Fellow parliamentarians, ladies and gentlemen, sisters and brothers. It gives me greater pleasure to be part of this momentous occasion today. Our role and function as parliamentarians is not one to be taken lightly. It is a noble calling to be able to serve our country at this level and it is important that we properly equip ourselves to do the best job possible.

For those of us who are seasoned politicians, it is important that from time to time, we take advantage of opportunities to sharpen our skills and broaden our knowledge base. Although experience can be one of the greatest teachers, sometimes we need the learning environment such as the one created through this seminar to reinforce some of the life taught lessons and to adapt to our continuously changing world.

For our newly elected parliamentarians, especially those with the advantage of youth, this seminar provides an invaluable opportunity to get better acquainted with parliamentary procedures and expectations. Having been elected since March 2018 and in the case of senators, appointed shortly thereafter, you have already had the baptism by fire, being thrust directly into the role of parliamentarians. Over the next two days, you have an opportunity to take a step back, evaluating what you have been doing and arming yourselves to continue that forward march and to offer the very best representation to those you serve.

Sisters and brothers, this is an opportunity we must all embrace. I must express my appreciation to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association for initiating this important Post-Election Seminar. It is almost a decade since Grenada would have benefitted from such an initiative. It is timely, it is fitting, and we are immensely grateful.
I cannot thank the parent body without acknowledging the valuable service of the local branch through the leadership of the Speaker of the House, Michael Pierre and the President of the Senate, Chester Humphrey. Collectively, with their respective teams, they provide immeasurable guidance and support for all parliamentarians.

Fellow parliamentarians, I am truly heartened to see included on the agenda, a session that focusses on Women in Parliament. The power of women is recognised globally but I think here in Grenada, that power takes on extra significance. It was only in 1990 that we appointed our first female President of the Senate but today, we have four female senators. Seven of our 15 elected parliamentary representatives are in fact women. These figures give us one of the highest percentages of women in both the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament in the entire Commonwealth. As leader of the New National Party and as Prime Minister of this beloved country, I can hardly put into words what an honour it is to be part of this moment in our history.

In closing therefore, I would simply like to reiterate the importance of this session to the further growth and development of Grenada as a nation and the recognition of proper parliamentary procedures and maintaining the principles of good governance. We hold true to many of the same underlying values of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association – recognising the value of democratic political processes, the rule of law and equal rights and representation for all.

Sisters and brothers, I thank you and I look forward to a very productive seminar.