

# THE UNITY & PROGRESS CHARTER

## (Otherwise – the “Charter”)

A NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, UNITY AND PROGRESS CHARTER, DESIGNED TO SECURE OUR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, GOOD GOVERNANCE, RULE OF LAW, TRANSPARENCY IN ALL DEALINGS, AND A FOCUS ON UNITING DOMINICANS AT HOME AND ABROAD TO DO THE WORK OF EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT.

We, Dominicans of civic virtue and patriotic commitment, at home and abroad, concerned by -

- the decline in good governance,
- the failure of the Integrity Commission to act with any semblance of justice and accord with the substance of unlawful behaviour and not merely the form or timing,
- the incompetence of the administration,
- the lack of understanding of the meaning of real development,
- the gross disrespect of government ministers to the Dominican people and their deliberate attempt to reduce Dominicans to a mendicant society,
- the general decay of the basic fabric of society and the total disregard of the Dominican youth who are languishing on the streets in a state of hopelessness,
- the increase in crime,
- the appointment of unsavoury characters to serve as diplomatic envoys,
- the failure of our public officials to conduct state craft in accord with the rules of the civil service,
- the sale of Dominican citizenship and diplomatic positions,
- the failure of government to make public the contracts and foreign affairs agreements, which affect the national interests,
- the failure of government to meaningfully engage Dominicans overseas in the national development process, hereby state as follows:
  1. That the nation is at the crossroads and there is need to arrest the drift towards economic and social collapse brought about by the increasing lack of trust between the government and the governed;

2. That there needs to be confirmation that no further sale of passports shall take place without the complete reworking of our system of naturalization;
3. That the Dominican public shall not agree or accept the voting in our national elections by those who have “paid for citizenship” without regard to their being bona fide Dominicans;
4. That there should be no election called without the issuance of identification cards and other means instituted to prevent fraud and the imposition of foreign domination under the guise of a local political party being its façade;
5. That only a Unity and Progress government committed to a “**Team Dominica Governing Slate** “ which comply with the following principles has any opportunity to redress the ills confronting our country:
  - A. There be a **Unity and Progress Platform** grouping patriots from all the major parties to challenge the government in the next election, with good governance, commitment to our cooperative spirit of ***Koudmen***, the spirit of self reliance, pride in our indigenous people and culture, a team building ethic, proven competence, a national independence philosophy, transparency, integrity, and commitment to national interest being the prime objective. We cannot split the vote and witness the ruin of our country.
  - B. That **Unity and Progress Platform** must endeavour to promote a constitutional amendment to allow born-Dominicans the right to vote and run for public office, no matter that they reside elsewhere or took an oath to a foreign power. We all know that Dominicans who migrated for better opportunity were not disloyal but merely sought survival.
  - C. That **Unity and Progress Platform** should revamp our foreign service and recall all ambassadors; re-appointing only those of merit, without criminal entanglement or scandal which are a reproach to the dignity of our nation.
  - D. That **Unity and Progress Platform** must promote a National Energy Commission which shall endeavour to maintain the energy resources in the hands of the people of Dominica, for the benefit of Dominica and advance the cause of Dominica becoming energy independent by 2020 – with such energy being based on our geothermal, wind, solar and other non-fossil fuel sources.
  - E. That **Unity and Progress Platform** must promote a respectful, dignified and honest functional relationship with the Dominican communities overseas to ensure that their resources, both human

and otherwise, be placed at the disposal of Dominica's development.

- D. That **Unity and Progress Platform** develops a Dominican owned merchant marine and air lift capacity.
- F. That **Unity and Progress Platform** finds a creative way to enhance international air access to Dominica without burdening the treasury or selling our birthright.
- G. That **Unity and Progress Platform** develops a National Agriculture Institute to impart advanced agricultural technology, train students in practical agricultural science, introduce new food crops and enhance our food security.
- H. That **Unity and Progress Platform** develop a National Water Institute to preserve our water resources and promote water based industry.
- I. That the **Unity and Progress Platform** appoint a National Ombudsman who, upon proper petition by the aggrieved national, shall be equipped with the subpoena power to command the attendance of witnesses, obtain the relevant discovery, hold public hearings of matters concerning the national interest, and issue recommendations for civil fines, injunctions, other relief, or request criminal prosecution as necessary to so protect the citizens of Dominica from abuse by government and/or its agents.
- J. That **Unity and Progress Platform** passes a law to mandate that all those running for public office pass a class in civics, ethics, conflicts of interest, our history, and our constitution to remove the ignorance and corrupt behaviour which have been afflicted some of our politicians of all stripes over the years. The course work will be designed by a bipartisan commission of elder statesmen, distinguished retired civil servants, business people, a representative of the overseas community of Dominicans and educators.
- K. That **Unity and Progress Platform** develops a Small Business Administration to promote self reliance and enterprise as a means to curtail the dependence of our people o handouts by government and politicians.
- L. That **Unity and Progress Platform** shall pass a law mandating that election campaigns be based on a series of village and town hall debates and panel discussions so as to discourage dependence on foreign countries and donors to pay for election campaigns, preclude the financially wasteful bacchanal style political campaigning and replace it with meaningful discussion of national development imperatives; and that such debates and panels be viewed on television, via the internet and broadcasted via radio.
- M. That **Unity and Progress Platform**, pass a law to mandate that state radio and television allow equal time to the opposition – at minimal costs - to government owned media to include mandatory

public access to private cable TV for designated time slots and the Government Information Service at all times, to include election time.

- O. That **Unity and Progress Platform** be dedicated to educating all Dominicans of the value of maintaining our independence, control by our government and people of the commanding heights of our economy, self reliance, culture, dignity, membership in community development organizations, and the maintenance of productive relationships with our overseas communities at all times; and that such civic education and community service as is applicable form part of the school curriculum at all schools.

We, the undersigned cognizant of the need to unite all Dominicans at a time of global economic challenge and in view of the limitations imposed on our people by the overly partisan politics which over thirty years of political independence has ill-served our national interest, commit to the above **Unity and Progress Platform** and call on all the political tendencies and parties in Dominica to adopt the **Unity and Progress Platform Charter** and so enter a united ***Pro Dominica First*** candidate slate during the next elections, under a **Unity and Progress Platform. And that they shall be duty bound to so execute the terms of this charter once having entered office.**