



**COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA**  
OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

**STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER ROOSEVELT SKERRIT ON THE  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BARBADOS AND DOMINICA**

Let's refocus and move forward.

Fellow citizens and residents, I wish to call on all who are accountable, to cease and desist from the unwarranted verbal attacks on the Government and Prime Minister of Barbados and by extension on all Barbadians. The decision to relocate to Barbados was a decision taken solely by Ross University School of Medicine (RUSM).

The relationship between Barbados and Dominica is longstanding and amicable. The people and Government of Barbados have always stood with us both in good times and most recently in difficult times.

Lest we forget, when we were at the the mercies of the IMF in 2002, seeking to correct the financial mismanagement of the country by the UWP Government, it was the Government of Barbados who first assisted us with a loan of US\$10 million on concessional terms. At that time, this was a lifesaver for our country and Prime Minister Mia Mottley was a member of that Government.

After Tropical Storm Erika and Hurricane Maria, the people of Barbados, including Prime Minister Mottley herself, were at the forefront of tirelessly raising funds and securing food supplies, among other relief efforts, for us in Dominica. What is especially notable is that she accomplished this even though she was the leader of the Opposition at the time. I do not think it is right, neither do I support any attacks on Prime Minister Mottley and the Government of Barbados.

I reiterate my call to all Dominicans, including those who support me, that these attacks are not in our best interests nor to our benefit. It is not the Dominican way. It is not who we are!

My camaraderie with Prime Minister Mottley has not been affected by the decision of Ross to relocate. Similarly, my profound love for the people of Barbados remains in tact.

I have never been and will never be an ungrateful person. These are Dominican qualities which we all should never stray from.

As I said last week, Ross' closure here is not the end of Dominica. There are ongoing discussions between Ross and my administration, and I am confident that they will conclude with our country benefitting.

Dominica shall become stronger and indeed more prosperous from this experience and I trust that the good Lord will continue to create opportunities for us as a nation, just as he did numerous times in the past when we were jolted by natural disasters.

It was not too long ago when Colgate Palmolive closed in 2016, leaving several of us depressed. I reassured the nation then, that we shall be blessed with another investor; and that we were. Less than two years later, that soap factory is making waves with its products throughout the region and it is swiftly expanding. In earnest, Government shall continue to work with the investors to ensure this continued success.

Similarly, after Jungle Bay Resort was decimated by Tropical Storm Erika, the Government followed through on its promise and worked with the proprietor, Sam Raphael, to build an even larger resort, doubling the number of rooms to 120. Now, even after the passage of the even more powerful Hurricane Maria, the first phase of the hotel is set to be open for business in March 2019.

We Dominicans would recall, about 14 years ago, a call centre closed its doors in Dominica, later to be replaced by Clear Harbour, with over 830 full-time employees. Today, the Government is creating additional space for Clear Harbour's expansion.

My call to us all, is to look forward. We have a country to build! Being negative and gloating on setbacks will benefit no one. Over the past few days, the international media has been effusively endorsing our march toward becoming the first climate resilient nation, by applauding our ban on plastics which will take effect from January 1, 2019.

Let us be energised and encouraged by this, and continue to show the world what Dominica and its people are made of. We must abstain from misdirecting our energies into instigating island wars and instead focus on rebuilding our nation.

May God bless you all.