



January 17, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**H.E. AMBASSADOR TATSUO HIRAYAMA VISITS ST. VINCENT AND THE
GRENADINES ON A 3-DAY TOUR**

SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES, January 17, 2022 – H.E. Tatsuo Hirayama will be on a three-day mission to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines commencing Monday, 17 January to Wednesday, 19 January, 2022.

The Ambassador's delegation will include Mrs. Sarah Bailey, Head of Programme, World Food Programme Caribbean of Multi-Country Office and Mr. Robert Natiello, Regional Coordination Officer of the Caribbean and Chief of Mission, International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

Ambassador Hirayama will meet with Prime Minister; Dr. The Hon. Ralph Gonsalves on Tuesday, January 18, 2022 and other government officials throughout his 3-day visit.

On Tuesday, January 18, 2021 there will be a ceremony at the Lewis Punnett Home in Orange Hill at 3:00 pm. Ambassador Hirayama, UN partners and a representative from the Government of SVG will give brief remarks and kick-start works on the rehabilitation of the Lewis Punnett Home. The delegation will also visit Sandy Bay, one of the communities recovering from the eruption of La Soufrière volcano.

In December 2020, through partnership with the Government of Japan, WFP and Ministry of National Mobilisation, Social Development, Family, Gender Affairs, Youth, Housing and Informal Human Settlement, there was the Soufrière Relief Grant programme to include value vouchers which allowed persons to meet food and related needs during the holidays. Depending on family size, 3,000 recipient households received vouchers valued between EC\$350.00 to EC\$500.00, reaching 18,000 men, women and children who continue to feel the effects of La Soufrière's eruption in April 2021.

The United Nations World Food Programme (UNWFP) partnered with the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines on the national response to the volcanic eruptions since April 2021. WFP has worked with the National Emergency Management Organisation, the Ministry of National Mobilisation and the Ministry of Education, providing emergency logistics support and technical assistance and resources for cash and voucher assistance to displaced persons from the red and orange zones through the Soufrière Relief Grant.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) (UN Migration) is promoting since 1951 humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. IOM has presence in over 100 countries. St Vincent and the Grenadines became member of IOM in 2012. IOM assists its 153 Member States and partners in the areas of preparedness, disaster risk reduction, prevention, protection, humanitarian response, peacebuilding, as well as protracted displacement and post-crisis transition and recovery activities. In St Vincent and the Grenadines, through partnership with the Government of Japan, NEMO, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Health, IOM is supporting the management of the emergency shelters that are still in use, the repairs of washrooms in 21 schools around the mainland and retrofitting the Lewis Punnett facility in Orange Hill into a welcoming, safe and eco-friendly home for 40 senior citizens.

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For further information, please contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade at telephone number 456 2060.