



The Prime Minister  
St. Vincent and the Grenadines  
West Indies

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**SOLIDARITY WITH QATAR**

**ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES APPLAUDS THE STATE OF QATAR FOR HOSTING THE FIFA WORLD CUP**

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The government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines applauds the State of Qatar for its hosting of the 2022 FIFA WORLD CUP competition which had its opening on Sunday November 18, 2022. The global football competition will run for one month.

Qatar is the first Arab country in the history of world football to host a FIFA World Cup competition. Qatar's historic achievement in this regard is truly impressive for a small, though wealthy, Arab country. It is a mark of the growing stature and influence of the State of Qatar in the global political economy.

It is thus unfortunate, and prejudicial to global peace, security, and progress, that Qatar has faced unjustified, even deranged and unhinged, criticisms as hosts of the FIFA World Cup, emanating from some non-governmental organisations and "tabloid" journalists located in North Atlantic countries such as Britain, the United States of America, and Western Europe. The bulk of the criticism, dressed up as high principle, is laced with Islamophobia, racism, anti-Arab sentiment, hypocrisy, and profound disrespect, derived from the notion that a small Arab country like Qatar should never aspire to global influence. The critics sneer at, and mock, Qatar's small population size of 3 million, of which only 400,000 or so are Qataris; the rest are migrants, who by and large, enjoy the host country's hospitality. The truth is that Qatar is an amazing country that is soaring to higher heights!

Indeed, the unjustified and jaundiced criticisms of Qatar as hosts of the FIFA WORLD CUP land the critics at a place where they seem to think that the only countries to be eligible to host the WORLD CUP are those which have a watered-down Christian heritage or no religious core values whatsoever, and which subscribe to a universal culture of atomised individualism (as distinct from that of an uplifting social individualism), nihilism, and a globalised culture of neo-liberalism amidst all its malcontents/discontents.

Thus, the State of Qatar is pilloried for its restrictions on alcohol consumption; its opposition to homosexuality, and sexual permissiveness; its stance against wanton abortion; its embrace of Islamic values unconnected absolutely to any form of homicidal violence; its tightly-knit family systems; its rejection of a future decreed by the cultural tsars of western modernity with their nihilistic project and jaundiced relativism; and its promotion of Arab nationalism within an appropriate universal space.

Qatar has chalked up some very impressive achievements which are compelling in its hosting of the FIFA WORLD CUP. Among these are the following:

1. A “Very High” Human Development Index (HDI) assessed by the United Nations Development Programme.
2. A nominal, annual per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US \$83,000, ranked outstandingly at 5<sup>th</sup> in the world.
3. A history of hosting regional and international sporting and cultural events, including the Asian Games in 2006.
4. A highly sophisticated and organised country with high quality education, administration, governance, science, and technology but grounded in Islamic and hereditary traditions.
5. A very high level of civilisation in central material particulars (Incidentally, its Museum of Islamic Art is one

of world renown; so, too, its universities, health system, housing, physical infrastructure).

6. Its ranking as the “World’s Safest Country”.
7. Its establishment, consolidation, and expansion of the Al Jazeera network, a global communications entity.
8. A highly respected member of the international community which subscribes to the fundamental tenets of the Charter of the United Nations and a multilateralism of peace, security, and progress for all humanity.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is an independent country with a functioning liberal democracy but with a symbolic external colonial remnant (The British sovereign) as nominal Head of State. Qatar is a semi-constitutional monarchy headed by a home-grown Executive authority, the Emir. There are, of course, differences in the two countries’ governance apparatuses and legal regimes. However, in our complicated and inter-connected world, we are all obliged to respect each other’s evolved systems of governance and economic arrangements. Undoubtedly, all systems of governance continue to evolve in their people’s interests and as the circumstances admit.

We in St. Vincent and the Grenadines celebrate the amazing spectacle and sporting excellence on display in Qatar at the 2022 FIFA World Cup. It is an obligation of the world’s peoples to join in this celebration as a contribution to global friendship, peace, security, and progress. To be sure, there are limitations and weaknesses in the endeavour, but let us not make perfection the enemy of the good. The strengths and possibilities are immense.

We are sure that Qatar will continue to be magnificent hosts of World Cup 2022!


St. Vincent and the Grenadines has friendly relations with the State of Qatar although we do not have any practical bilateral programmes. Our two countries work well together on global affairs in all the relevant international fora. Qatar is a force for good in our difficult

and complex world. We consider Qatar to be a friend of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. And we thank them yet again for supporting our country's successful candidacy for the United Nations Security Council on which St. Vincent and the Grenadines sat as a non-permanent member in 2020-2021.

We are friends of all, we strive for a better world.

Let World Cup 2022 go on without the mountain of humbug by the hypocritical critics. St. Vincent and the Grenadines affirms its solidarity with Qatar!

Dated the 19<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2022.

A blue circular stamp with the text "PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE" at the top and "ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES" at the bottom. Overlaid on the stamp is a handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ralph E. Gonsalves".

Dr. The Hon. Ralph E. Gonsalves  
Prime Minister