



Brief Speech to

Ambassador Peter Selfridge
Chief of Protocol of the United States of America

By H.E. Lou-Anne Gilchrist

**On the occasion of the Presentation of Letters of Credence as the
Ambassador Designate of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the
United States of America**

*US Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington DC*

November 02, 2016

Thank you very much.

Ambassador Peter Selfridge, Chief of Protocol;

Mr. Donald Jacobson, Director of the Office of Central American Affairs (*filling in for Ambassador Juan Gonzalez, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Western Hemisphere Affairs*);

Ms. Margaret Bond, Deputy Director, Office of Caribbean Affairs;

Mr. Arnaldo Arbesú, Desk Officer of St. Vincent and the Grenadines;

Mr. Michael Schena, Desk Officer for the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative,

Other Members of Staff of the US Department of State;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good afternoon.

It is a great honour and privilege to be here today - one week after commemorating my country's 37th anniversary of independence - to present copies of my credentials to you, Ambassador Selfridge, to serve in the capacity as Ambassador of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the United States of America, and the second female Ambassador to this country. Please permit me also to convey cordial greetings from Dr. The Honourable Ralph E. Gonsalves, Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and from the Honourable Sir Louis H. Straker,

the Minister of Foreign Affairs of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Ambassador, the United States of America is a great nation, a world leader, and the bond of friendship between both of our nations is strong. Our countries have had historic and cordial relations; to this day these continue. I am confident that this situation will obtain in the future.

Ambassador, none of this would be possible if it were not for the efforts and work of my predecessors. Therefore, I wish to thank them for their role in paving the way for me. They have undertaken magnificent work in enhancing the relationship between our nations and in promoting the interest of the Vincentian Government and people. Ambassador, I must express the same sentiments about your predecessors and other US diplomats who have served

with distinction over the years. If it were not for them as well, we would not be here. Additionally, there is a large, vibrant and well integrated Vincentian Diaspora in this. This integration serves to show that our nations are destined to accomplish great feats together.

Ambassador Selfridge, St. Vincent and the Grenadines has a common interest with the United States of America on core issues such as Democracy, Human Rights, the Rule of Law and Security. In the past, my nation has worked with the United States on a number of issues. Currently we are doing the same and will continue to do so in the future. St. Vincent and the Grenadines is always more than eager to work with the United States on combatting matters such as the illicit trafficking in persons; child labour; terrorism; the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons; the illegal drug trade and

climate change; we work with you on addressing issues such as clean and renewable energy; the blue economy and the protection of our oceans; the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI); the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI); De-risking and the Temporary Agriculture Workers Program **(H-2A and H-2B Non-immigrant Worker Programs)**.

Ambassador Selfridge, on this momentous occasion and as my nation's top envoy to this country, let me reaffirm my nation's commitment to working with the Government of the United States on areas of mutual concern and to fulfilling our responsibility as genuine partners in order to foster a better global community. As a country in the Caribbean, St. Vincent and the Grenadines is part of the third border of the U.S., therefore the historical ties between our people naturally play a critical role in the improvement of our bilateral relationship.

Ambassador, I do look forward to a successful tour of duty. Let me therefore express my gratitude to and commend the U.S. Department of State for facilitating today's ceremony.

God bless our nations.

I thank you.
