



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
SEISMIC RESEARCH CENTRE
ST. AUGUSTINE, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, WEST INDIES

MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

St. Vincent and the Grenadines Country Conference 2023: Explosions, Ash & Lahars set to begin on March 29th.

St. Augustine, Trinidad & Tobago W.I. – March 24th, 2023. Vincentians are being encouraged to increase their understanding of La Soufriere volcano and to prepare for any future unrest scenarios.

The call has come from conveners of the upcoming country conference happening on March 29th at The UWI Open Campus, Kingstown. The UWI Seismic Research Centre (UWI-SRC) in partnership with The University of the West Indies (UWI) Open Campus, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO) will showcase work and research based on the theme: ***The 2020-21 eruption of La Soufrière Volcano, St. Vincent.***

Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Dr. The Honourable Ralph Gonsalves will deliver the feature address at the opening ceremony followed by presentations from local, regional, and international researchers. The aim of the conference is to highlight research that has been or is being undertaken on La Soufrière Volcano with particular focus on the eruption that occurred between December 27, 2020 and April 22, 2021. It will provide a forum for regional and international scientific researchers and disaster response stakeholders to meet and discuss the state of knowledge regarding Caribbean volcanism and gaps in knowledge that still exist while engaging with members of the public on these topics. The conference closes with a field excursion to view the impacts of the eruption on various areas on the island.

Professor of Geology at the UWI-SRC and Chair of the Conference Committee, Dr. Richard Robertson, hopes that all interested members of the public will attend this free event either in person or virtually. “The workings of the volcano and the response mechanisms to any unrest should be of concern to persons living on island,” stated Prof. Robertson. “We look forward to full

public participation so that Vincentians can better understand and be prepared for any event,” added Robertson

Director of NEMO, Ms Michelle Forbes noted that “The management of the eruption resulted in many lessons being learnt and this conference allows for opportunities for discussion and sharing with both researchers and members of the public.”.

Director of the UWI-SRC, Dr. Erouscilla Joseph, added “We are pleased that this conference will showcase some of the new knowledge that has emerged since the eruption to help improve our understanding of eruptive transitions at volcanoes.”

The Open Campus. St. Vincent and the Grenadines notes that this conference will add significantly to existing community knowledge and strengthen over time, the overall capacity of residents and the nation to respond effectively to future eruptions of La Soufrière.

La Soufriere volcano began erupting effusively in December 2020 with at least thirty-one explosive events recorded between April 9-22.

Persons can register for the conference online: <https://forms.gle/bbQpKFSPTCZAPQt7> and for any questions or concerns, please contact the Planning committee at soufriereconference2023@gmail.com.

Full programme and conference material can be found on The UWI-SRC’s social media platforms or at <https://uwiseismic.com/volcanoes/la-soufriere-eruption-2020-2021-hub/svg-country-conference-2023/>.

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Notes to the Editor

Photo Caption 1: Country Conference Schedule

About The UWI Seismic Research Centre (UWI-SRC)

The Seismic Research Centre was set up in 1953 and became part of The UWI in 1962. From its headquarters in Trinidad and Tobago, it operates a volcano and earthquake monitoring network throughout the English-speaking Eastern Caribbean islands extending from St. Kitts & Nevis to Trinidad and Tobago. The UWI-SRC is responsible for monitoring earthquake and volcanic activity in these islands. The region in which these countries are located is seismically active and historically has been the site of earthquakes of magnitude greater than 8.0 There are at least 19 live volcanoes in the region, which has

been the site of numerous eruptions, most recently in Montserrat (1995-present), Dominica (1997, phreatic) and St. Vincent & the Grenadines (2020-present). The UWI-SRC currently manages the Montserrat Volcano Observatory (MVO), which is responsible for monitoring the on-going eruption of the Soufriere Hills Volcano. The Centre's Education & Outreach section conducts geohazard awareness campaigns in all territories and manages the Centre's social media platforms inclusive of the real-time earthquake interactive map. The Centre was the recipient of The UWI Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence for outstanding contribution to the University in the area of All-round Performance in Research Accomplishments and Public Service in 2013 and the 2022 Volcanic Surveillance and Crisis Management Award presented by the International Association of Volcanology and Chemistry of the Earth's Interior (IAVCEI) for the management of the 2020-2021 eruption of La Soufrière in St Vincent and The Grenadines. **Social media handles - @uwiseismic (Facebook, Instagram & Twitter), @UWISeismicResearch (Youtube)**

About The UWI

For over 70 years The University of the West Indies (The UWI) has provided service and leadership to the Caribbean region and wider world. The UWI has evolved from a university college of London in Jamaica with 33 medical students in 1948 to an internationally respected, regional university with near 50,000 students and five campuses: Mona in Jamaica, St. Augustine in Trinidad and Tobago, Cave Hill in Barbados, Five Islands in Antigua and Barbuda and an Open Campus. As part of its robust globalization agenda, The UWI has established partnering centres with universities in North America, Latin America, Asia, Africa and Europe including the State University of New York (SUNY)-UWI Center for Leadership and Sustainable Development; the Canada-Caribbean Institute with Brock University; the Strategic Alliance for Hemispheric Development with Universidad de los Andes (UNIANDES); The UWI-China Institute of Information Technology, the University of Lagos (UNILAG)-UWI Institute of African and Diaspora Studies; the Institute for Global African Affairs with the University of Johannesburg (UJ); The UWI-University of Havana Centre for Sustainable Development; The UWI-Coventry Institute for Industry-Academic Partnership with the University of Coventry and the Glasgow-Caribbean Centre for Development Research with the University of Glasgow.

The UWI offers over 800 certificate, diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate degree options in Food & Agriculture, Engineering, Humanities & Education, Law, Medical Sciences, Science & Technology, Social Sciences and Sport.

As the region's premier research academy, The UWI's foremost objective is driving the growth and development of the regional economy. The world's most reputable ranking agency, Times Higher Education, has ranked The UWI among the top 600 universities in the world for 2019 and 2020, and the 40 best universities in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2018 and 2019, then top 20 in 2020. The UWI has been the only Caribbean-based university to make the prestigious lists. For more, visit www.uwi.edu.

(Please note that the proper name of the university is The University of the West Indies, inclusive of the "The", hence The UWI.)