



REPORT

CARICOM ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION (CEOM)

GENERAL ELECTIONS OF
ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES



27 NOVEMBER 2025

REPORT
OF THE
CARICOM ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION
TO THE GENERAL ELECTIONS
OF
ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES
27 NOVEMBER 2025

Prepared by:

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Chief of Mission
29 June 2026

CARICOM Election Observation Missions are comprised of experts nominated from CARICOM Member States and provide independent expert analysis. The CARICOM Secretariat provides administrative and logistical support. The opinions expressed in this report are those of the Chief of Mission and the team of observers.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page(s)</u>
OVERVIEW	2
SCOPE OF SERVICES	3 - 4
COUNTRY PROFILE	5 - 7
BACKGROUND	8 - 10
PRE-ELECTION DAY OBSERVATIONS	10 - 13
ELECTION DAY OBSERVATIONS	13 - 15
RECOMMENDATIONS	16 - 17
CONCLUSION	17 - 18

APPENDICES

Appendix I – Arrival Statement	19 – 20
Appendix II – CEOM Team Deployment Schedule	21
Appendix III – Election Results	22
Appendix IV – Preliminary Statement	23 - 26

OVERVIEW

Mandate

One of the fundamental pillars of democracy is the holding of elections in keeping with constitutional and statutory requirements. In this regard, public confidence in the process is paramount and is bolstered by the presence of electoral observers. In response to an invitation extended by the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) mounted a ten-member CARICOM Election Observation Mission (CEOM) to observe the General Elections held on 27 November 2025. The Mission is in keeping with the commitment of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to supporting Member States by providing an independent, impartial, and honest assessment of the preparations for, and conduct of General Elections.

Team Composition

The CARICOM Election Observation Mission comprised senior electoral and other officials from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago, as well as three members of the CARICOM Secretariat, who provided administrative and logistical support. The team was headed by **Mr. Sase R. Gunraj**, a Commissioner of the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM). The other members of the team were as follows:

1. **Mr. Clovis St. Romain**, Member, Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission (Antigua and Barbuda);
2. **His Honour Arthur Eugene Holder**, SC. MP, Speaker of the House of Assembly (Barbados);
3. **Ms. Anthea Joseph**, Chief Elections Officer, Electoral Commission (Dominica);
4. **Ms. Karina Nicola Thomas**, Systems Administrator, Parliamentary Elections Office (Grenada);
5. **Mrs. Dorinnie Irma**, Member of the Independent Electoral Council (Suriname); and
6. **Ms. Gillian Macintyre**, Chair of the Human Resource Sub Committee, Elections and Boundaries Commission (Trinidad and Tobago).

The CEOM was supported by the following CARICOM Secretariat staff:

1. **Ms. Shae-Alicia Lewis**, Programme Manager, Community Relations;
2. **Mr. Irvin Brown**, Project Officer, Foreign and Community Relations; and
3. **Ms. Serojnie Seetaram**, Senior Secretary, Foreign and Community Relations.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The CARICOM Election Observation Mission is mandated to observe the entire electoral process in the host country starting with the observation of the environment/atmosphere ahead of the polling and the level of preparedness of the body responsible for conducting the polls. The CEOM also undertakes the following activities, as specified by the Appendix to the *Handbook for CARICOM Election Observation Missions*:

On the day of the elections

- Observe the entire electoral process, including the preparations for the start of the poll, the casting of votes, the closure of the polling stations, the counting of the ballots, and the preparation of the Statement of Poll;
- Collect information on the results at the voting tables to assist in the quantitative verification of results; and
- Collect qualitative observations regarding the voting process, comportment of the electoral officials and political actors, and the overall electoral environment.

In the post-electoral period

- Observe and assess the outcome of the elections and the initial immediate impact on the social and political environment; and
- Collaborate in the preparation of the Report of the Observer Mission to be prepared by the Chief of Mission, through the submission of observation sheets, oral reports on their observations and findings on the day of the elections.

Summary of Observations

The CEOM team conducted observation in over 85 percent of polling stations across mainland St. Vincent on election day. Observation included the opening of the polls, the voting process throughout the day, the closing of polls, and the counting process. Prior to election day, the team also interacted with key stakeholders in the process and held meaningful consultations to garner a broad perspective of the electoral and national landscape. The Mission also monitored the immediate post-election environment.

While there were some operational and staffing challenges observed, overall, the General Elections in St. Vincent and the Grenadines were orderly, peaceful, and conducted in an atmosphere of robust civic engagement and camaraderie among the electorate.

Acknowledgements

The CARICOM Election Observation Mission wishes to express gratitude to the leaders of the political parties, civil society groups, other stakeholders, the media, and the people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines for their warm welcome and cooperation, which contributed to the success of this endeavour.

COUNTRY PROFILE

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a multi-island state, consisting of St. Vincent and a chain of the smaller Grenadine Islands, which stretch towards Grenada. The larger Grenadine Islands on the Vincentian side include Bequia, Canouan, Mayreau, Mustique, Prune (Palm) Island, Petit Saint Vincent Island, and Union Island.

The country is administratively divided into six parishes: Charlotte, Grenadines, Saint Andrew, Saint David, Saint George, and Saint Patrick. Kingstown, the capital city and central administrative centre, is in the Parish of St. George.



Figure 1: Map of St. Vincent and the Grenadines

The table below provides further political and socioeconomic data on St. Vincent and the Grenadines at the time of the General Elections.

Type of Government	Parliamentary Democracy (under constitutional monarchy)
Head of State:	King Charles III (since 8 September 2022); represented by Dame Susan Dougan, Governor General (Since 1 Aug 2019)
Head of Government:	Dr. the Hon. Ralph Gonsalves (since 29 March 2001)
Legislative structure:	Unicameral Parliament
Ruling Party	Unity Labour Party (ULP)
Major Political Parties	Unity Labour Party, New Democratic Party (NDP)
National Day	27 October, Independence Day (since 1979)
Population	100,616 (2024 est., World Bank)
Major Ethnicities	African Descent 71.2%, mixed 23.0%, Indigenous 3.0%, East Indian 1.1%, Caucasian 0.8%, Portuguese 0.7% other 0.2% (2012 est., St. Vincent and the Grenadines Statistical Office)
Major Religions	Christian 81%, No Religion 7.5%, unspecified 4.7%, other 4.3%, Rastafarian 1.1%, Muslim 0.1%, Hindu 0.1%
Major Languages	English, Vincentian Creole English, French patois
Major Exports	Recreational Boats (\$11.6M), Wheat Flours (\$10.9M), Animal Food (\$6.84M), Passenger and Cargo Ships (\$2.75M), and Molluscs (\$2.03M) (Data OEC 2023)
Major Export Partners	Croatia (\$10M), Barbados (\$8.86M), United States (\$6.21M), Saint Lucia (\$6.16M), and Saint Kitts and Nevis (\$5.44M) (Data OEC 2023)
Major Imports	Refined Petroleum (\$46.5M), Recreational Boats (\$38.5M), Wheat (\$23.7M), Coal Briquettes (\$22.6M), and Poultry Meat (\$15.6M) (Data OEC 2023)
Major Import Partners	United States (\$217M), Italy (\$41.5M), Trinidad and Tobago (\$40.2M), China (\$36.3M), and United Kingdom (\$36.1M) (Data OEC 2023)
Income Category	Upper-middle income (World Bank)

GDP per capita	US\$11,501.10 (World Bank, 2024)
GDP (real growth rate)	4.1% (World Bank, 2024)
Unemployment Rate	18.06% (Trading Economics, 2024)
Human Development Index	0.798 (UNDP, 2025) Rank: 76 out of 189 countries
Currency	East Caribbean Dollar (XCD, \$EC)
Exchange Rate	2.7 XCD to 1 USD (pegged to USD)
Date of CARICOM Membership	1 May 1974
Last General Elections	5 November 2020

BACKGROUND

Historical Context

St. Vincent and the Grenadines was originally settled by Amerindians, but eventually came under British control in 1783 through the Treaty of Versailles. St. Vincent and the Grenadines would later join the West Indies Federation, which existed from 1958 to 1962, before gaining independence in 1979.

Prior to independence and in the early post-independence period (1955 to 1984), politics was dominated by the two major parties of that era, the People's Political Party (PPP), founded by Ebenezer Joshua, and the St. Vincent Labour Party (SVLP), under Milton Cato. The SVLP was particularly dominant during the 1960s to the mid-1980s when the New Democratic Party (NDP) became the primary political force. In 1994, the SVLP formed an alliance and later merged with the Movement for National Unity (MNU) to form the Unity Labour Party (ULP).

Legislation

Chapter III of the Constitution of St Vincent and the Grenadines provides details on political representation and outlines the basis for the right to vote. Article 27, entitled "Election of Representatives", states:

Each of the constituencies established in accordance with the provisions of section 33 of this Constitution shall return one Representative to the House who shall be directly elected in such manner as may, subject to the provisions of this Constitution, be prescribed by or under any law.

Every Commonwealth citizen of the age of eighteen years or upwards who possesses such qualifications relating to residence or domicile in Saint Vincent as Parliament may prescribe shall, unless he is disqualified by Parliament from registration as a voter for the purpose of electing Representatives, be entitled to be registered as such a voter in accordance with the provisions of any law in that behalf, and no other person may be so registered.

Every person who is registered as aforesaid in any constituency shall, unless he is disqualified by Parliament from voting in that constituency in any election of Representatives, be entitled so to vote in accordance with the provisions of any law in that behalf, and no other person may so vote.

In any election of Representatives the votes shall be given by ballot in such manner as not to disclose how any particular person votes.

Along with the 1979 Constitution, the core electoral law in St. Vincent and the Grenadines is the Representation of the People Act, 1982, which includes the House of Assembly Election Rules. The Act makes provisions for the registration of voters, administrative arrangements for an election, and the conduct of the election of the 15 members of the House of Assembly. The Representation of the People Act also provides for fifteen (15) constituencies as indicated in the map below.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is also guided by the relevant provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which it ratified in 1981, as well as the CARICOM Charter of Civil Society, among other international legal and normative instruments.

Electoral Institutions

The Electoral Office, a department within the Ministry of National Security, Air and Sea Port Development, oversees the country's electoral process. It is governed by the Representation of the People Act. The Electoral Office, which is led by a Supervisor of Elections appointed by the Public Service Commission, ensures that the election machinery is in place to perform the constitutional requirement of transparent, free, and fair elections. The mission of the office is to "provide quality service to the electorate of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, while maintaining an up-to-date electors' list through a continuous registration/re-registration process, thus ensuring the conduct of transparent, free and fair elections." The Electoral Office does not have commissioners as part of its structure to make decisions regarding electoral processes. The law vests those powers in the Supervisor of Elections.

In relation to legal challenges related to the elections, the Representation of the People Act further provides for the High Court to serve as the primary judicial avenue for electoral petitions.

Political and Electoral Landscape

Upon gaining independence, St. Vincent and the Grenadines instituted a Parliamentary Democracy based on the Westminster model. The House of Assembly presently comprises 23 members, with 15 of the members elected for five-year terms in single-seat constituencies. Six (6) members are senators, four (4) of whom are appointed by the Government, while two are appointed by the Opposition. The Attorney-General and Speaker of the House also serve as ex-officio members of the Assembly. Election to the House of Assembly is on a first-past-the-post basis. The parliamentary opposition is the largest minority party following the general elections and is headed by the Leader of the Opposition.

The office of the Governor General executes primarily ceremonial functions, including the opening of the islands' House of Assembly and the appointment of various government officials. Control of the government rests with the elected Prime Minister and his or her cabinet.

Political Parties

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is considered a stable democracy, with no recent politically motivated violence or civil disturbances. Elections are generally peaceful and deemed fair; political parties can organise freely; and there is a history of peaceful transfer of power.

The ULP and NDP have dominated the politics of St. Vincent and the Grenadines for decades. The NDP won elections from 1984 to 2001, including an unprecedented sweep of all 15 elected seats in the National Assembly in the 1989 General Elections. The Unity Labour Party (ULP) defeated the NDP in 2001 and has formed the government since that time. The National Liberation Movement (NLM) also contested the 2025 elections.

2020 General Election

In the general elections in 2020, the ULP secured its fifth term and a parliamentary majority with 9 out of 15 seats in the House of Assembly and 49.3% (32,419 votes) of the popular vote. The NDP won all the six remaining seats with just over 50% (32,900 votes) of the popular vote. The Saint Vincent Green Party (GP) and independent candidates earned 33 votes and 16 votes respectively. Registered voters totaled 98,119 and 65,687 votes were cast for a voter turnout of approximately 67%.

PRE-ELECTION DAY OBSERVATIONS

Dissolution of Parliament

On 28 October 2025, the Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Honourable Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, announced that the next General Election was to be held on 27 November 2025. He also indicated that Nomination Day had been set for 10 November 2025.

The dissolution of Parliament on 28 October 2025 marked the formal end of the parliamentary term and was in keeping with the constitutional requirement that a general election be held within five years from the date of the first sitting of Parliament following the previous election.

Nomination of Candidates

On 10 November 2025, Nomination Day, a total of thirty-two (32) candidates were nominated to contest the General Elections across the fifteen (15) constituencies. The nominated candidates, disaggregated by political party, can be found in the table below.

POLITICAL PARTY	NO. OF CANDIDATES
Unity Labour Party	15
New Democratic Party	15
National Liberation Movement	1
Independent Candidates	1
TOTAL	32

Table 1: Table showing the nominated candidates by political party affiliation

Pre-election Stakeholder Engagement

In the period leading up to polling day, the CEOM held consultations with a range of political, electoral, security, and civil society stakeholders. Meetings were held with Dr. the Honourable Ralph Gonsalves, then Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Leader of the Unity Labour Party (ULP), the Honourable Daniel Cummings, Chairman of the New Democratic Party (NDP), representing Dr. Godwin Friday, then Leader of the Opposition and of the NDP, Dr. Doris Frederick, Leader of the National Liberation Movement (NLM), and Ms. Kenna Questelles, independent candidate.

The CEOM also met with Ms. Dora James, Supervisor of Elections, and Mr. Enville Williams, Commissioner of Police, media practitioners, and representatives of the following organisations:

- St. Vincent and the Grenadines Teachers' Union;
- The Voice of the Disabled;
- National Society for the Blind;
- Public Service Union (PSU);
- Commercial, Technical, and Allied Workers' Union (CTAWU);
- National Workers Union;
- RedRoot SVG Inc;
- National Monitoring and Consultative Mechanism (NMCM);
- Caribbean Women in Leadership, St. Vincent and the Grenadines (CIWiLSVG); and
- Police Welfare Service.

These engagements provided the Mission with perspectives on the political climate, institutional readiness, and key pre-election considerations.

Main Issues Raised by Stakeholders

The CEOM noted that overall, the stakeholders expressed confidence in the ability of the Electoral Office to conduct peaceful and credible elections. The quality of

campaigning was also commended by various stakeholders. Below are several areas of concern highlighted during the consultations.

Preparations made by the Electoral Office

While most stakeholders expressed confidence about the preparedness of the Electoral Office to conduct the elections, issues such as adequate training for and bias in the appointment of electoral officials were highlighted. Concerns were also raised about accommodation for differently-abled persons.

The voters' list and registration process

The manner in which the voters' list was compiled, particularly the conduct of the 15-day special registration exercise, was a recurring complaint. Stakeholders also commented on the manner and timeliness of the distribution of said list to the candidates.

Voter education

Stakeholders commended the voter education resources provided by the Electoral Office; however, at least one stakeholder found it necessary to provide supplementary resources to educate the public.

Campaign financing and use of state resources

Most stakeholders were curious about the source(s) of funding for the purportedly elaborate campaigns run by the two major political parties and considered whether campaign financing or integrity legislation requiring disclosure would remedy this. Comments were also made about the timing of the distribution of building materials and other support for households, which was assumed to be an attempt by the ruling party to influence voters.

External interference in the electoral process

Some stakeholders expressed concern about the presence of persons unconnected to St. Vincent and the Grenadines during the election season and their possible interference in the electoral process. These external parties were allegedly connected to political parties from other CARICOM Member States or external financiers.

Security concerns

Many stakeholders were fearful of possible post-election violence triggered by rhetoric on the campaign trail and other connected factors, including what some perceived to be a desperation on the part of both major political parties to prevail in the elections.

Persons with Disabilities

Stakeholders identified systemic gaps that limited the full participation of persons with disabilities in the electoral process. Chief among these was the lack of a comprehensive legislative framework to protect and guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities. The gap was also reportedly reflected in broader accessibility issues,

including insufficient voter education materials and political content in formats such as Braille, large print, and sign language.

Operational challenges at polling stations were also highlighted. Stakeholders reported that persons with disabilities were not afforded priority access and were generally required to queue alongside able-bodied voters. Additionally, stakeholders noted that voting arrangements did not adequately support independence for blind voters within polling booths, highlighting the need for more inclusive and enabling mechanisms on election day.

ELECTION DAY OBSERVATIONS

On election day, four (4) observer teams were deployed to monitor the conduct of the poll in all of mainland St. Vincent. Time and logistical restrictions prevented observations in the Grenadines. The teams monitored all critical phases of the day's activities by observing the opening of the poll, the conduct of voting, the closing of the poll, and the subsequent counting of ballots.

Opening of the Poll

At the polling stations observed, the majority opened at the prescribed time of 7 a.m. Observers ranked the opening of most polling stations as good, indicating that there were no significant issues and that all necessary criteria were satisfied, including the sufficient supply of the required voting materials, adequate presence of staff, the counting of ballots, and the checking of ballot boxes. Nonetheless, in some instances, the opening was delayed by uncertainty and inexperience on the part of some polling staff during the pre-poll activities and lack of preparation of the places of poll prior to election day. Observers also noted inconsistencies in the procedures adopted by presiding officers across polling stations.

Conduct of the Poll

Across the polling stations observed, the conduct of polling on Election Day was generally orderly and consistent with prescribed electoral procedures. However, the following were observed at several polling stations:

1. Long lines

Most of the polling stations visited at various times during the day had very long lines of electors waiting to vote. It was observed that in some cases, the queues were not necessarily maintained in an orderly fashion. This could be attributed to the number of electors assigned to each polling station and to the level of efficiency with which the process was conducted.

2. The process

Representatives of the two major political parties were present at all stations visited. There were limited reports of campaigning and voter intimidation outside polling stations, although none was observed inside.

Polling was conducted in accordance with established procedures and norms, including the identification of electors, casting of votes in secrecy, the checking of fingers for ink, and the immersion of fingers in ink following the casting of votes. Electors without ID cards were subject to intense scrutiny prior to the administration of oaths, which contributed to delays in some instances.

3. Materials and personnel

All required materials and supplies were present in the appropriate quantities at polling stations. However, the training of poll day workers appeared less than universal. In many instances, the workers adopted practical measures to deal with issues and could clearly benefit from expanded training. This would lead to a more uniform approach to the setting up of the polling stations, use of electoral material and signage, and general execution of election day tasks.

4. Respect for polling station limits

It was observed that in a few instances, party agents were active within the 100-yard boundary. Nonetheless, no steps were taken to prevent these occurrences. While police ranks were present in the immediate vicinity of the polling station, there was no visible presence outside of the polling places.

5. Secrecy of the Vote

Insufficiency of voter education was highlighted by the frequency with which electors encountered issues with the voting process. In a few instances, this resulted in a violation of the secrecy of the ballot.

Closing of the Poll

The closing of the polls was generally conducted according to the established standards and most polling stations observed closed at the stipulated time of 5:00 p.m. Nevertheless, people remaining in line at 5 p.m. were allowed to vote. The counting of the ballots that immediately followed was conducted in an efficient manner, which yielded results in the prescribed form. Again, poll day workers did not conduct the closing and counting process in a uniform manner across polling stations. In some instances, there was also uncertainty about the mode of transport of the completed ballot boxes to the returning officers.

Result of the Poll

The New Democratic Party received the majority of the votes in 14 (fourteen) constituencies while the Unity Labour Party obtained the most votes in the remaining one, following the preliminary counting of ballots for the election. The voter turnout was 62.2%. A summary of the final results is presented below.

Final Results Summary

CONSTITUENCY	Registered Voters	Votes Cast	Rejected	ULP	NDP	INP - Kenna V. Questelles	INP - Doris D. Charles
NORTH WINDWARD	7303	5343	20	2542	2781	-	-
NORTH CENTRAL WINDWARD	5891	3594	24	2577	1193		-
SOUTH CENTRAL WINDWARD	6626	4303	11	1984	2308	-	-
SOUTH WINDWARD	7190	4375	16	1911	2448	-	-
MARRIAQUA	7073	4387	18	1983	2386	-	-
EAST ST. GEORGE	9369	5778	31	2352	3395		-
WEST ST. GEORGE	8025	4815	38	1822	2903	52	-
EAST KINGSTOWN	7418	4474	19	1727	2728	-	-
CENTRAL KINGSTOWN	7677	4420	14	1560	2846	-	-
WEST KINGSTOWN	7226	4169	28	1450	2691	-	-
SOUTH LEEWARD	8627	5260	24	1971	3237		28
CENTRAL LEEWARD	7194	4781	14	2359	2408	-	-
NORTH LEEWARD	6445	4512	20	1966	2526	-	-
NORTHERN GRENADINES	4376	2535	11	339	2185	-	-
SOUTHERN GRENADINES	3084	1790	9	609	1172	-	-
TOTAL	103,524	64,536	297	27,152	37,207	52	28

Source: Electoral Office of St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Post-election Developments

Preliminary results were announced without delay, and the defeated party's prompt concession demonstrated adherence to democratic norms. The post-election period was characterized by stability and a generally peaceful atmosphere. There were no widespread disputes regarding the integrity of the process, although an intent to file petitions was announced by the ULP.¹

¹ The ULP later filed two election petitions with the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court challenging the election of Godwin Friday as parliamentary representative for the Northern Grenadines, and Fitz Bramble as East Kingstown MP. The ULP asked the court to consider their elections as invalid on the basis that they were not qualified to be nominated as candidates, given that they hold Canadian citizenship. The petitions are due to be heard in late July 2026.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations made by the CEOM are provided herein. The guidance offered is founded on international standards and best practices on electoral frameworks, elections management and election observations. It is the hope and expectation of the CEOM that the recommendations will be used to strengthen the democratic processes and institutions within St. Vincent and the Grenadines, thereby upholding the democratic foundation of the nation.

The recommendations of the CARICOM Election Observation Mission to St. Vincent and the Grenadines are outlined below.

1. Create an Independent Electoral Office

Currently, the Electoral Office exists as a department within the Ministry of National Security, Air and Sea Port Development. There was a concern that this relationship was contrary to the Representation of the People Act and undermined the independence of the Supervisor of Elections.

An independent office with a dedicated source of funding and clear method of appointment of officials would lend to greater transparency in the process, especially in a polarised electoral environment.

2. Enhance Training of Election Workers for Procedural Consistency and Competence

Overall performance was strong; however, isolated deviations from established procedures were noted, including instances where the backs of voting booths faced thoroughfares and irregular adherence to finger inspection procedure before it is dipped in ink.

Training should therefore reinforce strict procedural adherence, with greater emphasis on practical application and hands-on simulation, to ensure uniform competence across all polling staff.

3. Expand Voter and Civic Education

This would enable electors to participate more meaningfully in the process and to augment enhanced training of election days workers, all in an effort to have a more efficient electoral process.

4. Advance Campaign Finance Transparency and Oversight

The CEOM recommends the adoption of political finance legislation and corresponding regulations aimed at enhancing transparency, fairness, and accountability within the electoral process by regulating the financial activities of

political parties and candidates. The mission notes that, while the framework establishes clear timelines for disclosure and reporting, these obligations primarily take effect after the campaign period, with no requirement for pre-election disclosure. As a result, voters may have limited access to financial information that could inform their decision-making prior to election day.

5. Limit the Number of Electors at Polling Stations

The long lines that attended polling stations show a clear need for better management of polling stations, including careful attention to the number of assigned electors per station. This would result in more efficiency in the conduct of the poll, especially in locations where there are multiple polling stations.

6. Improve Polling Station Infrastructure and Accessibility

Observers acknowledged proactive efforts in accommodating persons with disabilities and the elderly. Nonetheless, further improvements are required to ensure a fully accessible and comfortable voting experience since a number of polling stations were observed to present challenges in terms of physical accessibility, owing to rugged terrain and the location of some polling stations on upper floors without adequate access provisions. In several instances, observers reported that individuals using wheelchairs required assistance from relatives or friends to enter such polling stations, highlighting the need for improved accessibility measures.

CONCLUSION

The General Elections conducted on 27 November 2025 reflected the collective will of the voters, who were able to cast their ballots on polling day without intimidation or harassment. The results of the General Elections further reinforced their commitment to the democratic process.

The Mission was successfully able to observe proceedings at a significant number of polling stations on mainland St. Vincent. In their observations, most of the election workers competently executed their duties, allowing for a generally smooth voting process on polling day. Polling station officials generally upheld the electoral standards and protected the democratic foundation of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

In moving forward, the CARICOM Election Observation Mission recommends that the various aspects of election proceedings, as detailed in this report, be carefully reviewed and analysed. In this way, the overall electoral process can be enhanced for future elections.

The CEOM applauds the Electoral Office of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the poll workers, the political parties and their candidates, the independent candidates, the security forces, the media, and the electorate for their commitment and discipline in upholding the democratic process in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, resulting in a credible and peaceful election. The CARICOM Election Observation Mission also

wishes to thank the people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines for their warm welcome and cooperation, which contributed to the success of this endeavour.

Finally, I wish to extend my gratitude to the CARICOM Secretariat for allowing me the opportunity to complete this important assignment as Chief of Mission in support of the democratic process within the Caribbean Community.

Sase R. Gunraj
Chief of Mission

ARRIVAL STATEMENT

ARRIVAL STATEMENT | **CARICOM Election Observation Mission** to the General Elections of St Vincent and the Grenadines

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) has mounted a ten-member **CARICOM Election Observation Mission (CEOM)** to observe the General Elections of St. Vincent and the Grenadines scheduled for 27 November 2025.

The Mission was deployed in response to an invitation extended by the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, in a letter dated 2 October 2025. The **CARICOM Election Observation Mission** will be in the country for the period 20-29 November 2025.

The Mission comprises senior electoral and other officials from seven **CARICOM Member States**, as well as three members of the **CARICOM Secretariat**, who will provide administrative and logistical support.

The **CEOM** is headed by the Chief of Mission, **Mr. Sase R. Gunraj**, Commissioner, Guyana Elections Commission. The other members of the **CEOM** are as follows:

1. **Mr. Clovis St. Romain**, Member, Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission (Antigua and Barbuda);
2. **His Honour Arthur Eugene Holder**, SC. MP, Speaker of the House of Assembly (Barbados);
3. **Ms. Anthea Joseph**, Chief Elections Officer, Electoral Commission (Dominica);
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5. **Mrs. Dorinnie Irma**, Member of the Independent Electoral Council (Suriname); and
6. **Ms. Gillian Macintyre**, Chair of the Human Resource Sub Committee, Elections and Boundaries Commission (Trinidad and Tobago).

The **CEOM** is supported by the following **CARICOM Secretariat staff**:

1. **Ms. Shae-Alicia Lewis**, Programme Manager, Community Relations;
2. **Mr. Irvin Brown**, Project Officer, Foreign and Community Relations; and
3. **Ms. Serojnie Seetaram**, Senior Secretary, Foreign and Community Relations.

The Chief of Mission and **CARICOM Secretariat staff**, who comprise the Core Group, arrived in St. Vincent and the Grenadines on 20 November 2025. The remaining members of the observation team are expected to arrive by 23 November 2025.

To date, the **CEOM** has met with **the Honourable Daniel Cummings**, Chairman of the New Democratic Party (NDP), representing **Dr. Godwin Friday**, Leader of the Opposition and of the NDP, and **Dr. Doris Frederick**, Leader of the National Liberation Movement (NLM). We have also met with representatives of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Teachers' Union, the Voice of the Disabled, and the media.

In the coming days, the **CEOM** is scheduled to meet with **Dr. the Honourable Ralph Gonsalves**, Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Leader of the Unity Labour Party (ULP); **Ms. Dora James**, Supervisor of Elections; and **Mr. Enville Williams**, Commissioner of Police. The team will also engage with other political actors and civil society institutions. These engagements are expected to provide the **CEOM** with a first-hand account of the pre-election atmosphere and assess the level of preparedness for the holding of the elections.

The role of the **CEOM Observers** on Election Day is to observe the electoral process, including preparations for the start of the poll, the casting of votes, the closure of the polling stations, the counting of the ballots, and the declaration of results. The **CEOM** will also assess the immediate post-election atmosphere.

Following the conclusion of the Election Day activities on 27 November 2025, and prior to the departure of the **CEOM** on 29 November 2025, a Preliminary Statement will be issued, outlining the Mission's initial assessment of the electoral process.

A detailed Final Report providing a summary of the Mission's comprehensive findings and recommendations will subsequently be prepared. This Report will be submitted to **Dr. Carla Barnett**, Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community, and subsequently made public.

The **CARICOM Election Observation Mission** values this opportunity to support the democratic process in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The Mission expresses its appreciation for the warm welcome and cooperation received since its arrival and extends its best wishes to the electorate as they prepare to go to the polls.

SASE R. GUNRAJ
CHIEF OF MISSION
21 November 2025

**DEPLOYMENT OF CARICOM ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION
TO ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES**

Constituency	Team
North Windward North Central Windward	Karina Thomas Anthea Joseph
South Windward Marriaqua South Central Windward	Irvin Brown Gillian Macintyre
West Kingstown Central Kingstown East Kingstown West St. George East St. George	Sase Gunraj Hon. Arthur Holder
North Leeward Central Leeward South Leeward	Clovis St. Romain Dorinnie Irma

FINAL RESULTS SUMMARY**Final Results Summary**

CONSTITUENCY	Registered Voters	Votes Cast	Rejected	ULP	NDP	INP -Kenna V. Questelles	INP - Doris D. Charles
NORTH WINDWARD	7303	5343	20	2542	2781	-	-
NORTH CENTRAL WINDWARD	5891	3594	24	2577	1193		-
SOUTH CENTRAL WINDWARD	6626	4303	11	1984	2308	-	-
SOUTH WINDWARD	7190	4375	16	1911	2448	-	-
MARRIAQUA	7073	4387	18	1983	2386	-	-
EAST ST. GEORGE	9369	5778	31	2352	3395		-
WEST ST. GEORGE	8025	4815	38	1822	2903	52	-
EAST KINGSTOWN	7418	4474	19	1727	2728	-	-
CENTRAL KINGSTOWN	7677	4420	14	1560	2846	-	-
WEST KINGSTOWN	7226	4169	28	1450	2691	-	-
SOUTH LEEWARD	8627	5260	24	1971	3237		28
CENTRAL LEEWARD	7194	4781	14	2359	2408	-	-
NORTH LEEWARD	6445	4512	20	1966	2526	-	-
NORTHERN GRENADINES	4376	2535	11	339	2185	-	-
SOUTHERN GRENADINES	3084	1790	9	609	1172	-	-
TOTAL	103,524	64,536	297	27,152	37,207	52	28

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

In response to an invitation extended by the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the **Caribbean Community (CARICOM)** mounted a ten-member **CARICOM Election Observation Mission (CEOM)** to observe the General Elections held on 27 November 2025. The Mission is in keeping with the commitment of Heads of Government of the **Caribbean Community (CARICOM)** to support Member States, on their request, by providing an independent, impartial, and honest assessment of the preparations for, and conduct of General Elections.

The **CARICOM Election Observation Mission** is comprised of senior electoral and other officials from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago, as well as three members of the **CARICOM Secretariat**, who provide administrative and logistical support.

To adequately provide the independent, impartial, and honest assessment referenced earlier, the **CEOM** set out to:

1. Observe the entire election process in the host country, including the general atmosphere and environmental conditions under which the elections were being conducted; the activities at the polling stations on the day of the elections; the counting and tabulation of votes after the closing of the polls; and the political climate after the announcement of the results;
2. Collect qualitative and quantitative data regarding the entire election process, including the general administration of the election by the election officials, and the conduct of stakeholders, such as political actors, civil society, the media, and the voting public at large; and
3. Identify opportunities for improvement and make appropriate and timely recommendations.

Pre-Election Period

During the pre-election period, the **CEOM** engaged several stakeholders to ascertain critical information on the country's electoral laws and practices. These engagements aided in the further understanding of the political culture and broader environment within which the elections were being held.

In this context, the **CEOM** met with **Dr. the Honourable Ralph Gonsalves**, Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Leader of the Unity Labour Party (ULP) and completed a series of engagements with the Honourable Daniel Cummings, Chairman of the New Democratic Party (NDP), representing **Dr. the Honourable Godwin**

Friday, Leader of the Opposition and of the NDP, **Dr. Doris Frederick**, Leader of the National Liberation Movement (NLM), and **Ms. Kenna Questelles**, independent candidate for West St. George.

The **CEOM** also engaged civic organisations, including representatives of:

St. Vincent and the Grenadines Teachers' Union;
The Voice of the Disabled;
National Society for the Blind;
Public Service Union (PSU);
RedRoot SVG Inc;
National Monitoring and Consultative Mechanism (NMCM);
Caribbean Women in Leadership, St. Vincent and the Grenadines (CIWiLSVG);
Police Welfare Service;
National Workers Union;
Commercial, Technical, and Allied Workers' Union (CTAWU); and
Media.

The **CEOM** also met with **Ms. Dora James**, Supervisor of Elections, and **Mr. Enville Williams**, Commissioner of Police, as well as a team of senior officers from the Royal St. Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force.

During these engagements, the main issues below were raised.

Preparations made by the Electoral Office: While most stakeholders expressed confidence about the preparedness of the Electoral Office to conduct the elections, issues such as adequate training for and bias in the appointment of electoral officials were highlighted. Concerns were also raised about accommodation for differently-abled persons.

The voters' list and the registration process: The manner in which the voters' list was compiled, particularly the conduct of the 15-day special registration exercise, was a recurring complaint. Stakeholders also commented on the manner and timeliness of the distribution of said list to the candidates.

Voter education: Stakeholders commended the voter education resources provided by the Electoral Office; however, at least one stakeholder found it necessary to provide supplementary resources to educate the public.

Campaign financing and use of state resources: Most stakeholders were curious about the source(s) of funding for the purportedly elaborate campaigns run by the two major political parties and considered whether campaign financing or integrity legislation requiring disclosure would remedy this. Comments were also made about the use of state resources, particularly the timing thereof, to allegedly influence voters.

External interference in the electoral process: Stakeholders expressed concern about the presence of persons unconnected to St. Vincent and the Grenadines during the election season and their possible interference in the electoral process.

Security concerns: Stakeholders were fearful of possible post-election violence triggered by rhetoric on the campaign trail and other connected factors.

Election Day Observations

The **CEOM** team conducted observation in over 85 percent of polling stations across mainland St. Vincent. Observation included the opening of the polls, the voting process throughout the day, the closing of polls, and the counting process.

A summary of the observation follows:

Opening of Polls

Polls generally opened on time at 7 a.m. and there was a sufficient supply of the required voting materials at all polling stations. Nonetheless, in some instances, the opening was delayed by uncertainty and inexperience on the part of some polling staff during the pre-poll activities and lack of preparation of the places of poll prior to Election Day. Observers also noted inconsistencies in the procedures adopted by presiding officers across polling stations.

Voting Process

Throughout the day, observers noted long lines at several polling stations caused by inadequate access to, ingress, egress, and flow of electors in and out of polling stations. This was compounded in some instances by insufficient poll staff and large numbers of electors assigned to certain polling stations.

It was observed that in instances where party agents were active within the 100-yard boundary, no steps were taken to prevent these occurrences. While police ranks were present in the immediate vicinity of the polling station, there was no visible presence outside of the polling places.

Insufficiency of voter education was highlighted by the frequency with which electors encountered issues with the voting process. In a few instances, this resulted in a violation of the secrecy of the ballot.

Closing

At the closing of the polls at 5 p.m., people remaining in line were allowed to vote. There was adherence to the specified closing procedures. Nonetheless, as with the opening of polls, the method utilised varied by polling station and presiding officer. In some instances, there was also uncertainty about the mode of transport of the completed ballot boxes to the returning officers.

Conclusion

While there were some operational and staffing challenges, overall, the General Elections in St. Vincent and the Grenadines were orderly, peaceful, and conducted in an atmosphere of robust civic engagement and camaraderie among the electorate.

The **CEOM** will prepare a full report for submission to the Secretary-General of the **Caribbean Community (CARICOM)**, which will include recommendations for the conduct of future elections in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The **CARICOM Election Observation Mission** wishes to express gratitude to the leaders of the political parties, civil society groups, other stakeholders, the media, and the people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines for their warm welcome and cooperation, which contributed to the success of this endeavour.

SASE R. GUNRAJ
CHIEF OF MISSION

28 November 2025