

# GOVERNMENT OFFERS \$140,000 TO UWI OPEN CAMPUS TO REPAIR AREAS DAMAGED BY HURRICANES IRMA AND MARIA

**Basseterre, St. Kitts, January 30, 2020 (SKNIS):** The Dr. Timothy Harris-led Team Unity Administration answered the call for assistance by the University of the West Indies (UWI) Open Campus to repair areas of the institution which were damaged by the passages of Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017.

The government lent its financial assistance in 2019 to the tune of EC \$140,000.

In an interview with SKNIS, Dr. Robertine Chaderton, the Vice-chancellor's representative on the University of the West Indies Council, who is responsible for the management of the University, and who sits in particular on the finance sub-committee commented on the condition of the centre after the hurricanes and the adverse effects that re-



sulted. "The condition of the site here in St. Kitts came before the Council at a meeting in February of 2019 because two years have passed and the site had been unable to have any classes," she said. "This is because of the hurricanes that affected the building. The roof was severely damaged so we

had leakages in the corridor preventing students from having access to the bathrooms. The main classroom on this floor was also affected in that the windows leaked, and it was very difficult to conduct any sessions there," she added. Dr. Chaderton stated that financial assistance was necessary as the in-

surance did not cover the cost of the repairs. She expressed how grateful the University was for the assistance. "We approached the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis, since the University had no money to be able to do these repairs and the cost came in under the insurance," she said. "So we didn't get any

insurance to be able to make these renovations. For that the University is very grateful because although St. Kitts pays its contribution, which covers staffing and operations, we needed extra money to be able to deal with buildings." The renovations included completely refurbishing the roof, as well as replacing the windows and the electrical fittings, which had been water-logged, and the air-conditioning unit. "So, we have a brand new lecture room, which can accommodate about 35 students. So, we are very pleased about that," said Dr. Chaderton, adding that "the University is very thankful to the government and people of the Federation for responding to their plea for help." "We want to thank in

particular the Prime Minister who is one of our alumni, one of our outstanding graduates," she said. Gail Grey-Phillip, Head of Site for St. Kitts and Nevis, stated that after the renovations of the rooms, the university was now able to offer their short courses. She noted that due to the damage the Centre was not able to generate income for two years. "We have our income from our programmes, the classes, the short courses, the workshops that we offer, and for the last two years we have been unable to do so. So, we are very excited now that this seminar room is completed and we can now begin offering our short courses and facilitate our online students in support groups etc."

## ST. KITTS AND NEVIS SECURES RECOGNITION OF SIDS REPRESENTATIVES AT SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION CONFERENCE

**January 29, 2020:** The Federation's representative to UNESCO in Paris has secured a central role for the Minister of Education, Honourable Shawn Richards, at the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development to be held in Berlin in June, 2020.

One education minister from each SIDS region will be invited to participate in this important strategic conference, organised by UNESCO in cooperation with and generously supported by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research of Germany, and with the German Commission for UNESCO as advisory partner.

At an information briefing meeting held at UNESCO in Paris on 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2020, attended by UNESCO ambassadors, UNESCO education experts and NGOs, the St. Kitts and Nevis Ambassador to UNESCO, Dr. David Doyle, commended the long-standing support of Germany and UNESCO in treating SIDS as a priority group at the same level as LDCs and lower middle income countries.

He stated that few SIDS education ministers had the resources to attend this important conference: "Education for sustainable development constitutes a critical priority for small islands, transcending the Pacific, Caribbean, and Indian Ocean, and indeed goes to the centre of national development strategies of these vulnerable states facing daily challenges related to climate change".

He went on to assert, "One minister should be invited to represent each of the four SIDS regions to actively participate in the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development".

The proposal, vigorously backed by the Ambassador



**Hon. Shawn Richards, Minister of Education**

of the Seychelles, H.E. Louis Sylvestre Radegone, current President of the SIDS Committee at UNESCO, was carried forward.

The Honourable Shawn Richards, St. Kitts and Nevis Minister responsible for Education, Youth, Sports and Culture, will thus attend the Berlin conference and speak on behalf of the Caribbean education ministers during the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2020. One education minister from each of the SIDS regions will also have a representational role at the conference, drawn for the

Pacific, Indian Ocean and the SIDS off the African continent, Cape Verde and São Tomé e Príncipe.

Their presence at the conference will enable SIDS to offer responses to the multiple climate-change induced challenges facing small islands. As one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals for 2030, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) goal supports efforts to equip learners with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed to contribute to a more inclusive, just, peaceful and sustainable world. In 2017, the UN General Assembly reaffirmed UNESCO's role as the lead agency on ESD in its Resolution 72/222 and recognized ESD as 'an integral element of the SDG on quality education and a key enabler of all the other SDGs'.

To further enhance ESD efforts, UNESCO launched the new framework 'Education for Sustainable Development: Towards achieving the SDGs' (ESD for 2030)<sup>1</sup> and its roadmap for implementation at the Berlin conference.

Representatives from the SIDS regions will be called upon to speak about their political commitment to ESD for 2030 and how they intend for it to be implemented, with special emphasis on national-level implementation/national initiatives.

Minister Richards noted: "Education for sustainable development is central to our government's ongoing strategy by incorporating a range of values and knowledge, at all levels of the Federation's academic structure, that contributes to raising awareness and promoting sustainable development of our twin-island state".