Never have the traditional political parties in Saint Lucia offered so little hope in terms of leadership or have seemed so bankrupt of ideas and appeal. They have been tried, they have been tested and they have failed.

To renew our nation we must purge ourselves of the political divisions of old, recognizing that the development interests of the nation take precedence over narrow individual or partisan priorities.

The traditional refusal to harness our scarce and limited human and material resources behind the common national good is a luxury that most of us realize this country can no longer afford.

Each person must be allowed to make the contribution of which he or she is capable regardless of political or religious persuasion. As a nation, we must embrace this philosophy or face the consequence of increasing marginalization and decline in a world where, more and more, the priorities are being determined by the imperatives of globalization.

In this Manifesto, “**Real Change, A Development Agenda for Saint Lucia**”, we present for your consideration the policies and strategies to be pursued by a National Development Movement administration.

Saint Lucia is an extraordinarily beautiful country and we believe that it is our responsibility to preserve its unique environment and culture and to leave it better than we found it for the benefit of future generations.

Our Development Agenda is an agenda for real change – the change that has been promised but never delivered; the change that is necessary and whose time has come.

REAL CHANGE: A DEVELOPMENT AGENDA FOR SAINT LUCIA

Our Agenda is a people-centered agenda that seeks to eradicate poverty, to bring relief to the most vulnerable in our society, to create jobs and opportunity for all and to ensure that the benefits from our nation's growth and development are shared equitably.

We ask for your support and your vote that will afford us the opportunity to implement this **Development Agenda**.

Now is the time for real change. Together we can change the course of Saint Lucia's future; together we can make history and build a new Saint Lucia.

Yours faithfully,

Ausbert d'Auvergne

Political Leader

REAL CHANGE

A Development Agenda for Saint Lucia

Some Highlights of the NDM's 2011 MANIFESTO

- Create a minimum of 5,000 permanent new direct and indirect jobs during a five-year term of office.
- Reserve 10% of the public service wage bill for apprenticeships, cadetships and short-term, transition-type employment for young persons.
- Introduce a National Service programme that will focus on community service and the teaching of employable skills and will absorb at least 1,500 young persons.
- Introduce a programme to create jobs for Single Mothers.
- Establish a Young Entrepreneurs Services (YES) initiative that will encourage and provide financing for micro and small businesses for persons between 18 and 39 years of age.
- Allocate 25% of Government contracts for the supply of goods and services to small and micro businesses.
- Entitle all investors, whether local or foreign to the same investment incentives.
- Establish a special tax regime for small and medium size businesses, limiting the corporation tax payable by such entities to a maximum of 20% and reduce the corporate tax rate for large businesses to 25%.
- Elevate Sir Arthur Lewis Community College to become the 4th campus of the University of the West Indies to enable it to provide affordable university level education in a wider range of subject areas.
- Attract offshore schools and institutions to create more educational opportunities and jobs for Saint Lucians.
- Introduce a system to provide affordable healthcare and medicines for every citizen.
- Adopt a zero-tolerance approach to crime and lawlessness at every level within the society.
- Initiate a resolute and sustained assault on crime using modern as well as traditional crime-fighting tools and provide access to justice for all, especially the poor and disadvantaged.
- Transform agriculture and the farming sector by focusing on both traditional and new crops, new farming systems and agro-processing.
- Introduce a new Agricultural Development Act to provide incentives similar to those provided to the tourism and hospitality industry.
- Build nature/eco-tourism and other specialist guest rooms in selected rural communities to bring jobs and the benefits from tourism to all parts of Saint Lucia.
- Establish minimum wage requirements for household, domestic and part-time workers.
- Establish minimum wage requirements for shop and store workers.
- Make school textbooks affordable for all.
- Make laptop computers affordable for each primary and secondary school student.
- Introduce free summer camps for primary and secondary school students who demonstrate good academic performance.
- Provide established and registered community under-19 sports clubs with free uniforms for one sporting discipline each year.

REAL CHANGE: A DEVELOPMENT AGENDA FOR SAINT LUCIA

- Introduce a National Sports Excellence Programme involving the recruitment of international sports coaches on long-term contracts to improve the national standards of performance in selected sporting disciplines.
- Introduce a system of free bus passes for eligible students, the disabled and senior citizens.
- Build at least 500 affordable housing units per year.
- Guarantee access to our beaches.
- Eradicate political interference and patronage from the operation of the public service.
- Ensure that all government contracts are awarded on the basis of merit and that no citizen is denied opportunity because of political persuasion.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT MOVEMENT (NDM)

After decades of defining and viewing the world in terms of the extremes of capitalism on one hand and socialism on the other, there appears to be a growing consensus that neither of those systems, especially in their pure forms, have provided for or can adequately meet the needs of people, especially those in the developing world.

We believe that there is another way. A way that recognizes that progress, and life itself, demands that our happiness and success as a people does not depend entirely on the efficiency of markets or the power of the state to fashion and control every aspect of our lives. Instead, we believe that it requires that we build upon and leverage our rich tradition as a Christian people recognizing our responsibility as our brother's keeper and our obligation to ensure that no-one is left behind as our nation develops.

The creation in Saint Lucia of the **National Development Movement (NDM)** and the adoption of its motto, "***Opportunity for All***", represents our response to the current state of affairs in our country. Our motto provides a clear and unambiguous insight into what the NDM stands for and the focus of our vision for a new political milieu.

In choosing to name our organization the **National Development Movement**, we are asserting that the historical tensions engendered by political and economic philosophies that emphasize the value of the market on one hand or the state on the other, or the antipathy between labour and capital, have not provided the solutions required in today's world in which there is a growing cry for fairness, equity, justice, tolerance and a return to our traditional spiritual and cultural values.

We recognize and accept that all human beings have the capacity for and the need to continually advance themselves, improve upon their environment and to maintain the best aspects of it. We also assert that in making **development** the foundation of our political philosophy, we are giving support to the notion that development of the individual, and hence the nation, must address material as well as spiritual needs. It is **people**, functioning within the family unit, who must be the *focus* of and *raison d'être* for our political actions. Our name also signifies the recognition of the act or process of growth and progress in the human, social, cultural and economic spheres.

The apparent deterioration in the economic and social circumstances of our country and its people, the evident decline in moral and spiritual values, the prevalence of crime against persons and property, and the increasing sense of hopelessness about the future in all sectors of the society, is a cause of grave concern for all citizens, residents and friends of Saint Lucia.

There is an immediate need to reverse the trend towards economic decline, social fragmentation, lawlessness and moral degeneration and to purge the society of the forces of divisiveness that have become manifest.

It is imperative therefore, that all sectors of the community join hands to implement realistic solutions to the economic and social problems of the nation, to create an environment in which

love of country and for each other is the motivation for each citizen to assume responsibility for the building of a just society, and to foster spiritual growth and renewal.

The fundamental rights and freedoms provided for in the Constitution of Saint Lucia, form the foundation of the philosophy of the NDM and accordingly, our members are required to:

- Affirm their faith in the supremacy of the Almighty God; believe that all persons have been endowed equally by God with inalienable rights and dignity;
- Recognize that the enjoyment of these rights depends upon certain fundamental freedoms namely, freedom of the person, of thought, of expression, of communication, of conscience and of association;
- Maintain that these freedoms can only be safeguarded by the rule of law;
- Realize that human dignity requires respect for spiritual values; for private family life and property; and the enjoyment of an adequate standard of economic and social well-being dependent upon the resources of the State;
- Respect the principles of social justice and therefore believe that the operation of the economic system should result in the material resources of the community being so distributed as to subserve the common good, that there should be adequate means of livelihood for all, that labour should not be exploited or forced by economic necessity to operate in inhumane conditions but that there should be opportunity for advancement on the basis of recognition of merit, ability and integrity;
- Express their commitment to democracy, in particular the principle of a government freely elected on the basis of universal adult suffrage;
- Consider that individually, each person has duties towards every other and to the community and is under obligation to observe and promote the rights, freedoms and values recognized in our Constitution.
- Pledge that our beautiful island St. Lucia, ultimate source of our economic wellbeing and object of joy and pride for all St. Lucians, shall not be raped and exploited but tended with respect and be passed on to future generations of St. Lucians intact and improved.

The NDM believes that education, knowledge, hard work, discipline, integrity, enlightened leadership and love of country are the keys to empowering each citizen to contribute effectively to building a community in which prosperity and opportunity are created for all, and not just for a few.

The NDM believes that the nation will only be as strong as the weakest of its citizens, and therefore embraces the imperative that the strengthening of the weak is the basis upon which all can prosper, together, through shared endeavor, in a society in which harmony and a spirit of mutual respect and tolerance prevail, and in which the rights enjoyed are balanced by the responsibilities that are accepted.

The NDM is committed to providing leadership by example for a national effort to build a society in which excellence is the standard, justice is the entitlement of each, and prosperity, power and achievement are the prerogative of all.

The NDM is convinced that with faith in God, with perseverance and with a steadfast commitment to the ideals of truth, integrity and respect for human dignity, the nation and its

people can, with confidence, confront the challenges of development within a global economy and build a strong and secure society that will be a proud legacy for future generations.

NDM'S PRIORITIES

To give effect to its commitment to bring about the realization of the considerable development potential of the nation of Saint Lucia and its people, the NDM shall pursue the following priorities:

- To define a clear and coherent vision for the development of the nation and its people within an economic environment of free enterprise bolstered by necessary government action, that has as its objective the significant improvement of the living standards of all.
- To establish a consistent framework of policies, strategies, programmes and appropriate projects that promote significant economic growth in a context of fiscal prudence, sound economic management and decisive leadership so as to bring about the realization of national development objectives.
- To undertake a major restructuring and reorganization of the machinery of government to ensure that central government departments, local government agencies and statutory corporations become effective vehicles for the transmission of government policies and the implementation of government strategies, programmes and projects.
- To eradicate adult illiteracy and promote excellence in education at all levels as the foundation for the empowerment of citizens, and to expand educational opportunities especially for young people.
- To create jobs and economic opportunities for all, but especially for young people by maximizing business opportunities and the job-creation potential in existing, new and emerging sectors of the economy.
- To improve the living conditions of the weak and the disadvantaged as a precondition for the advancement of the nation as a whole and to give special emphasis to strengthening the family unit that is the foundation of society.
- To create a secure society in which law and order prevails, in which every child is well cared for, in which every citizen has access to affordable healthcare and in which the needs of working people, the retired, the disabled and the elderly are fully addressed.
- To ensure a process of balanced development in which appropriate emphasis is placed on the economic, social, moral, religious, cultural and recreational aspects of national life.
- To provide decisive, visionary, experienced and capable leadership for a national development effort that combines the endeavours of workers, trade unions, voluntary and community-based organizations, the business community and government in an environment in which the contribution of each citizen is expected, and welcomed.
- To review the Constitution of Saint Lucia on the basis of the report of the Constitution Commission to ensure that its provisions reflect the needs, aspirations, possibilities and potential of the nation and its people.

KEEPING THE MANIFESTO'S PROMISES

The contents of the Manifesto represent the promises that an NDM administration intends to keep. Specific arrangements will be put in place to ensure that the Administration does not stray from its declared objectives and targets.

Upon assumption of office each Ministry, Department or Agency will be assigned specific responsibility for elements of the Manifesto programme together with timelines and parameters for implementation.

Progress with regard to the implementation of the Manifesto programme will be constantly monitored by a team of Policy Managers who will report regularly and directly to the Prime Minister.

WE BEGIN WITH....

THE ECONOMY

The goal of the economic policy and strategy of a NDM Administration will be:

- to ensure the long-term economic survival and development of Saint Lucia;
- to create a stable economic climate in which investment can flourish;
- to bring about increasing standards of living for all;
- to maximize the employment possibilities for Saint Lucians; and
- to ensure that all Saint Lucians enjoy the benefits of economic growth and national development.

Without a strong economy none of the far-reaching changes and development policies that are proposed in the Development Agenda can be achieved. As we are all aware, the underpinning of a strong economy is a healthy growth momentum.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

The economic policies of a NDM Administration will be designed to generate accelerated economic growth.

The growth targets established in the context of challenging national and global financial circumstances are as follows:

6% – 10%

Restructuring &

Reorientation

YEAR 2 Investment

YEAR 3 Major Investment

YEAR 4 Major Investment

YEAR 5 Optimization &

Stabilization

These rates of growth are necessary to reduce unemployment, to improve standards of living throughout the society and to generate the income required to finance the social and development programmes that will distribute the nation's wealth equitably among all its citizens.

Economic growth must be something that brings benefits to the population in the form of improved living standards and unless this is the case claims by politicians of generating growth will for all intents and purposes, be meaningless.

THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CLIMATE

The economic management practices pursued over the last decade have created an economic environment that has the following characteristics:

- Unemployment is in excess of 20%.
- Whatever modest economic growth that has been achieved is accompanied by steadily rising prices while wage levels do not keep up with inflation.
- The public debt has ballooned and is currently in excess of \$2.0 Billion.
- Taxes, levies and charges are ever on the increase.
- The procedures for the award of contracts have been completely compromised.
- Lack of transparency and accountability has reached alarming proportions.

In light of this situation, a complete change of approach with regard to the direction of the economy is required.

It will therefore be necessary for a NDM Administration to initiate a process of economic and social reform as a matter of urgency.

ECONOMIC & SOCIAL REFORM

It is necessary for Saint Lucia to undergo a process of managed structural change of its economy and society. This change will involve a redistribution of power and influence within the socio-economic system.

This process of change will incorporate a programme of medium-term macroeconomic measures to make the economy more resilient and self-reliant and to ensure growth, development, and improvement in the quality of life of the people of Saint Lucia.

The portfolio of strategies and measures to be incorporated in an economic reform programme will:

- Stabilize central government finances within two years by eliminating wasteful expenditure and by maximizing the efficiency of revenue collection.

REAL CHANGE: A DEVELOPMENT AGENDA FOR SAINT LUCIA

- Activate the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament by making it a full-time functional office with a professional staff including forensic accountants with a clear mandate to investigate and validate the expenditure of public funds by government ministries and departments and statutory corporations both currently and retrospectively.
- Create a climate that is more conducive to investment by reducing the existing maximum rate of personal and corporate income taxes.
- Evaluate all Government enterprises and either sell, close or reform them.
- Strengthen the Saint Lucia Development Bank to enable it to adequately meet the needs of farmers, fishermen, small entrepreneurs and business people.
- Implement a strategy to encourage and support new businesses and foster innovation and creativity.
- Improve financial information flows to the public.
- Amend the Finance Act to remove any provision for the issue of Letters of Comfort or Implicit Guarantees by Government except with the explicit approval of the Cabinet of Ministers.
- Include Government subsidies to the private sector and state corporations in the Budget.
- Introduce legislation to control credit and hire purchase agreements.

An **Economic Development Council** will be institutionalized with periodic meetings to consider major elements of the structural adjustment and development strategy.

The Council will be chaired by the Prime Minister and will include the economic ministries, private sector organizations and trade unions and will meet on a quarterly basis.

Under the umbrella of this Council:

- A Foreign Exchange Committee comprising representatives from all sectors will be set up to monitor and improve the performance of the foreign exchange earning sectors.
- An Administrative Effectiveness Committee will be set up to provide the private sector with the opportunity for identifying administrative hurdles and bureaucratic impediments to entrepreneurship.

As a result of these reforms, it is expected that Government will reduce the scope of its economic activities and the burden of unnecessary regulations and make it easier to do business in Saint Lucia. These reforms will also lead to a reduction in the overall burden of taxation.

With the private sector expected to be a leading generator of growth over the medium-term, Government will do its utmost to facilitate private enterprise through incentives, joint ventures or partnerships.

THE PUBLIC SERVICE

The structural adjustment strategy must encompass the Public Service, the effectiveness of which is a critical determinant of the ability of any Administration to successfully implement its development programme.

Urgent steps shall be taken, not only to attract and keep staff of the highest quality, but to motivate them to perform to the best of their ability, irrespective of political persuasion.

Training will be provided to make the Public Service responsive to the national needs, to increase efficiency, and to improve the self-esteem of the workers.

A NDM Administration will:

- Immediately streamline procedures and reduce processing times for the grant of government approvals that are critical for the encouragement of investment, the stimulation of economic growth and the facilitation of citizens. The procedures to be reformed include those associated with the issue of Aliens Landholding Licenses, Development Control Authority approvals, birth certificates and passports.
- Establish a **Public Services Review Commission** with broad terms of reference to review the status, role and functions of the Public Service, its relationship to elected representatives, its accountability to Parliament and its relationship to the general public – including the private sector.
- Implement a system that **ensures** job security on the basis of **merit** and that the appointment, promotion, disciplining, and dismissal of public servants are not within the purview of politicians or Ministers.
- Increase the effectiveness of the Public Service through the provision of greater training opportunities and incentives for excellence.
- Establish structured training programmes for public officers in collaboration with Sir Arthur Lewis Community College.
- Subsidize fees paid by public servants for work-related seminars, training and study programmes.
- Relate the tenure and reward levels of senior management in the Public Sector and the Statutory Corporations to their performance and to the operating effectiveness of their organizations.
- Improve the working conditions and facilities of public officers through a five-year structured implementation programme.
- Streamline the Public Service by achieving reductions in staffing levels through controlled early retirement programmes, natural attrition and redeployment of personnel within the local government system.
- Simultaneously implement an administrative reform and restructuring programme that also encompasses the local government system. The emphasis will be on strengthening the delivery capability of core ministries and departments and avoiding the proliferation of special purpose units or offices.
- Increase computerization and mechanization in the Public Service in order to improve its efficiency and service delivery.

REAL CHANGE: A DEVELOPMENT AGENDA FOR SAINT LUCIA

- Arrange short-term attachments and consultancies in specialized areas so that Public Officers can spend time in the private sector without losing benefits as a means of promoting cross-fertilization of ideas.
- Review the status of non-established workers with a view to offering greater job security, improved benefits, upward mobility and better working conditions.
- Provide counseling and advisory services and special incentives and concessions for public officers who retire from the Public Service and who wish to make the transition from the public to the private sector by setting up new businesses.
- Reserve 10% of the civil service wage bill for apprenticeships, cadetships and short-term, transition-type employment for youth.
- Aggressively pursue the goal of creating a smaller Government bureaucracy and a larger private sector.

GENERAL ECONOMIC POLICY

The economic policy to be implemented by a NDM Administration to achieve the economic growth targets that have been established will have many facets.

The objective will be to promote, stimulate and catalyze economic growth through multiple interventions to create national wealth that can then be re-distributed equitably to all members of the society.

The NDM's philosophy will embrace the development of linkages at all levels of the economy to include manufacturing, services, agriculture, tourism, culture and entertainment. It will also involve exploring global markets that are available in all spheres of economic activity in which we can profitably participate.

NDM's "**Economic Plan for Generating Growth and Creating Jobs**" will provide details of the projects to be implemented and the specific strategies to be pursued however, the policy measures and the direction to be pursued will:

- Attract major inflows of capital into the construction sector by direct government involvement in large tourism, commercial and infrastructural projects, located throughout the country in joint ventures with the national, regional and international private sector and the international financial community. This will bring economic growth, employment creation and income generation to all parts of the country and therefore stabilize our rural communities.
- Create at least six thousand new jobs over five years while bringing about rapid and sustained agricultural and rural growth and development, raising agricultural productivity, reducing poverty and bringing prosperity to rural communities.
- Create at least five thousand new jobs over five years by direct intervention of Government as a catalyst in and initiator of large and small scale development projects in conjunction with the national, regional and international private sector and the international financial community.
- Pursue a deliberate strategy of Government participation in joint-venture investments with the private sector and the subsequent transfer of government shares in these investments to the public after these ventures are well established.
- Entitle all investors, whether local or foreign to the same investment incentives.
- Collaborate with the private sector in organizing and developing the music, arts and entertainment industry.
- Strengthen and re-structure the productive sectors of the economy particularly tourism, agriculture and manufacturing, and create a vibrant private sector that can become the main engine of economic growth in the medium-term.
- Develop Saint Lucia as a major services centre in the Caribbean.
- Increase the export capacity of all the productive sectors of the economy.
- Bring every citizen into the mainstream of economic life of the country by broadening the base of ownership and creating new opportunities for all.
- Ensure that the economy grows rapidly, that all St. Lucians share in the benefits of this growth and that price increases are moderate and commensurate with the rate of growth.

REAL CHANGE: A DEVELOPMENT AGENDA FOR SAINT LUCIA

- Create an environment conducive to the expansion of existing enterprises and the creation of new ones.
- Transform our rural communities and create new opportunities for investment in all parts of Saint Lucia.
- Remove the burden of excessive taxes and excessive government bureaucracy.
- Restore order and discipline to Government's financial operations.
- Ensure that the statutory corporations function effectively and fulfill the roles for which they were established.
- Initiate a programme of tax reform aimed at reducing the burden on low income families, stimulating savings and investment and boosting exports.
- Ensure that Saint Lucians retain control of the commanding heights of the economy and that the use of the nation's resources is directed toward the enhancement of the standard of living of all of our people.
- Protect the consumer and safeguard the interest of depositors in financial institutions.
- Pursue economic programmes that enhance and protect the environment.

SPECIFIC MEASURES

A NDM Administration will:

- Introduce VAT and eradicate Consumption Tax.
- Protect economically vulnerable social groups by waiving, zero-rating or exempting certain basic foodstuffs and goods from the payment of VAT.
- Exempt from VAT basic food items and other commodities widely used by low income groups including: flour, rice, corned beef, sardines, pickled meat, cooking oil, sugar, margarine, macaroni, condensed milk, evaporated milk and cheddar cheese.
- Exempt from customs duty and VAT baby food, disposable diapers, baby wipes, baby medicines and toiletries, feeding bottles, nipples, bibs and other baby supplies.
- Protect small businesses under a certain size from the administrative burdens of the VAT regime by setting the Business Registration Threshold for VAT at an appropriate level.
- Together with the introduction of VAT establish a special tax regime for small and medium size businesses, limiting the corporation tax payable by such entities to a maximum of 20%.
- Together with the introduction of VAT reduce the corporate tax rate for large businesses to a maximum of 25%.
- Together with the introduction of VAT reduce the personal tax rate for individuals to a maximum of 25%.
- Waive property tax payable for all residential properties valued at less than \$150,000.
- Abate property tax payable by 25% on the second \$150,000 on properties valued at under \$300,000 where such properties are owned and occupied by citizens over 55 years of age.
- Introduce tax incentives for developmental inputs such as goods for training, education and business startups
- Establish a special tax regime for Saint Lucian professionals that will encourage the sale of their services outside of Saint Lucia, and within Saint Lucia to foreigners, as a means of earning foreign exchange.
- Allow any first time shareholder a tax benefit of up to \$10,000 for the purchase of shares in designated companies.

REAL CHANGE: A DEVELOPMENT AGENDA FOR SAINT LUCIA

- Exempt from taxation any interest earned on savings in any financial or commercial institution.
- Provide a tax benefit for contributions made to any venture capital fund that provides start-up capital for small businesses.
- Create tax incentives for investments by the private sector in research and development and quality control that can boost productivity and exports.
- Exempt from transfer taxes and stamp duty any foreign investment by way of equity in local export-oriented joint-venture companies.
- Increase tax allowances for: investment in credit unions; premiums of life insurance policies; and education of children both at home and abroad.
- Provide tax allowances to working students participating in a course of study for professional examinations.
- Exempt from tax maintenance payments for the benefit of a child pursuant to an order of the court.
- Exempt from property transfer tax property transferred between spouses pursuant to an order of the court made on the breakdown of a marriage or union other than marriage where the property was jointly owned by the parties.
- Exempt sporting goods from VAT.
- Exempt musical instruments from VAT.
- As a general policy, public funds should support healthy products and health practices – support for environmentally-friendly products, breast-feeding devices rather than for manufactured baby food.

THE PUBLIC DEBT

The accumulation of debt by successive administrations has made Saint Lucia a highly indebted nation, and the rate of accumulation of such debt should be a cause of considerable concern for all citizens.

A NDM Administration that inherits the responsibility for the management of this debt burden will adopt the following strategy:

- Establish a specialist Public Debt Management Unit within the Ministry of Finance to ensure the efficient management of the public debt portfolio.
- Define a comprehensive economic and social structural adjustment and development programme that can be presented to creditor and donor nations and financial institutions.
- Within the context of this structural adjustment and development programme approach creditor nations and financial institutions with the view to debt forgiveness and debt restructuring.
- Refinance existing debt to secure longer grace periods, longer amortization periods and more concessional rates of interest.
- Dedicate a percentage of the increased government revenue generated from the accelerated rates of economic growth towards the settlement and retirement of the public debt.
- Establish strict criteria to be met before additional debt is assumed.
- Institute strict controls to reduce government expenditure and operating costs.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

PLACING ECONOMIC POWER IN THE HANDS OF ALL SAINT LUCIANS

A major objective of a NDM Administration will be to place economic power in the hands of every Saint Lucian and to ensure that each citizen shares in the benefits of economic growth and development thereby ensuring that economic opportunities are created for all.

In addition to implementing sound economic policies designed to create growth and increase employment, it is necessary for mechanisms to be created that can allow the public to participate fully in the ownership, management and control of our national resources and to enjoy the income and wealth that these resources produce.

To realize this objective a NDM Administration will implement several innovative strategies designed to ensure the distribution of some of the wealth of the nation as equitably as possible. The strategies to be adopted include the following:

SAINT LUCIA INC.

A NDM Administration will establish a profit-oriented private limited liability investment company called **Saint Lucia Inc.**

The shareholding in Saint Lucia Inc. will be divided into three classes of shares: golden shares; government shares and ordinary shares.

Every native born Saint Lucian, on attaining the age of eighteen, becomes entitled to receive one golden share. Golden shares cannot be sold but can be bequeathed to the holder of another golden share upon the death of its holder.

Holders of golden shares will be entitled to a distribution of 25% of the dividends declared by Saint Lucia Inc. The total of the golden shares issued at any one time will be equivalent to 25% of the total shareholding of the Company. Each golden share shall be entitled to one vote at Annual General Meetings of Saint Lucia Inc. such votes being equivalent to 25% of the total votes.

Government shares will be allocated to Government upon the inception of the Company and will be equivalent to 25% of the total shareholding. Government shares will be entitled to a distribution of 10% of the dividends declared and to 25% of the total votes in Saint Lucia Inc.

Ordinary shares will be entitled to a distribution of 65% of the dividends declared and will be equivalent to 50% of the total votes in Saint Lucia Inc. Only holders of golden shares will be entitled to purchase ordinary shares and the holder of each golden share will be eligible to purchase ordinary shares equivalent to a maximum of 0.5% of the total ordinary shares outstanding or 0.25% of the total shareholding in Saint Lucia Inc.

As part of the strategy of a NDM Administration to rationalize the operations of statutory corporations and agencies, Government will vest many of its land, infrastructure, shareholding

and physical assets in Saint Lucia Inc. to establish its asset base. Notwithstanding the value of the assets vested by Government in Saint Lucia Inc., government shares will be entitled to a distribution of 10% of the dividends declared and to 25% of the total votes in Saint Lucia Inc.

A tax allowance of up to \$25,000 will be provided to any Saint Lucian who purchases ordinary shares in Saint Lucia Inc.

Management for Saint Lucia Inc. will be recruited on the basis of proven competence and will be answerable only to the shareholders of the Company.

Saint Lucia Inc. will set up subsidiary companies and special purpose corporate vehicles as required through which it will undertake investments in various sectors and enterprises.

One investment that Saint Lucia Inc. will undertake from the outset is:

A Consortium Contracting Company

Most large road and infrastructure contracts in Saint Lucia are undertaken by foreign contracting companies for the simple reason that there is no large locally-owned company that is able to pre-qualify and to be competitive in tendering against large international companies.

Saint Lucia Inc. will establish a company the function of which will be to bring together small and medium-size contractors and heavy equipment owners, engineers and other professionals into consortiums that are able to tender competitively for large-scale road and infrastructure contracts in Saint Lucia and the O.E.C.S.

To give this company the opportunity to develop and to gain a foothold in a highly competitive environment, this company will be given a 10% price preference on its bids for eligible government contracts for a period of five years.

The Privatization of WASCO

The control of the water supply sector is a matter of national strategic importance.

While there is the need for this sector to operate within a framework that encourages efficiency, reliable service to the public, a high-quality product and the attraction of new investment, control of the water supply should never be allowed to slip from national control.

The key is to find a mechanism that allows for privatization and the benefits to be derived therefrom, while ensuring that national sovereignty over the sector is preserved. The privatization of WASCO under the umbrella of Saint Lucia Inc. meets these requirements.

The incorporation of WASCO as a Saint Lucia Inc. subsidiary company will ensure that there is always a significant national ownership interest while enabling the introduction of competent management and the attraction of new investment capital.

In addition, the strong national shareholding in WASCO will ensure that while the Company operates on a for-profit basis, this impulse will be moderated by the need to maintain water rates at an affordable level for the general public.

Other investments to be undertaken by Saint Lucia Inc. will be identified in the sections of the Agenda that follow.

In addition to the establishment of Saint Lucia Inc. a NDM Administration will introduce other significant measures that will ensure the economic empowerment and enfranchisement of Saint Lucians. To that end a “Business Incubator” system will be introduced to help drive new business development, innovation, creativity and business start-up.

To be more effective, Government’s support agencies will be rationalized so as to avoid duplication, take advantage of synergies and become more cost-efficient.

A NDM Administration will:

- Introduce a Bonus Investment Scheme that will allow the investment of up to 100% of the value of annual bonuses paid to employees in shares in approved companies.
- Allow any first time shareholder a tax benefit of up to \$10,000 for the purchase of shares in approved companies.
- To encourage land ownership, provide a tax allowance of 50% to a maximum of \$35,000 of the purchase price of lots in residential subdivisions purchased by young persons between the ages of 18 to 39 years acting either jointly or individually. The tax allowance will be applied in equal amounts over 5 years but will be discontinued if title to the lot is transferred during this period.
- To encourage home ownership, provide a tax allowance equivalent to 50% of the annual interest paid on the first \$300,000 of mortgages on residential homes assumed by persons between the ages of 18 to 39 years.
- Provide increased incentives to land developers and home builders to encourage an increase in the supply of affordable properties to meet market demand.
- Wherever Government still has ownership of fertile agricultural land, make this land available to farmers in approved farming programmes at affordable prices or on the basis of secure lease or tenantry arrangements.
- Provide increased incentives for investment in credit unions and cooperatives.
- Through the Business Development Agency at a re-structured National Development Corporation, provide assistance to small entrepreneurs to enable them to establish, and expand their businesses.
- Through the Saint Lucia Development Bank, provide loans at affordable rates for the establishment and expansion of small businesses.
- Ensure that a fair share of government contracts is reserved for small contractors.
- Establish and regulate the rates to be paid by foreign contractors for the hire of heavy equipment, for trucking services and for the employment of labour.

TOURISM

The objective is to achieve a rapid increase in hotel occupancy and capacity, increase the quality of service offered to visitors, increase visitor per capita expenditure, make the Sector more competitive and less dependent on traditional markets and improve working conditions, benefits and opportunities for training and certification for hotel sector workers.

The tourism industry is Saint Lucia's number one industry from the standpoint of the provision of jobs and the earning of foreign exchange.

It is easily affected by incidents of crime or harassment that make visitors feel unsafe or unwelcome, by poor quality service or inadequate or inappropriate marketing.

A National Development Movement Administration will promote the development of the tourism sector by adopting the following initiatives, strategies and programmes:

- Construction of tourism resorts at selected locations in Saint Lucia as joint venture partnerships between Government and local and international investors.
- Construction of 1,500 new traditional and non-traditional (including health, retirement, adventure, nature/eco-type) guest rooms over the next five years with the consequent creation of 3,000 new direct job opportunities and an additional 1,500 new indirect job opportunities.
- A significant expansion of the budget for tourism marketing and promotion to increase Saint Lucia's presence in existing markets and to commence the penetration of new and non-traditional markets (including the health, retirement, adventure, nature/eco-tourism markets).
- Provision of increased financial support by government for the marketing and promotion efforts of the small hotels, inns, guest-houses and private villa sector of Saint Lucia.
- In light of its significant contribution to job creation and commerce, encourage the consolidation of the private villa sector into one organized body so that it can benefit more directly from government incentives and support.
- The establishment within five years of a new, fully equipped hotel/tourism training school of international standard.
- The initiation of a resolute and sustained assault on tourism-related crime using modern as well as traditional crime-fighting tools.
- The involvement of hoteliers, beach vendors, water-sports operators and other stakeholders in the formulation of a management plan for beach activities and the empowerment of the Police Force to ensure that this plan is adhered to in the interest of the preservation of the beaches for peaceful enjoyment by Saint Lucians and visitors alike.
- The introduction of tourism courses into all primary and secondary schools. The content of these courses will be developed in collaboration with the Hotel and Tourism authorities.
- The introduction of a sector-wide programme of graduated training courses for hotel and tourism sector workers. The objective is to enable any worker to be able to enroll in part-

time courses that will improve proficiency and provide an objective basis for advancement and promotion.

- The systematic promotion of multilingualism through the teaching of foreign languages. In each year 30 new students each will be enrolled in French, Spanish, German and Italian classes.
- The introduction of a code of standards for the Sector to ensure that a high level of professional conduct and quality of service is maintained.
- The revision of the criteria for classification and registration of hotel properties in collaboration with stakeholders to accord with the realities of the industry.
- Provision of additional incentives to encourage hoteliers to refurbish, upgrade and expand the existing plant and the eradication of bureaucratic red tape associated with the delivery of such incentives and other concessions.
- Provision of incentives to encourage hoteliers to increase investment in their businesses by giving their employees the opportunity to purchase shares directly and to be issued shares in lieu of bonus.
- Through Saint Lucia Inc., the initiation of joint ventures to develop more Saint Lucian owned hotels and tourism facilities.
- Establish a Saint Lucia Tourism Authority to absorb the functions of the St. Lucia Tourist Board and the Ministry of Tourism.
- Establish within the Saint Lucia Tourism Authority a Tourism Investment Unit for the purpose of undertaking studies and determining the feasibility of projects for the expansion or diversification of the tourism product and to mobilize investment, both local and foreign, for these ventures.
- Boost up-market and specialized tourism by encouraging the development of a combination of services essential for appeal to this market, for example quality hotels and services, restaurants of distinction and uncompromising standards of service.
- Encourage through the provision of concessions and incentives the further development of ancillary services such as water-sports, ground transportation, restaurant and dining facilities and entertainment.
- Intensify the development of sports tourism by organizing a “Special Fund” to provide assistance to sporting organizations to assist in the planned growth and development of sport.
- Create three new off-season annual international sports highlight events comparable to the Jazz Festival to generate higher levels of hotel occupancy in the months of August, October and November.
- Revitalize the craft sector to enable it to produce unique craft products thereby increasing the level of direct visitor expenditure.
- Promote the development of linkages with domestic food and other commodity production sectors and substantially increase the local value added of souvenirs and other cultural articles.
- Provide incentives for the development of attractions and facilities for cruise ship visitors.

YACHTING

The potential of the yachting sub-sector with regard to the creation of jobs and the generation of income is tremendous. The steady trade winds of the Windward Islands are a major asset, making our waters a natural world-class sailing environment.

To realize this potential a NDM Administration will:

- Work closely with marina operators and yachting associations to develop and implement strategies designed to make Saint Lucia a leading international yachting centre.
- Upgrade facilities and streamline customs and immigration processes at all marinas and designated ports of entry.
- Enter into negotiations with the USA to obtain “listed status” for Saint Lucia to encourage the registration of United States based and foreign yachts wanting to gain entry into the USA without being subjected to onerous US Customs regulations.
- Work closely with the Republic of China on Taiwan, a leading builder of yachts, to further develop the yachting sector.
- Establish a comprehensive network of navigation lights and markers along the coastline.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture must once again be placed at the forefront of the national development strategy.

To that end, fostering rapid and sustained agricultural and rural growth and development, raising agricultural productivity and reducing poverty in rural communities will be among the main priorities of a NDM administration.

Our fertile land is the principal resource that sustains our rural communities. A successful agricultural sector can earn considerable foreign exchange through exports and save a great deal of foreign currency through a reduction in the volume of imports.

The attainment of those goals will require a departure from existing subsidy-based regimes that are no longer sustainable, and the building of a solid foundation for a highly productive, internationally competitive and diversified agricultural sector.

Major emphasis will be placed on the domestic processing of agricultural products into final consumer commodities thereby maximizing the retention of value-added. The focus will be on creating new markets for traditional crops while introducing new crops that will allow non-traditional marketing opportunities to be realized.

As part of this strategy extensive use will be made of leading international marketing and branding firms that will in every instance be required to affiliate formally with a counterpart Saint Lucian company. These firms will be required to create image and branding and undertake marketing campaigns targeting international, regional and domestic markets for the consumer products generated by the agricultural sector.

The linkage between agriculture and tourism is a vital one and priority will be placed on making this linkage work. The ready availability of a supply of fresh fruit and vegetables is critical to good nutrition and the health of the nation and the objective will be to make this produce available at an affordable price.

There is general acceptance of the fact that the “golden era” of bananas is over and that efforts must be made to diversify the agricultural sector as a matter of priority to absorb the farmers displaced from banana production and to optimize the use of farming lands released from banana cultivation.

The strategy for Agriculture will be to: rationalize and consolidate the banana industry retaining the most efficient farmers and focusing on lands that allow for the introduction of irrigation and high productivity; diversify into new crops and processing and value-added enterprises; ensure national food security; stimulate agricultural production to meet the needs of domestic consumers and the Tourism Sector and encourage increased livestock and fisheries production.

This strategy will lead to the creation of a considerable number of new jobs and income generating opportunities in rural communities.

A National Development Movement Administration will:

- Restructure the Ministry of Agriculture and restrict its role to one of policy, planning and regulation.
- Create an **Agriculture and Food Sector Development Corporation** to absorb all the other current functions of the Ministry of Agriculture and to implement the vision for the development of the Agriculture and Food Sector.
- Introduce a new **Agriculture and Food Sector Development Act** to provide incentives similar to those provided to the tourism and hospitality industry.
- Where fragmentation still exists, encourage the consolidation of the existing banana companies so that the benefits from economies of scale may be realized.
- Facilitate the employment of qualified and competent management of international calibre to direct the operational and financial affairs of the consolidated banana sector.
- Place the full weight of Government behind the banana sector to ensure that the financing, inputs and technical support required by the industry to achieve high quality production are made available.
- Seek to ensure that banana production maintains levels that maximize income and foreign-exchange earnings from export to the European Community as long as this market opportunity continues to exist.
- Support efforts to identify additional markets as well as processing options both within and outside the Region to absorb banana production not exported to the European Community to provide an additional source of revenue for banana farmers and foreign exchange earnings for the nation.
- Abolish the Saint Lucia Marketing Board.
- Create through Saint Lucia Inc. a new for-profit private sector company in which all stakeholders will have shares, to manage the marketing and sale of agricultural products to the hotel and tourism sector. The objective will be to ensure that increasing levels of locally produced agricultural products are absorbed into the hospitality sector.
- Stimulate the systematic production of agricultural products to ensure, in the interest of food security, that the local agricultural sector produces as much as possible of the food requirements of the nation.
- Programme the production of vegetables to reduce the incidence of gluts and shortages.
- Relate concessions granted to hotels to the extent of sustainable linkages entered into with farmers and producers of agricultural products.
- Create a modern contract-farmer based poultry production and processing industry that will cost-effectively meet the poultry consumption requirements of the nation while providing numerous employment opportunities.
- Provide generous concessions for the establishment of a modern full-fledged hatchery and a fully-equipped poultry processing plant.
- Promote the large scale production of aloe vera on secondary and marginal lands and establish an aloe vera processing industry to capture the value-added from this crop.
- Provide generous concessions for the establishment of an aloe vera processing plant and related industries that produce final consumer products.
- Encourage the significant expansion of cocoa production to meet rapidly increasing international demands for this commodity.
- Provide generous concessions for the establishment of cocoa processing enterprises that produce final consumer products.

REAL CHANGE: A DEVELOPMENT AGENDA FOR SAINT LUCIA

- Together with the production of cocoa encourage the production of vanilla and black pepper.
- Promote coffee production in selected areas.
- Establish a high value niche coffee industry with locally produced coffee being processed into final consumer products.
- Revitalize the coconut industry and encourage the planting of fast growing short-height varieties of coconut trees.
- Promote the bottling of coconut water, the manufacture of coconut milk, coconut milk powder, coconut cream, coconut butter, coconut flour, coconut vinegar, coconut chips and desiccated coconut and the use of coconut oil for the manufacture of high value oils for therapeutic and other purposes.
- Develop an industry for the production of Essential Oils.
- Promote the establishment of a cashew nut industry. While more nuts would be produced for the local market the objective would be to realize the commercial potential of the cashew nut apple.
- Promote the large scale production of hot peppers.
- Establish a diversified agro-processing industry to absorb a wide variety of agricultural products.
- Provide generous concessions for the establishment of multi-fruit processing plants that can process whichever fruits are in season and can convert these fruits into pulp or concentrate for use in the production of final fruit-based consumer products.
- Provide generous concessions for the establishment of enterprises that produce fruit based consumer products such as juices, jams, jellies and confectionery.
- Encourage the production of tropical fruits such as pineapple, passion fruit, pomegranate, mango, guava, citrus, golden apple among others to supply the fruit processing industry as well as the domestic market for fresh fruits.
- Encourage the modernization and mechanization of agriculture in order to raise productivity and attract youthful entrepreneurs to the sector and to this end, provide duty-free concessions for all equipment and machinery used in agriculture.
- Encourage the introduction of irrigation systems, drilling of wells, establishment of mini-dams, and the harnessing of run-offs through the provision of duty-free incentives and concessions.
- Establish a modern Agricultural Research and Development Centre with a mandate to diversify agriculture, improve yields, identify the optimal size and location for farming units, undertake crop trials and develop processing and value-added options for agricultural products.
- Restructure the Extension Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and incorporate it within the Agricultural Research and Development Centre.
- Make Government-owned land available to farmers in approved farming programmes through leases. The lease arrangements will be structured to enable farmers to use the land to collateralize loans for clearly designated and approved purposes.
- Make available through the Saint Lucia Development Bank, concessional loans to farmers to encourage the transition to greenhouse production and new farming systems.
- Provide concessions and incentives to encourage the private sector to supply support services for the agricultural sector.
- Establish agricultural business incubators.
- Encourage the cultivation of exotic crops and support non-traditional projects involving agriculture and horticulture.

- Develop and promote the local Herbal industry.
- Introduce a new Agricultural Development Act to provide incentives similar to those provided to the tourism and hospitality industry.
- Introduce agricultural education and training in primary and secondary schools and strengthen the support for the teaching of Agriculture at Sir Arthur Lewis Community College.
- Review and enforce legislation relating to crop theft and *praedial larceny*.

FISHERIES

Fish thrive in the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean that surround Saint Lucia.

A National Development Movement Administration will modernize and expand the fishing industry with special emphasis being placed on the development of the technical and management skills of all participants in the fisheries sector.

A NDM Administration will:

- Strengthen existing fishing co-operatives and provide concessions and incentives to encourage investment in larger and more modern fishing vessels and fishing techniques targeting pelagic species.
- Improve safety and enhance the size of catches by ensuring that all fishing boats are equipped with two-way radios, navigational equipment and fish finding equipment.
- Provide generous concessions for the establishment of a seafood processing industry that will transform seafood into final consumer products thereby providing additional markets for fishermen.
- Train fishermen in the use of navigation and safety equipment.
- Introduce courses into the secondary school curricula on fish ecosystems, modern fishing methods and the management of fishing businesses and enterprises.
- Undertake research on fish migration patterns, advanced fish-harvesting techniques and markets in collaboration with other interested OECS Countries.
- Negotiate for increased access by our fishermen to the economic zones of neighboring countries.
- Establish an affordable and comprehensive scheme for the insurance of fishing boats and fishing equipment in collaboration with locally-based insurance companies.
- Incorporate fishermen into the National Insurance Scheme so as to provide them social security.
- Through the Saint Lucia Development Bank provide access to credit for fishermen on affordable terms.
- Encourage the development of land-based fishing and aquaculture.
- Provide duty-free concessions, incentives and training to encourage the establishment of a large-scale aquaculture industry.

LIVESTOCK

Livestock production has excellent potential as the demand for fresh meat and livestock products is growing rapidly.

While the price of locally grown meat and poultry may be above that of similar items that are imported due to the limited volume that is being produced, the imperatives of national food security dictate that every encouragement should be given to this sector.

A major constraint to the growth of the sector and a major contributor to the relatively high cost of production is the price of animal feed and, if the sector is to realize its potential, this cost component must be minimized.

A key objective must therefore be to organize the sector as efficiently as possible so that it can benefit from economies of scale even as direct measures are taken to reduce the cost of inputs and other contributors to the final price of livestock products to the consumer.

A NDM Administration will:

- Promote the establishment of a Flour and Feed Mill that utilizes indigenous inputs to provide affordable feed for poultry, livestock and aquaculture producers.
- Encourage the expansion of cattle rearing by providing incentives and concessions for the importation of improved breeding stock.
- Encourage the establishment of a goat meat production industry through the importation and distribution of Boer Goat breeding stock.
- Encourage the establishment of a duck rearing industry through the introduction and distribution of the Muscovy and Peking duck varieties.
- Ensure that Saint Lucia becomes totally self-sufficient in pig meat through the provision of incentives to pig farmers to expand their output.
- Provide training for livestock farmers in modern scientific methods of animal husbandry.
- Ensure the efficient operation of a modern abattoir/meat processing facility for meat storage, distribution and ageing.
- Construct small sanitary community-based butchering facilities.
- Establish fenced communal grazing pastures in every region as a means of addressing the problem of stray animals.
- Improve the extension and veterinary services provided to livestock farmers.
- Regulate the industry to ensure the adoption of sanitary practices by all livestock and poultry farmers to reduce the incidence of pollution of rivers and water sources.
- Provide incentives to poultry and livestock producers for the construction of bio-gas digesters that utilize animal waste products.

AGRICULTURE RESEARCH

The diverse agro-ecological potential of the island needs to be investigated by more rigorous region-specific research. There is need to integrate both local and regional research institutions in an optimal strategic mix, based on their respective comparative advantages, to address the problems and challenges of our agriculture sector.

This will require careful priority-setting to ensure that resources are allocated to drive the agricultural growth and diversification agenda for the future. The specific goals to be achieved will include:

- Improving the quality and relevance of agricultural research.

- Increasing the market potential of agriculture through the development of products that involve the processing and adding of value to primary agricultural products.
- Undertaking research to support the introduction of an aloe vera production and processing industry.
- Developing formulations for animal feeds utilizing indigenous agricultural inputs thereby reducing the cost of this vital determinant of the viability of the national livestock sector.
- Undertaking analyses aimed at improving cost effectiveness, viability and comparative advantage in agricultural production.
- Developing farming models involving optimal crop combinations that enable small and medium-sized farmers to maintain an economically viable and sustainable farming operation.
- Strengthening international alliances to access new technologies, knowledge and inputs.

WATER RESOURCES & IRRIGATION

Recent adverse weather systems should serve to remind us of the need to ensure that the management of our nation's water resources has to be approached in a deliberate and focused manner.

To that end a NDM administration will:

- Review the existing policies and regulatory framework necessary to support the integrated and sustainable development of our water resources.
- Establish or identify an apex institution at the state level with overall responsibility for the planning, management and allocation of the country's water resources.
- Introduce private sector participation in the management and financing of water sector development while preserving national control.
- Initiate processes leading to the construction of new major dams in the South and North-East quadrants of the country.
- Encourage the introduction of modern irrigations systems and establish wells, mini-dams and the harvesting of rain-water through the provision of duty-free concessions and other incentives.
- Provide the legal framework for managing our irrigation and drainage infrastructure at all levels and tailored to the socio-economic and ecological conditions of Saint Lucia.
- Work with local, regional and international agencies on sustainable forestry practices.
- Ensure the protection of coral reefs.
- Introduce policies that will require the treatment of sewage and waste water.

INDUSTRY, TRADE & COMMERCE

Saint Lucia's economy is directly connected to the economies of our major trading partners and to the world economy.

If Saint Lucia is to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the rapid expansion in world trade there must be a significant improvement in our international competitiveness and greater effectiveness in the marketing of our exports.

A NDM Administration will dedicate itself to provide the support necessary to make industry more competitive, to give our business people and producers greater opportunities in and access to overseas markets and to provide an enabling environment for the expansion of trade and commerce, through a decrease in government regulation and an increase in the efficiency of government support agencies.

Policies implemented in this Sector will seek to:

- Revitalize the manufacturing and industrial sector.
- Promote exports of goods and services.
- Set up a Trade Promotion Agency to direct and coordinate initiatives aimed at penetrating export markets that have become accessible to Saint Lucia under Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA's) and similar arrangements.
- Reduce the cost of doing business in Saint Lucia by increasing productivity and efficiency in both the public and the private sector.
- Streamline the decision-making process in the public sector as it relates to matters affecting industry, trade and commerce.
- Provide an adequate financial and capital base for the rapid expansion of trade, industry and commerce.
- Attract technology and expertise into the Sector.
- Encourage linkages between local and foreign investors to expand the productive capacity of the sector.
- Increase the efficiency of the domestic distributive sector.

The realization of these policy objectives will require the adoption of a broad range of complementary measures, and accordingly, a National Development Movement Administration will:

- Through Saint Lucia Inc. establish a Venture Capital Fund to assist manufacturers and service sector companies to acquire modern technology, to penetrate overseas markets, and to access technical assistance and training resources. Contributions to this Fund will be 100% tax deductible.
- Introduce legislation that encourages companies to finance new investment and expansion through the issue of shares and to provide tax benefits in this regard.
- Link the corporate taxation rates of manufacturing and service sector firms on an incentive basis to the number of jobs created and the amount of foreign exchange earned.
- Establish under the umbrella of the Economic Development Council a Foreign Exchange Committee comprising representatives from all sectors, set up to monitor and improve the performance of the foreign exchange earning sectors.
- Establish under the umbrella of the Economic Development Council an Administrative Effectiveness Committee set up to provide the private sector with the opportunity for identifying administrative hurdles and bureaucratic impediments to entrepreneurship.
- Introduce a new payment system in the Treasury to make payments to the business sector in accordance with an established schedule and to pay interest on bills not settled by the scheduled date.
- Provide tax concessions to encourage private sector investment in research and development, quality control, new products and designs and the penetration of new markets.

- Encourage the establishment of export companies through the provision of lower tax rates on the profits of such companies.
- Remove property transfer taxes associated with equity foreign investment in local export companies.
- Provide duty-free status for raw materials and packaging materials used by the manufacturing sector.
- Revise the Fiscal Incentives legislation to make it attractive for firms to continue to operate or remain in Saint Lucia after the initial period of incentives has expired.
- Restructure the National Development Corporation to concentrate its focus on Investment Promotion, Export Promotion and Business Development.
- Give priority in Investment Promotion to the attraction of skill-based, high-tech and knowledge-based industry as well as to labour-intensive industries.
- Provide special incentives to attract software development, informatics and data processing joint ventures between the local and international private sector.
- Promote the establishment of international call centres via special area incentives for any such investments in communities outside of the Northwest geographic region of Saint Lucia.
- Link the remuneration of senior managers at the re-structured National Development Corporation to its performance in the areas of Investment Promotion, Export Promotion and Business Development.

SMALL & MICRO BUSINESSES

The role of small and micro businesses in creating jobs, generating income and stimulating commercial activity is widely recognized.

To encourage and stimulate this sector and to expand the opportunities for small entrepreneurs and young people, a NDM Administration will:

- Create a Business Development Agency within the re-structured National Development Corporation to provide a full range of support services for business enterprises and to serve as a “one-stop shop” for fiscal incentives and concessions, training, marketing opportunities, technical assistance and information on legislation, regulations, procedures and financing.
- Reserve designated commercial and business opportunities for national small and micro businesses.
- Allocate 25% of Government contracts for the supply of goods and services to national small and micro businesses.
- Provide access to capital for small and micro businesses at preferential rates through the Saint Lucia Development Bank.
- Provide, through the Business Development Agency, direct support for young persons who are trying to establish their own businesses.

THE DISTRIBUTIVE SECTOR

The distributive sector provides thousands of jobs for Saint Lucians and markets large quantities of locally produced and imported goods.

It is important that this sector operates efficiently so that there are no shortages of goods and costs and prices are kept at a minimum for the benefit of the consumer.

To ensure that these objectives are realized a NDM Administration will:

- Develop a comprehensive food security policy and strategy that would include competitive bidding procurement practices involving the private sector.
- Maintain the prices of certain basic foodstuffs at controlled levels to ensure that the food security of low income families is not threatened, while working within all regional trade liberalization agreements.
- Provide tax and other concessions for distributive sector businesses that promote local agricultural and manufactured products. These concessions will be based on the value of such products purchased by the distributive sector businesses.
- Provide concessions and incentives to support marketing activities established overseas for the purpose of promoting St. Lucian products overseas.
- Provide incentives to, and encourage operating cost reduction practices by locally-based companies that earn foreign exchange to enable them to compete effectively against regional competitors and cruise ship shops.
- Reserve certain segments of the distributive sector for nationally owned companies and in other segments where non-national firms are active, induce them through an incentive regime to offer shares to Saint Lucians.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

In addition to tourism and the hospitality sector, the other service sector that has the capacity to provide good quality professional, managerial and clerical jobs is the financial services sector.

The progress of this sector has so far been modest but its potential remains great and, to stimulate this sector and to accelerate the pace of its development, a NDM Administration will:

- Ensure the more aggressive international marketing and promotion of the Offshore Financial Services Sector.
- Revise the existing enabling legislation to remove the present inadequacies and to make the Saint Lucia jurisdiction more marketable.
- Enact “state of the art” asset protection and foreign elements legislation to attract trust and pensions business.
- Enact “state of the art” arbitration legislation to encourage international companies and organizations to conduct arbitration hearings within the Saint Lucia jurisdiction thereby increasing tourism and providing jobs at the professional and clerical levels.
- Establish an “open flag” Maritime Registry to attract the registration of ships.
- Negotiate a comprehensive network of double taxation treaties to increase the attractiveness of the investment climate in Saint Lucia.
- Protect the integrity of the Saint Lucia destination by maintaining a high level of scrutiny of all transactions to prevent infiltration by unsavory business operators.
- Simplify all bureaucratic procedures associated with the management of the offshore financial services sector.

EMPLOYMENT & JOB CREATION

The scourge of unemployment must be eradicated. All persons capable of working will be provided with the opportunity to work.

Our society has a special obligation to our young people who have been encouraged to believe that after education, they will find gainful employment.

Not only must jobs be created but an environment conducive to job advancement and job mobility must be promoted through the availability of training, education programmes and incentives. That way persons who start their working lives in entry-level jobs can, through diligence, discipline and ambition, advance to the highest positions within their chosen professions.

The target that a NDM Administration will meet is the creation of a minimum of 5,000 new direct and indirect jobs and paid employment opportunities during a five-year term of office. This is equivalent to the reduction of the current unemployment rate of 20.5% by a minimum of five percentage points.

To achieve this objective a NDM Administration will:

- Implement economic policies that generate high rates of economic growth, create jobs and create high demand for labour.
- Create 3,000 permanent new direct job opportunities and an additional 1,000 permanent new indirect job opportunities through the establishment of 1,500 new traditional and non-traditional guest rooms over the next five years.
- Introduce a permanent community based national service, apprenticeship and skills training programme that will absorb a minimum of 1,500 young persons.
- Maintain a buoyant, growth-oriented economic environment that generates consistent demand for skilled and semi-skilled construction labour.
- Implement a major programme for construction of a minimum of five hundred (500) single-family and multi-family housing units per year in new development areas that will generate approximately 1,500 construction jobs.
- Revitalize the Agriculture and Food Sector and in the process create a minimum of 6,000 new jobs over a five-year period.
- Create service sector jobs through the enhanced promotion of the financial services sector.
- Specifically promote the establishment of offshore medical schools, nursing schools and technological training institutes as part of a strategy to create educational opportunities, create jobs and generate economic growth.

LABOUR

The National Development Movement is committed to industrial democracy and to the establishment of a wholesome industrial relations climate.

The focus on tourism, a modern agricultural sector, the services sector and information technology require a well trained workforce.

The objective of a NDM Administration is to create an environment in which the benefits and conditions provided to workers are just and equitable and in which workers are committed to the achievement of the highest levels of labour productivity.

A National Development Movement Administration will:

- Modernize and enforce occupational health and safety laws and make the public sector set the example in complying with these laws.
- Review the proposed Labour Code in collaboration with all stakeholders to ensure that the imperatives of equity, fairness, competitiveness and productivity are protected and to arrive at a consensus with regard to its implementation on a phased basis within six months.
- Establish minimum wage requirements for household, domestic and part-time workers.
- Establish minimum wage requirements for shop and store workers.
- Establish a standard five-day working week for hotel workers.
- Introduce productivity-enhancing schemes using the services of international management consultants.
- Establish a National Productivity Council to better assist social partners by providing guidelines for wage contracts that link pay and productivity.
- Establish an Employment Exchange to be the interface between employers and the unemployed and that will monitor manpower needs.
- Establish enhanced programmes for skills training and retraining and decentralize the operations of the National Skills Development Centre.
- Provide National Insurance coverage for all categories of workers.
- Enact a new Unfair Dismissal Bill.
- Encourage companies to introduce schemes for worker participation.
- Provide tax and other incentives to encourage firms to offer employees the option of share ownership.
- Introduce and support, where appropriate, flexible hours of work to increase employment and decrease family and social stress.

LAW & ORDER & NATIONAL SECURITY

INTRODUCTION

The only way for our nation to stem, and then reverse the tide of crime and lawlessness that threatens to destroy us is to re-dedicate ourselves to the moral, philosophical and spiritual values that are the foundation of our framework of laws.

Laws represent the codification of a set of values that are considered to be necessary to ensure the preservation of the structure and integrity of a society.

As long as the vast majority of persons continue to believe that these laws are equitable and protect their rights, freedoms and interests, they will adhere to and uphold these laws, and social order will prevail.

When significant numbers of persons come to believe, for whatever reason, that they are oppressed by these laws, that they are unable to survive by adherence to these laws or that all are not equal before the law, they resort to crime and lawlessness.

The crime and lawlessness that is prevalent in Saint Lucia today stems in large part from a growing sense of alienation on the part of a significant proportion of the population who no longer perceive that their interests are being served or protected by the society and that all are not equal before the law. That situation is exacerbated by the lure of “easy money” encouraged by the drug trade and the disregard for or erosion of our traditional values.

This perception is reinforced daily when leaders refuse to be accountable; when politicians are not brought to account for corruption; when white-collar and blue-collar crimes go unpunished while “ghetto” crimes are punished with the full force of the law; when party supporters evade the law because of their connections; when politicians secure their financial interest while the general population suffers economic hardship; when financial and economic mismanagement lead to the impoverishment of the society; when a chosen few are seen to prosper while the masses of the people suffer; when clueless governments are unable to create job opportunities; and when those in whom much confidence was reposed fail the people and instead bequeath them a legacy of hopelessness.

While it is possible to explain or to understand the motivations of those who engage in crime, crime and lawlessness, at whatever level, must **never** be condoned.

Solutions must be found that address the fundamental causes of this phenomenon but even these solutions must be based on a zero-tolerance approach.

The NDM believes that the way forward in the uncompromising fight against crime and lawlessness involves the combination of all of the following elements in a comprehensive and coherent strategy that includes:

- The re-dedication of this nation to the moral, philosophical and spiritual values upon which it was founded.
- The engagement of religious, community and government organizations in outreach activities that seek to alleviate the real poverty and economic hardship being experienced in many communities throughout the country.
- The provision of leadership by example on the part of elected leaders by adherence to basic principles of accountability and integrity.
- The application of the law without fear or favour, without political interference, and without regard to political affiliation, social status or economic power.
- The provision of access to justice for all, especially the poor and disadvantaged.
- The creation of jobs and economic options and opportunities for all, especially for young persons, through the implementation of effective economic policies.
- The implementation of a series of social interventions that seek to reinforce the role of the family as the principal mechanism for the promotion of social values and social stability.
- The reform of the Police Force in accordance with a well-defined strategic plan and the implementation of this plan in a resolute and determined manner.

- The adoption of a zero-tolerance approach to crime and lawlessness in all of its manifestations at every level within the society.
- The reform of the criminal justice system to ensure that justice is dispensed swiftly and equitably.

The adoption of such a strategy will not change the situation overnight, but it offers the only certain long-term solution. This is not a time for half-measures or for politically opportunistic responses, but for comprehensive solutions that engage the entire society.

The success of this strategy depends to a large extent on action by the Administration in office.

The objective is to create a safe environment for residents and visitors that is a pre-requisite for the development of a stable economy and society and to ensure that our national security is assured.

Saint Lucians must once again feel safe in their homes and be able to walk the streets and enjoy the beaches without fear of harassment.

The current situation of escalating lawlessness requires the adoption of tough measures and a NDM Administration will not shrink from doing whatever is necessary to reverse the alarming trend.

THE POLICE

Crime has grown exponentially over recent years under successive administrations that have proven to be incapable of devising effective solutions to halt this scourge that undermines the very fabric of our society.

The specific objective with regard to the Royal Saint Lucia Police Force is to establish an effective, properly staffed, properly equipped and satisfied Police Force that will be committed to the reduction and control of crime in Saint Lucia.

A NDM Administration will:

- Restructure the Police Force with due regard to representations of the Police Associations.
- Establish a Police Commission with direct responsibility for governing the Force and answerable to the relevant Minister.
- Modernize the legislation pertaining to the Police including the Disciplinary and Promotion Rules.
- Retain a diverse team of experienced regional and international police officers to participate in the process of reform of the Police Force and simultaneously, train a cadre of St. Lucian police officers over a period of five years to assume full responsibility for the effective management of the Force. However at all times the Police Force will remain under the management of a Saint Lucian Commissioner.
- Review the pay and conditions of the Police Force and introduce incentives in support of home ownership, education and life insurance for police officers.

REAL CHANGE: A DEVELOPMENT AGENDA FOR SAINT LUCIA

- Over the first two years, ensure that the staffing level of the Police Force is at required levels.
- Establish a minimum of 12 Rapid Response Patrol Units deployed island wide on a 24 hour basis to combat the scourge of crime.
- Increase the Motor Cycle Unit of the Force to 50 machines, base a minimum of 2 machines at every police station in the country, and give this motorized Unit responsibility for general policing and not just for traffic management.
- Provide an adequate number of vehicles and all necessary equipment for the Force and make individual officers personally accountable for the safety and maintenance of the vehicles and equipment entrusted to their care.
- Establish a network of Closed Circuit Television Cameras at strategic locations throughout the country and feed the images to a central control room that can immediately dispatch Rapid Response Patrol Units or Motorcycle Units to the scene of any event.
- Increase the presence of police on the streets and in communities through a structured system of foot patrols.
- Strengthen middle and top management positions to the police force through accelerated training.
- Relieve police officers of non-law and order duties with the exception of the Police Band and security deployments.
- Reactivate and expand the Police Reserve to ensure the availability of a larger manpower force.
- Involve private security firms in specific policing activities and roles.
- Introduce a system for community conflict resolution that would involve community leaders and elders in the resolution of conflicts between community gangs and among alienated youth.
- Promote the formation of community watch organizations in every community in accordance with parameters defined by the Police Force.
- Improve the facilities and working conditions of the Police Force island-wide through a structured five-year implementation programme.
- Establish a fully equipped and staffed crime scene and forensics unit to increase the success rate of criminal investigations.

- Employ a team of effective private sector prosecutors to handle police prosecutions thereby increasing the success rate in this area, while simultaneously training a cadre of police prosecutors.
- Establish an internal affairs division within the Police Force to address issues related to police corruption and misconduct and to combat penetration of the Police Force by drug and criminal elements.
- Create an independent Police Complaints Commission with wide-ranging powers to investigate complaints by the public against the Police.
- Establish a specialist “white collar” crime division within the Police Force.

THE LAW & THE JUDICIARY

The need to modernize our criminal laws and to increase the effectiveness of the courts and the entire judiciary is well-recognized.

A NDM Administration will:

- Provide new accommodation for the Judiciary by constructing a new complex to accommodate the Supreme Court, the Registry and Magistrates Courts.
- Increase the effectiveness and throughput rate of the legal system through the introduction of new technology, more magistrates, judges and administrative and support personnel and consequently, abolishing the system under which judges and magistrates take verbatim handwritten notes.
- Increase the monetary jurisdiction of magistrates to facilitate the speedy resolution of summary disputes.
- Establish the legal system as a self-financing entity through structured adjustment of the level of fines and penalties.
- Revise the Criminal Code with due regard to the representations of the public and other interest groups.
- Introduce harsh penalties for sexual offences against children and young people and for anyone using or involving a minor in the commission of any crime.
- Ensure the full independence of the judiciary.
- Provide opportunities for continuing education for legal practitioners and those engaged in the administration of justice.
- Introduce legislation to address issues related to the conduct and discipline of legal practitioners.
- Provide technical assistance to the Bar Association to foster its development and effectiveness.

THE PENAL SYSTEM

A combination of approaches must be adopted for the treatment of offenders so that punishment corresponds with the nature and the severity of crimes.

A NDM Administration will:

- Modernize the legislation related to the penal system including the enactment of a Young Offenders Act.
- Introduce “home imprisonment” and the use of ankle bracelets and other modern technology as part of the sentencing regime of the state.
- Create a new Division of Correctional Services.
- Modernize and expand the Probation Service and introduce mechanisms to allow punishments and sentences incorporating the performance of Community Service.
- As a general rule, abolish short term imprisonment and replace it with a system of punitive fines and community service.
- Establish a separate Remand and Holding Centre and institute special fast-track procedures for remand matters.
- Redefine the role and function of the Massade Boys Training Centre and establish a new vocational training oriented institution.
- Establish a vocational training oriented institution for juvenile female offenders.
- Institute a “Second Chance” programme whereby the criminal record of juvenile offenders is expunged after they have completed a sentence in a correctional institute with good behaviour.

- Introduce a comprehensive programme of rehabilitation, vocational training and community service work details at Bordelais Correctional Facility.
- Examine the cost effectiveness and feasibility of outsourcing the management and operation of the Bordelais Correctional Facility.

ILLEGAL NARCOTIC DRUGS

Like other countries in the Caribbean Saint Lucia has become a trans-shipment point for the export of illegal narcotic substances to the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

To take the initiative in the war against the scourge of drugs an Administration of the National Development Movement will:

- Establish a comprehensive National Drug Eradication Programme.
- Introduce structured education programmes into the schools and for dissemination in the national media.
- Increase the capacity of the police for detection and interdiction by collaborating closely and sharing intelligence with friendly nations.
- Strengthen legal penalties for trading and trafficking in illegal drugs.
- As a general rule, abolish imprisonment for offences involving the personal use of small quantities of marijuana and replace it with a system of punitive fines and community service.
- Enhance legislative provisions that allow for the seizure of the assets of those involved in the drug trade.
- Adopt policies and enact legislation that recognizes **drug use** as a public health problem and **drug dealing** as a crime.
- Improve the facilities mandated with the rehabilitation of those trapped in a cycle of drug abuse.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Because of its size Saint Lucia must approach the issue of the preservation of its national security within the framework of regional arrangements.

In this regard a NDM Administration will:

- Participate fully in the Regional Security System.
- Expand the Special Services Unit of the Royal Saint Lucia Police Force and enhance its training regimen.
- Introduce new technology for border control using satellite monitoring, on- going electronic intelligence sharing in real time, automated fingerprinting, DNA sampling and DNA banks.
- Introduce a structured rotation programme within the Special Services Unit to expose more members of the Royal Saint Lucia Police Force to its specialized training thereby increasing the cadre of officers capable of being deployed for special services assignments.
- Improve the equipment of, and increase the financial provision for the Marine Unit to ensure its ability to undertake regular and effective patrols of our coastal waters for the

purpose of interdicting unauthorized foreign fishing vessels, preventing smuggling and detecting drug trafficking.

JUSTICE & SOCIAL EQUITY

Saint Lucia should proudly uphold the principle of social equity and justice for all, whereby no act of discrimination on the basis of gender, race, age, religion, physical disability, political affiliation, place of origin or economic circumstance is tolerated or condoned.

In this regard, a NDM Administration will:

- Introduce legislation to outlaw discrimination of all types.
- Introduce legislation to address the issue of sexual harassment in general and in the workplace in particular.
- Enact Legal Aid Legislation to ensure that no person is denied access to justice because of economic circumstances.
- Encourage through a structured Lay Magistracy or other feasible arrangement, street and community level mediation.
- Enact legislation that makes it possible for CARICOM nationals resident in Saint Lucia for a continuous period of five years to qualify for permanent residence.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The major objective will be to redress imbalances in regional development that have occurred over the years, to make government and the provision of government services more responsive to the will of communities and to promote the more equitable distribution of employment opportunities.

A NDM Administration will:

- Introduce a system of Regional Development Offices that coincide with constituency boundaries to manage local government affairs.
- Provide each Regional Development Office (RDO) with a budget and staff including financial management and control staff drawn from among the ranks of existing public officers to give it a full capacity for implementation of community development projects and for undertaking clearly defined local community responsibilities such as road maintenance, garbage collection and sanitation, collection of house taxes, maintenance and upkeep of playing and sports facilities and community buildings.
- Hold democratic elections within two years to elect Regional Development Councils that will provide community/constituency level guidance for the RDO.
- Bring together representatives of Regional Development Councils (RDC) on a quarterly basis to review the implementation of the rural modernization and development programme.
- Coordinate the work and progress of the multi-disciplinary primary health care teams through the RDCs.

Under the umbrella of this new arrangement for local government special focus will be placed on Rural Modernization and Development to ensure that our rural communities are stabilized from a loss of population and are revitalized so that they become attractive places to reside and work.

A NDM Administration will therefore:

- Introduce a Rural Modernization and Development Fund at the re-established Saint Lucia Development Bank, to provide financing for new projects that seek to create economic activity and jobs in rural communities.
- Develop affordable residential lots in proximity to each long-established community to provide opportunities for land ownership and home construction especially for young people.
- Construct multi-purpose social and, sporting complexes in each major rural community to provide recreation opportunities especially for young people and the aged.
- Encourage through the provision of incentives, the production of non-traditional crops such as cashew nuts and *aloe vera* so as to bring unutilized secondary lands into production.
- Upgrade and maintain the infrastructure of rural communities by focusing on the maintenance of roads, the provision of adequate supplies of potable water, the introduction of water-closets and adequate waste water treatment in each household, the extension of electricity to all households and the provision of street lighting.

EDUCATION

The objective of the education policy of a NDM Administration is to transform the Sector within five years so that the nation can meet the challenges of a globalized world and take advantage of the opportunities afforded by the technological revolution that is likely to continue throughout the twenty-first century. To this end the NDM will seek to achieve minimum levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy for all citizens in five years.

The strategies proposed will seek to make education a lifelong experience and opportunity for all citizens.

In all areas, the education curricula and training programmes will be structured to be fully responsive to the manpower needs of key economic and social sectors at the least cost to parents, students and the state. In particular the issue of text books – their cost, utilization and relevance will be reviewed.

In addition, a NDM administration will adopt and promote the following initiatives:

- Introduce the W.H.O. *Healthy School Initiative* into every school.
- A health programme that will include universal screening/testing from the earliest age for eye and ear problems, learning disabilities, psychological and other mental health problems, social problems and a plan developed and executed for each affected child.
- A primary school curriculum that will ensure basic competencies in language – including foreign languages, mathematics, keyboarding and life skills while the secondary school curriculum will include technical and vocational skills.

To further its Agenda for Education, a NDM Administration will adopt the following approaches:

Under Five Age Group

- Upgrade and train the staff of day care centres to ensure that the educational programmes in centres are structured and consistent with national educational objectives.
- Provide tax incentives to private sector companies to encourage them to set up day care centres for the children of their employees.
- Provide affordable kindergarten education for all children in the 3-5 year age group in privately operated, government regulated and supported schools.

Infant Schools

- Upgrade the physical conditions at all infant schools over a five-year period.
- Support, promote and expand the Childhood Development and Guidance Centre.

Primary Schools

- Build more primary schools to address the problem of overcrowded classes.
- Introduce computer-learning classrooms into all primary schools over a five-year period and provide all children with access to computer technology.
- Introduce touch-typing as a compulsory subject in primary schools to complement the drive towards full national computer literacy and productivity.
- Establish a mechanism to make laptop computers available to each student.
- Establish a National Counseling Service to serve Primary Schools.
- Provide special and remedial education for children.
- Support the creation and operation of effective parent/teacher organizations and involve them in the management and organization of schools.
- Encourage the operation and management of schools by established religious denominations and provide support to such schools with regard to their maintenance and upkeep.
- Introduce over a five-year period, the teaching of two foreign languages into the curriculum of all primary schools.

Secondary Schools

- Provide fully equipped computer learning classrooms in all secondary schools within the first two years of a five-year term of office.
- Establish a mechanism to make laptop computers available to each student.
- Introduce structured modern agriculture and agricultural management, tourism and computer software development courses into the curriculum of secondary schools over a five-year period.
- Introduce annual software development, agriculture, tourism, mathematics and science excellence competitions for secondary schools.
- Provide adequate secondary school places for all children by building more secondary schools, with uniform standards of education and teaching provided in all education districts.

- Introduce a schools upgrading programme that will upgrade and improve the facilities and conditions at all secondary schools over a five-year period.

Physical Education

Introduce a mandatory physical education program into all school curricula.

- At both the primary and secondary levels make participation in sporting activity compulsory.
- At both the primary and secondary level introduce annual school competitions in selected sports.

Tertiary Level Education

There must be a strong focus on tertiary education. In order to ensure greater access to affordable tertiary education greater control must be exercised over the means through which tertiary education is provided.

A NDM Administration will:

- Accelerate the elevation of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College to become the 4th campus of the University of the West Indies as part of a strategy to provide affordable tertiary level education.
- Offer a wide range of certificate and degree level programmes at the upgraded Sir Arthur Lewis Community College.
- Offer increased numbers of overseas scholarships in priority subject areas that are not offered at the Sir Arthur Lewis Campus.
- Actively promote the establishment of offshore educational institutions through the provision of special incentives.
- Specifically promote the establishment of offshore medical schools, nursing schools and technological training institutes as part of a strategy to create educational opportunities, create jobs and generate economic growth.

General Programme Initiatives

- Work closely with CXC to ensure that Saint Lucia is always at the cutting edge with regard to curriculum development, educational certification and learning technologies.
- Provide equal treatment for all religious denominational schools thereby making secondary education free for students regardless of their religious persuasion or the school they attend.
- Introduce within three years a school feeding programme into infant, primary and secondary schools to improve the nutritional status of children thereby improving their ability to learn.
- Introduce free summer camps for primary and secondary school students who demonstrate good academic performance.
- Provide a tax credit for home computers and the annual cost of internet service.
- Introduce special excellence awards within primary and secondary schools in the subjects of English, software development, agriculture, tourism, mathematics and science.

- Support, through CAMDU, the development of local textbooks and educational materials.
- Establish a national schoolbook printing and publication initiative to ensure that schoolbooks are available to all children within the educational system at marginal cost.
- Provide remedial training for all children who require it, and train more teachers to deliver remedial education programmes.
- Require local TV stations to allocate a minimum of 25% of their programming to local content plus 10% to approved educational programmes.
- Promote multilingualism as a goal for the entire nation through the provision of language instruction in well-equipped language laboratories.

Teachers

- Improve the working conditions and training opportunities for teachers as part of a structured five-year programme.
- Hold regular consultations with teachers' representative organizations.
- Include teacher's representatives in policy discussions.
- Ensure the inclusion of teachers' representatives on Boards of Management of schools.
- Create structured programmes for skills upgrading and retraining for teachers, both locally and overseas.
- Hold regular seminars in essential subject areas including family life education, drug counseling, adolescent issues, remedial education, special education, vocational and career guidance and parent-teacher associations.
- Institute a programme of accelerated computer training for teachers.
- Introduce training programmes aimed at improving the management skills of school principals.
- Increase the number of teachers trained in specialized areas such as Remedial Education, Early Childhood Education, Family Life Education, Curriculum Development, Management Studies, Guidance and Counseling, Research Methodology, Computer Literacy and Scholastic Measurement and Testing.
- Establish an annual National Teachers Awards event.

Lifelong Learning

Existing schools and community facilities will be used to deliver lifelong learning programmes thereby maximizing the use of expensive buildings and also underlining the relationship between education and the wider community.

A NDM Administration will:

- Launch a nationwide adult education programme using existing schools as nighttime learning institutes with emphasis on literacy, numeracy and computer literacy education.
- Create structured programmes for the teaching of courses utilizing distance learning technology to support training for hotel sector workers, household workers and persons wishing to acquire technical and vocational skills.

Library Services

- Upgrade and modernize the Central Library.
- Establish Community libraries in all major communities and make sure all of these facilities are fully stocked with books and other reading material.
- Provide all libraries with internet access facilities for the public.

Financing of Education

In addition to providing increased levels of financing for Education from the Consolidated Fund, the NDM believes that the development of the Education Sector is of such critical importance to national progress that the introduction of special financing measures is merited.

Accordingly, a NDM Administration will:

- Issue 20-Year Education Bonds to finance major new initiatives in the Education Sector.
- Introduce an Education Levy that will take the form of a 5% surcharge on all alcohol and tobacco products.

COMPUTER & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

In a globalized world, access to computers, the internet and information technology is a must if a country is to have any chance of being competitive internationally.

It is therefore necessary that every citizen be provided with the opportunity to have access to these indispensable tools of a modern age.

In this regard a NDM Administration will:

- Abolish all taxes on computers and computer parts.
- Provide a package of incentives, including tax benefits, to entrepreneurs and technology developers investing in information technology services and training.
- Establish as a joint venture with international investors a software development company to harness the skills of talented young St. Lucians in developing specialized software as a commercial venture. The proceeds from this venture will be used to fund the introduction of additional computer facilities throughout the education system.
- Ensure the integration and adaptation of state-of-the-art information and communications technologies in all spheres of our daily life, in education, health, production, commerce, services, governance systems, law enforcement, entertainment and social interactions.
- Establish computer labs throughout the educational system and promote the integration of technology into instruction and learning at all formal levels of the education system.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

A NDM Administration will address social sector issues in a comprehensive and holistic manner and much of the effort to mobilize international grant and concessional resources will be associated with the introduction of new social sector initiatives.

- A new deal for the young
- Caring for the disadvantaged

- Caring for the elderly
- Bus passes for the disabled
- Bus passes for disadvantaged students
- Integrating the Women's Bureau

The scope of social services in rapidly urbanizing and developing countries such as Saint Lucia includes personal and group development, socialization of the people, and mobilization of the people to play their full role in the development process. In periods of rapid social change, there will be more serious social problems. There will also be a progressive inability of traditional service products to cope with the demands placed on them.

There is a need for urgent innovation in the delivery of social services that must respond to new client needs. The ability to provide required social services depends to a large extent on the strength of the economy.

Strengthening the Social Development Portfolio

The objective is to maintain a true balance between economic and social policy. The National Development Movement will strengthen the Social Development portfolio that will have responsibility for:

- Welfare: Family Services and the Aged.
- National Assistance: Home Help Services.
- Child Care: Children's Homes and Day Nurseries.
- Women's Affairs.
- Youth and Community Development.
- The Disabled and Children with Special Needs.
- Grants to Charitable Institutions.

Strengthening and Supporting the Saint Lucian Family

A major thrust in the social development programme will be to strengthen and support the Saint Lucian family unit.

A NDM Administration will:

- Introduce Family Life Education into the curriculum of all schools.
- Rationalize and reorganize the services of the Welfare Department, the National Assistance Board and other related bodies into a dynamic social development body.
- Offer educational and counseling programmes to persons living in common-law unions as well as legal unions and arrange for more supportive assistance to single parents and children.
- Review welfare grants at periodic intervals.
- Ensure that persons on the welfare roll, who are considered capable, are given opportunities to be trained or retrained in a skill. As most welfare recipients are female, this will be an important programme in the integration of women in national development.

- Exempt maintenance payments received by a parent resulting from a court order from income tax. The parent is really a trustee for the child in these circumstances and should not be required to pay tax.

Youth and Community Development Programme

The problems currently facing our youth include soaring unemployment, involvement in drug-related activities and a general alienation from societal goals.

The National Development Movement has the political will to plan and implement policies that will integrate youth into the mainstream of Saint Lucian society.

A NDM Administration will:

- Establish a two-year National Service programme involving young persons 16 years and over in a permanent community based national service, apprenticeship and skills training programme.
- Provide opportunities for participation in job placement in the public services.
- Establish a **Youth Development Foundation** that will channel funds to youth programmes and young entrepreneurs through grants and interest-free loans.
- Enhance and upgrade the National Skills Training Programme to improve the country's human resource base, to realistically prepare our youth for the world of work and business.
- Strengthen the corps of community development workers and institute drop-in counseling and referral centers for young people.
- Encourage the team approach among the various agencies doing community work.

Assistance to Self-Help Groups

Despite rapid social change, the type of thinking that existed in our former closely-knit communities where there was a self-help approach to dealing with social problems must be re-kindled. Government can never aspire to meet all its citizens' needs but can be the catalyst for change and can encourage self-help approaches, and in this regard a National Development Movement Administration will assist and support self-help groups through the local government structure by the provision of financial and technical assistance.

School Based Youth Activities

A NDM government will develop a multi-user strategy for school facilities that will make these facilities available in the evenings and on weekends to support youth activities in sports, arts and crafts and counseling.

Senior Citizens

The National Development Movement's programmes and services for senior citizens do not only recognize their past contribution to national development, but seek to ensure that they get vital social and economic support to lead meaningful and productive lives in their retirement years.

The NDM will:

- Develop an authoritative inspectorate to regularize and monitor centres and nursing homes for the aged to ensure high quality care and prevent abuses.
- Expand and upgrade the Home Help Service.
- Develop homes to accommodate small groups of senior citizens who require care that can be provided by Home Helpers.
- Assist private operators to upgrade facilities for the care of the elderly.
- Extend the concept of Day Care for the elderly to communities where there are high numbers of senior citizens.
- Constantly keep pensioners' grants and allowances under review so that they can maintain a reasonable standard of living.
- Provide upgraded senior citizens home facilities in the north and south of the country within four years. To that end the old Victoria Hospital premises will be converted into a Senior Citizens Home, Physical Rehabilitation Centre and Polyclinic.

The Mentally & Physically Challenged

Under a NDM Administration, the care of challenged persons will become a national obligation.

A NDM government will:

- Implement programmes for early detection of disabilities within all health care and early childhood centres.
- Encourage the integration of challenged children by facilitating their admission to all Government Day Care Centres.
- Develop additional units at various schools so that challenged children can be educated to their full potential and integrated into the general school population.
- Give incentives to employers to encourage the employment of physically challenged persons in industry.
- Encourage the development of more sheltered employment opportunities for physically challenged persons who cannot enter ordinary employment.
- Provide grants for purchasing aids for the disabled.
- Give tax and other allowances to parents or guardians who look after the disabled.
- Provide social security for all physically and mentally challenged persons, regardless of age.
- Ensure that all new Government buildings and facilities address the needs of the physically disabled.
- Employ health personnel who specialize in the care of the physically and mentally challenged, e.g., speech therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists.
- Provide free bus passes for all registered disabled persons regardless of age.
- Within five years, establish a new institute for special education.
- Provide increased financial assistance to the homes for the blind and the deaf.

The Homeless

Homelessness is a growing social problem that is often related to mental health or illicit drug use or occasioned by the destruction of homes or evictions arising from domestic disputes.

A new NDM government will:

- Encourage families to take greater responsibility for family members who are homeless.
- Devise appropriate measures for dealing with a growing number of vagrants who frequent well-known areas in the city.
- Establish guidelines for the humane treatment of vagrants and homeless people and register them in a programme that seeks to meet their basic health and social needs.
- Give subventions and assistance to charitable agencies providing shelter and care for the homeless.

Legislation

There are specific legislative provisions that can impact unfavourably on the family. Where such provisions are identified they will be repealed or amended.

The National Development Movement will therefore:

- Abolish imprisonment for debt.
- Abolish imprisonment for breach of a maintenance order.
- Abolish income tax on the maintenance payments made to a parent on behalf of a child pursuant to a court order.
- Abolish transfer tax and stamp duty where property is transferred between spouses pursuant to a court order.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

It is heartening to observe that Saint Lucia has been experiencing a renaissance in the field of music, arts and entertainment over the last decade. Those creative efforts have been bolstered by the existence of the Saint Lucia School of Music, The Royal Saint Lucia Police Band and other entrepreneurial music endeavours on the island.

A NDM Administration will seek to leverage that industry, using tourism and the Saint Lucia Diaspora worldwide to expose and promote local talent and creativity, and will:

- Conduct an assessment of the contribution of that sector to the national economy.
- Establish the Commission for Arts & Entertainment with the mandate to promote, regulate and develop the industry.
- Promote the financing of short courses for musicians and entertainers in areas such as studio production, etc.
- Recognize Arts & Entertainment as a legitimate growth sector and promote its development accordingly.
- Arrange in conjunction with stakeholders, development plans for moving the entertainment industry forward.

- Establish a film and music bureau to promote Saint Lucia as a filmmaking location and provide exposure for our musicians and artistes.
- Organize an annual film festival as in Cannes and Toronto to promote cinematography and tourism.

WOMEN

The recognition of the important role of women in Saint Lucian society still needs to be reflected in concrete actions that ensure that women enjoy full protection, justice and equal status with men within our society.

Women, being the primary nurturers, must also be assisted in ensuring that our nation's children are raised in wholesome settings.

A National Development Movement Administration will:

- Ensure that a Woman's Bureau gets the required technical and administrative assistance to carry out social and economic development programmes for women.
- Introduce a special Single Mothers' Employment Programme and place focus on training and on enabling young mothers to operate small-scale businesses.
- Provide such businesses with access to financial services, marketing assistance and relevant training in entrepreneurship and enterprise management.
- Ensure parity in employment opportunities and pay for women.
- Introduce new mechanisms that provide greater levels of child support by delinquent parents.
- Improve the effectiveness of operation of the family court system to ensure parity and equity in its deliberations.
- Develop a continuing education programme in support of young women forced to abandon their education because of teenage pregnancy.
- Create a specialized unit within the Police Force to provide sensitive and necessary psychological and protective support to victims of domestic violence and sexual offences.

HEALTH SERVICES

The NDM believes that the people of Saint Lucia have the right to a standard of health-care that is sufficient to enable them to lead socially and economically productive lives. This envisions a nation that is physically, mentally, spiritually and socially healthy.

Strategy and policy in this sector will focus on the effective management, maintenance and upkeep of existing facilities and the provision of affordable health care to all in accordance with need.

A NDM Administration will:

- Review the terms of reference and scope of operations of the new national hospital.
- Convert the Victoria Hospital to a public senior citizens home, national physical rehabilitation facility and polyclinic. Upgrade the facilities and staffing at Soufriere and Dennery Hospitals.

REAL CHANGE: A DEVELOPMENT AGENDA FOR SAINT LUCIA

- Employ efficient management for hospitals and the health sector to ensure the establishment and maintenance of high standards of operation of all health facilities.
- Provide a dedicated fund for the equipping of hospitals so that medicines, equipment and disposable items are always available.
- Improve the working conditions and training opportunities for medical professionals and nursing staff to bring about improved standards of patient care.
- Improve the terms of employment and working conditions of nurses and medical professionals.
- Train more nurses taking into consideration the high level of turnover of nursing personnel.
- Consolidate the primary health care system by extending the opening hours of polyclinics and health centres and increasing the range of services offered to cover areas like post-natal care and prostate screening.
- Strengthen the Ambulance Service by providing more vehicles, more training for staff, modern communications technology to enable treatment for patients while they are *en route* to a medical facility and more widespread deployment to place them within closer proximity to centres of population.
- Establish a modern home-health service to bring medical services to the house-bound, the elderly, the handicapped and the chronically ill.
- Ensure the existence of an adequate management plan for the new national mental health hospital.
- Establish a National Health Insurance Scheme to provide coverage for all citizens based on need and not on ability to pay.
- Encourage participation in insurance schemes in order to reduce the individual cost of serious illnesses through the provision of increased tax relief for medical expenses.
- Provide tax incentives and concessions to encourage the operation of 24-hour pharmacies.
- Review taxes on all pharmaceutical products, antibiotics, vitamins, baby products, and medicines, with a view to their removal or reduction to make these products affordable to all citizens.
- Give high priority to the national HIV/AIDS campaign, increase HIV/AIDS education programmes in schools and the media, improve the delivery of health care services to persons living with HIV/AIDS and provide an enhanced HIV/AIDS counseling and testing service.
- Introduce mandatory physical check-ups at polyclinics and health-centres, including hearing and vision screening, for all children prior to enrollment in primary school.
- Introduce a comprehensive school dental-care programme incorporating continuing school visits by dental hygienists.
- Ensure that the school vaccination program meets the standards established by the World Health Organization.
- Establish multidisciplinary primary health teams within each constituency within five years.
- Develop public hospital authorities with clear responsibilities and framework for accountability to manage all public hospitals within five years.
- Restructure health service financing to ensure support for a comprehensive publicly guaranteed package of services complemented by private health insurance within three years.

REAL CHANGE: A DEVELOPMENT AGENDA FOR SAINT LUCIA

- Ensure that all health services are accredited by a recognized international accreditation authority within five years.
- Establish a real-time health information system to be used by health teams to ensure optimal health services, especially preventive care for every resident.
- Move all acute care services from the existing Victoria Hospital to the National Medical Complex.
- Establish all health protocols and targets within the information system to facilitate guidance and monitoring.
- Negotiate with appropriate overseas providers for specialized health services to complement that which is provided locally.
- Develop *health tourism* in a strategic manner that meets the needs of local residents in addition to providing an economic return.
- Create incentives for the private sector to grow and provide services in all spheres of the national health effort.
- Develop regulations whereby all health service providers, public and private, are mandated by law to enter into formal accreditation processes by a recognized international agency within five years.
- Review existing health legislation with a view to enacting modern legislation to remove existing regulatory gaps.
- Put in place mechanisms for the speedy resolution of complaints through a Health Complaints Management authority.

SPECIAL SOCIAL INITIATIVES

- Introduce a system of free bus passes for eligible students, the disabled and senior citizens.
- Remove the taxes on all baby foods and baby supplies.
- Introduce measures to address and arrest the problem of male under-achievement, including counseling, mentorship, skills training, motivation and after school programmes.
- Ensure that Family Life Education becomes an integral part of the education of our youth from an early age, so as to inculcate wholesome values of citizenship and family life.
- Provide incentives to licensed operators of day care centers.
- Establish fully functioning homes and shelters for boys and girls within five years.
- Establish a full-fledged child adoption and foster care system within five years.
- Establish correctional facilities for delinquent teens and young offenders within five years.
- Provide support by Government for religious denominational groups to encourage their intervention through social and family-oriented programmes in communities throughout the country.
- Support religious denominations in their efforts to promote a spiritual revival in Saint Lucia.
- Institute a special initiative to reduce the level of teenage pregnancy.

THE YOUTH

The entire focus of the strategies contained in this Manifesto is the creation of a new future for Saint Lucia and Saint Lucians in which opportunities for young people, abound. The strategies aimed at promoting economic development, employment, education and occupational and vocational training opportunities and possibilities for sporting excellence, all target and are designed to benefit young people.

Young people are invited to read all sections of this Manifesto to understand the broad range of benefits ensuing to the Youth of Saint Lucia from the policies and strategies being proposed.

The objective is to harness the human and material resources of the country to achieve specified national and community development goals.

In that regard, the NDM Administration will:

- Establish **Young Entrepreneurs Services (YES)** as a dedicated business incubator unit that will spark and fund micro and small business ventures for young persons between 18 and 30 years of age.
- Establish a two-year permanent community based national service, apprenticeship and skills training programme that will absorb a minimum of 1,500 young persons and will involve education, community service and the development of life skills.

CULTURE & HERITAGE PROTECTION

Saint Lucia's cultural heritage places it in a unique position to develop a distinctive national identity that is a source of national pride.

It is necessary to build upon the diversity of cultures that have become part of our country's rich and diverse cultural heritage and to use our cultural traditions as a vehicle for the cultivation of a wholesome value system and for national development.

There is also the need to protect our patrimony and to ensure its preservation for the enjoyment of future generations and, in this regard there can be no compromise with regard to access to our beaches and the Queen's Chain.

A NDM Administration will:

- Promote the nation's flower festivals and traditional dances as desirable aspects of our folk culture.
- Encourage the local media to support and create appropriate programmes centered on Saint Lucia's folk culture.
- Make Independence Day celebrations a true representation of our national achievements and identity.
- Give due recognition to the nation's cultural icons.
- Review the mandate of the Cultural Development Foundation to ensure that it is geared towards the development of our cultural heritage, creativity and growth.
- Promote pride in our national symbols.

- Organize structured cultural programmes and competitions in schools and communities to promote greater participation and national pride.
- Provide incentives, where appropriate, to those who promote our culture regionally and internationally.
- Support heritage organizations and associations in their work in preserving parks, sites, etc. and the public education and preservation of artifacts.
- Legislate architectural standards for the construction and maintenance of buildings of historical interest.
- Encourage the Saint Lucian community to become involved in heritage protection.
- Establish legislation and guidelines that safeguard access to beaches and the Queen's Chain.

SPORTS

Sporting activities do not only provide a valuable and positive outlet for the creative energies of the youth, but also engender good health and discipline that is necessary for people of all ages.

Programmes for the total development of young people are at the heart of the NDM's policy agenda.

A NDM Administration will adopt a philosophy of sports that is totally inclusive. That philosophy recognizes and caters to the sporting needs of all citizens and will encompass programmes that address every age group.

To that end, sports programmes will incorporate school and community-based sporting activities and promote a level of sports-consciousness that makes every member of society feel comfortable in participating.

The significant investment in a National Stadium and the Beausejour Cricket Ground means that the returns from these facilities need to be maximized.

Both of these venues will be upgraded so that they can adequately host international events thereby generating revenue and promoting sports tourism.

A NDM Administration will:

- Require that all students participate in at least one sporting activity as part of the school curriculum.
- Where absent, provide every community and residential housing area with a central sporting facility including facilities for safe walking and jogging. These facilities are to include multi-purpose courts, playing fields, parks and gymnasias.
- Promote careers in sports.
- Organize and promote central or regional institutional training in major sporting disciplines.
- Expose our sportspersons to international scouts during major local sports events.
- Re-introduce zonal sporting competitions.
- Support regional and international sporting events.
- Encourage corporate support and involvement in sporting activities.

- Develop and implement special programmes for adults and senior citizens.
- Upgrade all existing sports facilities over a five-year period.
- Construct new sporting facilities in selected communities.
- Provide mini-stadiums for sporting and cultural activity.
- Further develop the link between sports and tourism.
- Collaborate with national associations and sports officials to achieve an optimal level of sports administration.
- Expand the coaching programme of educational institutions and community groups to ensure that more young people are taught the techniques and skills of the various sports.
- Encourage the creation of gymnasiums within private sector establishments through the provision of tax incentives.
- Provide established and registered community under-19 sports clubs with free uniforms for one sporting discipline each year.
- Introduce a National Sports Excellence Programme involving the recruitment of international sports coaches on long-term contracts to improve the national standards of performance in selected sporting disciplines.

ENERGY

It is recognized, by developed and developing countries alike, that the cost of energy is critical to national development and to ensuring a reasonable standard of living for all citizens.

While there have been some attempts at promoting the use of alternative sources of energy, that effort has not been sustained. It is clear that given the volatility of fuel prices over the last few years, no effort should be spared in ensuring the long-term sustainability of our energy needs.

There is a general lack of awareness of the general public about alternatives to their current patterns of consumption of primarily petroleum-based energy. We all blithely proceed to consume electricity in our homes and businesses and fuel our vehicles with petrol and diesel as if this is an infinite solution to our energy needs.

Very few of us practice active conservation in our homes by using prudent energy husbandry practices or investing in energy saving devices and there is very little education of the public about the tax, fiscal and duty incentives available to persons who wish to invest in energy saving devices when building or renovating their homes.

The progress made with biogas some years ago has been allowed to evaporate. There has been little follow-up on the early initiatives with wind turbines and the pioneering work with geothermal energy has come to nothing. Today, Saint Lucia lags behind the rest of the OECS, and the wider Caribbean, in renewables.

Taking the energy sector forward at this time requires a renewed commitment to energy conservation and encouragement of the use of energy saving devices in all areas of our economy and the strategy of the NDM is designed to accomplish this.

An NDM administration will give the Energy sector the recognition it truly deserves. It will place emphasis on increasing energy security, both through the development of renewable energy and the realization of increased energy efficiency and will also encourage the development of biomass and wind energy generation.

A NDM Administration will:

- Resume the exploration of Saint Lucia's geothermal options and encourage the development of large-scale wind energy generation.
- Make efforts to realize opportunities to promote the use of alternative vehicle fuels, such as bio-fuels, from local and external sources, as appropriate.
- Seek to arrange for the secure importation and internal distribution arrangements for ethanol.
- Educate the public about the options and incentives available to support their adoption of modern energy technology and, as appropriate, expand the suite of incentives.
- Since the hotel sector is the largest consumer of energy, special incentives will be provided to this sector to:
 - Further encourage reduction in energy consumption.
 - Encourage innovation in the use of energy.
- Move speedily to implement all key aspects of the National Energy Policy.
- Review legislation governing the energy sector to establish an optimal legislative environment for the sustainable growth of the sector while protecting the consumer.
- Embark on an aggressive energy efficiency drive, starting with the Public (Government) sector.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

The passage of tropical storm Tomas in 2010, provided important insights into both the strengths and weaknesses of our public utilities – both in terms of their resource endowments and response capabilities.

The nation needs to build on these strengths and take steps to eliminate the weaknesses or mitigate their impact on the lives and livelihoods of our citizens. The nation's readiness for dealing with the effects of natural disasters must become a central part of our development agenda.

To that end, a NDM Administration will pursue the following goals:

- Extend electricity distribution to all communities within five years.
- Extend the water distribution system to provide potable water to every community in Saint Lucia within five years.
- Initiate project-planning activities leading to the commencement of construction of a dam to serve the South of Saint Lucia within five years.
- Initiate pre-planning activities for the commencement of construction of a second dam to serve the north of the island within ten years.

- Provide incentives for domestic harvesting of rain water for households and businesses alike.
- Educate the populace in the importance of water and energy conservation practices.
- Ensure adequate sewage and wastewater treatment.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

We believe that the time has come for the nation to embrace science and technology as the basis of sustainable development and an integral element of the strategy to bring economic prosperity to the nation. A NDM Administration will address science and technology from the standpoint of both consumers and developers.

As consumers, the aim will be to remain on the cutting-edge in so far as our resources allow so that we can provide the best and most cost-effective services to our citizens. As developers, the objective is to imbue our students and professionals with the zeal to discover and develop solutions to the challenges of our time.

A NDM Administration will:

- Promote and facilitate investment in science and technology to achieve a critical mass of technological capacity to drive production and development.
- Through relevant agencies, provide market intelligence on the identified needs of the marketplace.
- Encourage and support Research & Development efforts geared at economic development, commerce and manufacturing.
- Nurture an appreciation of, and affinity with science and technology by introducing programmes in all schools.
- Provide incentives for private sector investments in science and technology, including investments in IT products and services geared towards job creation and economic development.
- Provide a framework for the development of an innovative and dynamic IT sector.
- Increase the number of nationals trained and qualified in the fields of science and technology, engineering and information technology.

HOUSING

APPROPRIATE HOUSING FOR THE NATION

- Promotion of water-borne toilet systems for all in 5 years
- Reduction of taxes on building materials
- Abolition of land taxes on residential properties valued at not more than \$150,000
- 30-year mortgages

Housing is a basic human need. Saint Lucia has a reasonably good housing stock, but too many houses still have no indoor water borne toilet. In addition, many St. Lucians who own their own houses do not own the land on which the houses stand.

The NDM intends to provide every St. Lucian with the opportunity to own his or her home at reasonable cost. For those who cannot afford even this cost the objective will be to ensure the availability of rental units, providing persons with the option to become the owners of these units.

House owners who at present cannot afford to install indoor water-borne toilet systems will be assisted in installing these facilities. The aim is the installation of these systems in every St. Lucian home within five years.

A pre-requisite of this policy is the encouragement of lending for mortgages, and the full participation of the private sector in an integrated scheme for the building of more houses both for the purposes of creating quality housing and of stimulating construction and jobs creation.

A National Development Movement government will:

- Introduce tax incentives for investment in mortgages.
- Use housing bonds and other instruments to increase the availability of mortgage funds.
- Introduce a Building Societies Act.
- Facilitate trading in mortgages.
- Promote thirty-year mortgages.
- Discontinue classifying bridging loans for housing development as personal loans.
- Encourage the private sector to play a more active role in the provision of new homes and home improvements, and to participate in low-cost housing.
- The introduction of a special tax regime for housing construction corporations will be considered with the aim of encouraging these enterprises to produce housing units at an acceptable rate.
- Encourage partnerships between the National Housing Corporation, the National Insurance Corporation and private builders to provide houses to rent and own.
- Focus increased levels of resources on renovating and maintaining the existing publicly-owned housing stock.
- Develop an integrated programme to provide house spots, new houses and finance for home construction.
- Implement a major housing construction programme to build at least 500 affordable single-family and multi-family housing units in new development areas each year.
- Undertake a major slum clearance and resident relocation programme to address poor housing quality and overcrowding conditions in major urban centres such as Castries and Vieux-Fort.
- Stimulate interest in home ownership, particularly for young persons, by tax concessions in respect of savings made specifically for this purpose, and also through a “Starter” house programme.
- Reduce taxes on building materials.
- Encourage, by way of incentives, the development of indigenous building materials.
- Establish standards for building materials, both local and imported.
- Ensure adherence to the Building Code.
- Build terrace units for rental to low income workers.
- Offer the tenants of the NHC the opportunity to purchase their homes as condominium units with the rent being credited back against the purchase price. In the case of such sales the NHC will operate as a Condominium Management Company for the upkeep to

the grounds, play parks and for maintenance of the roofs and end walls of each block of units.

- Accelerate the delivery of serviced lots.
- Re-establish and expand a sites and services programme.
- Create a special fund for the installation of water-borne toilet systems.
- Encourage, by way of incentives, insurance coverage for every house, with insurance premiums being deductible for the purpose of income Tax.
- Abolish land tax on residential properties. The abolition will be phased in, starting with properties of a value not exceeding \$150,000.
- Seeking financing from international aid agencies for housing for low income persons.
- Establish a housing mortgage insurance scheme to be administered by the Saint Lucia Development Bank as a protection against foreclosure by the mortgagee in circumstances when the mortgagor's inability to pay results from his loss of employment.

The National Development Movement, with a view to minimizing the traumatic consequences of fires and hurricanes, will:

- Seek to institute a form of compulsory home insurance, with government taking full responsibility for the houses of the aged and infirmed.
- Encourage the establishment of hostel-type accommodation.
- Expand the role of NEMO to coordinate fire and other disaster cases.

TRANSPORT & COMMUNICATIONS

The National Development Movement will adopt policies and provide incentives that encourage public and private participation in the long-term maintenance and implementation of carefully selected high priority projects and the utilization of these sectors to create employment opportunities.

A NDM Administration will:

- Restore in a prioritized and strategic manner the infrastructure damaged during Hurricane Tomas.
- Immediately examine the feasibility of constructing an alternative highway from the north of the island to Castries.
- Initiate feasibility studies relating to the construction of a tunnel access link from Castries to the Bexon Highway.
- Promote the construction of a major access road through the North-East Quadrant of Saint Lucia linking Rodney Bay to the East Coast Road at a point south of La Caye.
- Immediately examine the feasibility of constructing a cross-country road linking the East Coast to the West Coast.
- Introduce strict criteria for project selection based on *rate of return* and cost-benefit analysis.
- Begin a major programme of maintenance and upgrading of existing social and economic infrastructure to be implemented over a ten-year period.

A NDM administration will also:

- Create a Public Transport Authority to manage the nation's public transportation system.
- Provide a better deal for the minibuses to ensure that those who provide this service obtain an equitable return.
- Establish a transparent framework for the consideration and award of government contracts.

AIRPORTS & SEAPORTS

Notwithstanding the current stage of development of our airports and seaports, there is still need for further growth and development in that sector.

These facilities are central to Saint Lucia's continued development but also, in the case of Port Castries, need to be viewed in the context of making the Capital City a more attractive, less congested, and generally more wholesome setting.

A NDM Administration will:

- Construct two new berths in the Castries harbor and transform the Castries Port into a major, modern cruise-ship facility.
- Make Castries a duty-free port with respect to the trade in goods intended for the tourism sector.
- Establish a new port in Cul-de-Sac to handle commercial cargo.
- Build a duty-free cruise port in Soufriere having due regard for the ecological and heritage status of that area.

- Undertake a rational and economically sustainable expansion of the facilities and capacity at the Hewanorra International Airport to provide world-class operations and services.
- Establish a major new cruise home port in Vieux-Fort that would work in collaboration with an expanded Hewanorra International Airport to create a dynamic new economic hub for Saint Lucia.
- Improve facilities and working conditions for the air traffic control and meteorological operations staff, airport security and management.
- Partner with regional governments to ensure cost-efficient, reliable and frequent air services between our Caribbean states, particularly to facilitate and maximize trade opportunities the Caribbean Single Market and Economy will bring.
- Forge strategic partnerships with the private sector and international airlines to secure adequate airlift for our North American and European visitors.

THE ENVIRONMENT

It is not for nothing that Saint Lucia is known as the Helen of the West. Rugged mountains covered with verdant rainforest; fast-flowing streams, beaches of golden sand and a diversity of flora and fauna, all laid against a backdrop of the Caribbean Sea, are just some of the attributes that make Saint Lucia famously beautiful.

Saint Lucia's land and ecosystems support human life by providing a wide range of environmental services, including water and food. In addition, the natural environment continues

to be the main reason that tourists visit the island. Over the years, however, many of our natural systems have been degraded as a result of improper development and inadequate management.

An NDM administration will make environmental management a key facet of its overall development policy. It will pursue an environmental management agenda that aims to strengthen and rationalize the policy and legislative framework; ensure that environmental management agencies are properly equipped to discharge their responsibilities; promote wider public participation in environmental management and ensure that adequate financing is made available for key environmental programmes and activities.

A NDM Administration will:

- Institutionalize environmental education and accounting to factor the contribution of the environment into the national accounts.
- Provide support for an integrated environmental programme geared at research and monitoring.
- Vigorously pursue energy conservation policies and investment in cleaner and renewable sources of energy.
- Promote recycling and the use of biodegradable products as a means of reducing the accumulation of the waste products in the environment.
- Strengthen the existing Environmental Commission to enable it to better oversee environmental management matters.
- Establish and expand sewage treatment facilities to improve water quality and to prevent damage to our coral reefs.
- Create a National Parks Authority to manage our national parks and public areas in addition to assuming the functions of the National Conservation Authority.
- Provide key environmental agencies with the human resources and equipment they need to manage the environment and to enforce the applicable laws.
- Review and strengthen the land management and planning process.
- Review and improve the fiscal framework to promote environmental management.
- Promote and encourage holistic national planning. For sustainable development.
- Strengthen the legislative and institutional framework for the management of the country's vital water resources.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

CASTRIES, OUR CAPITAL CITY

Saint Lucia should have a capital city of which it can be proud; a city that is well laid out, with appealing shopping and commercial areas. The time is right for the renewal of Castries making it a pleasant green urban area that is well maintained and lush with flowers and trees.

Steps will be taken to address:

- The unpleasant odors that permeate certain parts of the city.
- The uncollected garbage, open gutters, poor lighting.
- Poor road signage.
- Inadequate security situation.
- The sense of decay created by the run-down buildings.
- The number of vagrants that harass passers-by.
- The absence of public toilet facilities.

The NDM will renew the Castries city center, so that it becomes a feature city, with an appeal all of its own for citizens and visitors alike.

Ensure the infrastructure of the City (roads, drains and gutters, traffic lights, etc.), is upgraded and maintained to the highest possible standard.

- Ensure that the police presence in the City is adequate around the clock, especially in the shopping and commercial areas.
- Provide incentives to property owners in the City to maintain their structures in an attractive state of repair.
- Ensure the provision and maintenance of proper road signage and street markings throughout the City.
- Establish information centres and public toilets at strategic areas in the city.
- Employ tour guides who will operate from the information centres, to facilitate tourists and other visitors as they explore the City.
- Regulate vending in such a way that this traditional small business activity is afforded the level of dignity and support it deserves.
- Designate green areas and parks that will be maintained by professional landscapers and horticulturists.
- Promote the restoration of the traditional architectural character of the City.
- Make Castries a duty-free city.
- Provide special incentives to international franchises who wish to establish businesses in Castries.
- Address the slum and poor housing conditions that exist in Castries by relocating residents to newly established, properly planned residential communities on a basis that offers these residents an opportunity for home ownership.

VIEUX-FORT

Make Vieux-Fort a duty-free town.

- Provide special incentives to international franchises that wish to establish businesses in Vieux-Fort.
- Establish a new Yacht marina
- Promote the development of a major new cruise ship home-port and a tourism, commercial and real-estate complex.
- Create a new access into Vieux-Fort from Laborie through the proposed new yacht marina and commercial complex to revitalize business activity in the town.

GROS ISLET TOWN

- To ensure that this town is more integrated into the tourism sector, special concessions will be given for the construction, renovation and operation of guesthouses and hotels owned by locals.
- Develop the Waterfront into a scenic tourism and commercial promenade connected to the Pigeon Island Causeway.

SOUFRIERE

- Develop Soufriere as a model tourism and commercial duty-free town with a distinctive architectural style.
- Preserve access to the beaches and waterfront for the residents of Soufriere.
- Build a duty-free cruise port in Soufriere having due regard for the ecological and heritage status of that area.
- Provide special incentives to international franchises that wish to establish businesses in Soufriere.
- Move quickly to ensure that the Soufriere region does not lose its World Heritage Site status and to resolve the conflict that currently exists between landowners' claims and Government's international obligations in respect of the World Heritage Site.

ANSE LA RAYE, CANARIES, CHOISEUL, LABORIE

- Develop jetty and sea accesses for yachts and mini-cruise ships.
- Re-develop these coastal villages as scenic historic communities through the provision of incentives and development grants for restoration and construction of structures that emphasize traditional architecture.

OTHER TOWNS, VILLAGES AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

To ensure that no one or community is left behind in Saint Lucia's development thrust and that all have a chance to benefit from our nation's progress, special incentives will be provided to Saint Lucians who develop Guest Houses and mini-resorts that are located away from the urban centres of Saint Lucia.

- Specific measures will be introduced to ensure that the benefits and visitor expenditure from tourism are attracted into rural communities.
- A new initiative will be undertaken to establish adventure, retirement, nature/eco-type resorts in selected locations throughout the country including Dennery, Micoud, Laborie, Choiseul, Canaries, Anse-La Raye and Babonneau to create approximately 1,500 new guest rooms of these types.

NEW DEVELOPMENT AREAS

As part of its development strategy an NDM administration will identify new areas in the North-East and Southern Quadrants, linked to existing settlements by a new network of roads, in which properly master-planned residential and commercial centres will be established.

These new development areas will incorporate:

- Over fifteen thousand affordable single-family and multi-family housing units.
- Retail and commercial areas.
- Areas reserved for factories and job creation investments.
- Primary, secondary and tertiary educational institutions.
- Sports and playing facilities.
- Areas for hotels, villas, guest houses and a marine resort.

ELECTORAL REFORM

The National Development Movement is committed to the principle of democratically elected government and will pursue policies and adopt practices that ensure that both the constitution and the spirit of democracy are upheld.

To that end the NDM will initiate discussions with all interested parties to arrive at a set of laws and guidelines that best protect our democratic right to free and fair elections.

In particular a NDM Administration will seek to:

- Include a constitutional provision that mandates a fixed date for the holding of General Elections.
- Establish guidelines for campaign financing and expenditure.
- Introduce constitutional and legal protections against political victimization.

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

The objective is to establish through democratic processes a new constitution for Saint Lucia, given NDM's commitment to democratically elected government.

The recommendations of the Constitution Reform Commission will be used as the basis for proposing amendments or modifications to the existing Constitution or establishing a new Constitution to replace that which was introduced at the time of Independence in 1979.

Such changes could include but not be limited to:

- The implementation of a fixed date for general elections.
- Creating a framework for active representation of their constituencies by the elected representatives of each constituency.

STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Corruption and incompetence are scourges on a nation. Every act of dishonesty or wastage robs our country of scarce and valuable resources and diminishes our ability to provide goods and services to our citizens.

A perception of dishonesty in public life has created great cynicism on the part of the general populace and has provided a basis upon which some ordinary citizens have tried to justify acts of dishonesty. The result of such beliefs is the deterioration of our ethical and moral principles and the decay of our societal values.

A National Development Movement administration will, using organs of the State, establish codes of conduct and administrative practice that will ensure that corrupt practices of public officials, are dealt with decisively and expeditiously.

In addition, a NDM Administration will:

- Establish an Ethics, Complaints and Mediation Commission to establish and promote standards of ethical conduct in both the public and private sectors. The Commission will also have powers to investigate alleged breaches of the established standards and propose appropriate remedies.
- Emphasize efficiency in the administration of public institutions at all levels.
- Adopt practices that uphold the rule of law at all times.
- Provide mechanisms through which persons may seek redress where they feel aggrieved by the decisions or actions of public officials.
- Ensure that public sector institutions employ a merit system in recruiting and promoting individuals.
- Provide adequate staffing for the Government Audit Department to ensure the timely review and oversight over government expenditure.
- Ensure that the Public Accounts Committee fulfills its constitutional role by providing it with a full complement of staff and confirming its mandate to investigate and validate the expenditure and use of public funds by central government agencies and statutory corporations.
- Ensure that the Integrity Commission enforces the provisions of the relevant legislation.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

Saint Lucia has had a proud tradition of being at the forefront of the regional integration movement. Saint Lucia has always shown its commitment to this cause by participating actively in the activities and programmes of regional institutions and providing unwavering support to them.

The National Development Movement will ensure that Saint Lucia's foreign policy remains consistent with the economic, cultural and social aspirations of its people.

Above all, a NDM Administration will ensure that in our relations with other countries, our sovereignty and democratic traditions are not compromised.

Current initiatives such as the CARICOM Single Market & Economy (CSME) will be fully supported.

Our foreign policy will therefore be an open one, embracing all who share our ideals for a peaceful world in which mutual respect and fairness are shared ideals.

Accordingly, a NDM Administration will:

- Commit itself fully to the continuing development of the OECS regional integration process.
- Support and participate fully in CARICOM initiatives.
- Link the country's foreign policy to the goal of promoting trade and investment relationships geared to the realization of economic prosperity for all our people.
- Pursue foreign relations that are strategic to our national development goals.
- Adopt administrative arrangements that help to minimize the cost, where feasible, of administering the foreign policy agenda.