



**Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica**

**MESSAGE BY**

**HONOURABLE ROOSEVELT SKERRIT**

**PRIME MINISTER OF**

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA**

**On the occasion of the**

**40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence**

**November 3, 2018**

This fortieth anniversary of our Independence should be one of thanksgiving and praise to God, who has allowed his face to shine upon our nation and has prospered the work of our hands and minds.

It should also be one of deep reflection on the type of country we would want to bequeath to our children and to succeeding generations of Dominicans.

Most important to you and I, is the role we can and must play in building that new Dominica.

The time to do so is now.

Last year, our independence celebration was subdued.

We were all caught up with relief operations and with patching up our roofs as best we could, following the catastrophic visitation of hurricane Maria in September.

This hurricane sapped our spirits. Simultaneously, however, it ignited within our souls the vision of a stronger, more resilient Dominica – a country reengineered with modern defences against the destructive forces of nature that have tended to impede and set back our march toward a prosperous and peaceful society.

With trust in God, we persevered.

Armed with grit and determination, we have within one year, moved from near hopelessness and despair, to a place of confidence and assurance that all is well in Dominica.

The future looks bright and promising for the Nature Isle.

We have pledges from friends and development partners around the world committed to combining their resources with ours to rebuild our country and transform it to the world's first climate resilient nation. No one could ask for a more satisfying fortieth birthday gift.

Our hopes and plans to make this dream become a reality are captured in our independence theme "My Love, My Home, My Dominica, Building a Resilient Nation".

A wise man once said "Where love and skill work together, expect a masterpiece". If we are to be inspired by this wise saying, then it would be fitting that we all make a birthday resolution to our country that we will use our skills, collectively and individually, with patience and tolerance, to build a Dominica that is a masterpiece of climate resilience among small independent nations of the world.

This is the message that I want to resonate in your hearts and minds as you dress up in national wear, sing the nostalgic songs, participate in traditional dance, partake of the cuisine that is

uniquely Dominican and do all those other expressions of our culture that make us stand out as Dominican.

I note with gratitude that many of the projects you have decided to undertake on our National Day of Community Service relate to enhancing the appearance, cleanliness and safety of your communities. I urge that this becomes a permanent feature of your contribution to your community.

I extend a warm welcome to our overseas nationals and friends who have been arriving to celebrate with us. In the midst of the celebrations, I invite you to drive around the country. Look around for yourselves, and compare what you see now, with the impressions and images of our country as it was one year ago and with the commentaries you have read on various media.

Be your own judge, and come to your own conclusions on the magnitude of the task and the relentless effort it took to bring about the landscape that you now see.

We have come a long way, but we have a much longer road to travel. Every man, woman and child who loves Dominica, is being called upon to travel that road; for we cannot grow weary, not even after we have reached our destination as the world's first climate resilient nation.

My friends, citizens and residents, let peace, true brotherhood and an unwavering commitment to lift up Dominica, infuse your celebration of our celebration.

May God shower his blessings upon you and upon our beloved Dominica.