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### **Charlotte Rehabilitation under UBEC Project**

Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, July 30, 2026 – The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, through the World Bank-funded Unleashing the Blue Economy of the Caribbean (UBEC) Project, has reaffirmed its commitment to preserving one of the country's most treasured heritage sites with the recommencement of rehabilitative works at Fort Charlotte.

The announcement was made during a community consultation held on Wednesday, July 29, 2026, at the Catholic Pastoral Centre, where residents and stakeholders were updated on the scope of the rehabilitation project and invited to share their views as works prepare to resume.

The consultation brought together representatives from the Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation and Sustainable Development, the St. Vincent and the Grenadines National Trust, contracting firm O. B. Sadoo Engineering Services Ltd., supervising consultants Politecnica, and members of the public.

Environmental Specialist with the UBEC Project, Dr. Clint Lewis, explained that the rehabilitation of Fort Charlotte forms part of Component Two of the regional UBEC Programme, which focuses on access to finance and infrastructure investments. Dr. Lewis noted that the project is designed to preserve the fort's historical and cultural significance while enhancing the visitor experience through carefully planned improvements that respect the site's heritage.

Quantity Surveyor and Environmental Manager with O. B. Sadoo Engineering Services Ltd., Kelene Frederick, said the contractor's primary objective is to preserve the fort's historic integrity while completing outstanding rehabilitation works. Frederick explained that the construction team will first reassess the site and update its work programme before recommencing activities.

Frederick noted that several restoration activities had already been undertaken, including sandblasting, power washing and the application of biocides to protect the historic masonry. However, because of the passage of time since works were suspended, these conservation measures will need to be revisited before construction resumes. Frederick also confirmed that work on the restroom facilities has been substantially completed, with only minor finishing items remaining.

Representing the supervision consultants, Luigi Salemi of Politecnica explained that the project has two principal objectives: preserving the structural integrity of the centuries-old fort and improving its functionality as a heritage tourism attraction.

Salemi said significant structural restoration had already been completed to stabilize damaged masonry, remove inappropriate cement repairs from previous decades and replace them with traditional lime-based materials that allow the historic stonework to breathe. Additional works will focus on completing conservation efforts, protecting the walls from further weather damage and installing interpretive displays that showcase the history, culture and geology of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The Politecnica Consultant emphasized that the project does not seek to alter the historic character of Fort Charlotte.

"The intent is not to modify the fort in any way, but to preserve it so that it remains for many more centuries while creating spaces that enhance the visitor experience without compromising its historical authenticity."

Chairman of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines National Trust, Fitzgerald Providence, welcomed the recommencement of the rehabilitation works, stressing that the National Trust fully supports responsible restoration and development that protects the country's cultural heritage.

Providence explained that while the Trust is often viewed solely as a preservation body, its mandate is equally focused on supporting sustainable development that respects the historical significance of national heritage sites.

The Chairman highlighted the Trust's longstanding involvement with Fort Charlotte and underscored the importance of protecting existing artefacts and ensuring that any archaeological discoveries made during construction are properly managed. He also encouraged Vincentians to become members of the National Trust, noting that public support is vital to preserving the nation's natural and cultural heritage for future generations.

The consultation also outlined the comprehensive environmental and social safeguards guiding the project. These include measures to manage dust, noise, traffic, waste disposal, worker safety, community access and the protection of archaeological and historical resources throughout construction. Residents were reminded that the UBEC Project's Grievance Redress Mechanism remains available to receive complaints, suggestions and feedback during every stage of implementation.

Construction is expected to recommence in early September, following updated site assessments and the finalization of construction planning.

The rehabilitation of Fort Charlotte forms part of the Government's broader efforts under the World Bank-funded UBEC Project to strengthen St. Vincent and the Grenadines' tourism product while safeguarding the country's rich cultural heritage for future generations.