

Message from Miss Peggy Da Silva
Chief Nursing Officer, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
& Chairman of the Regional Nursing Body

Fellow colleagues,

Season's greetings to you and your family.

Often our job is one of high pressure, attention to detail, intent on saving lives or giving hope to someone who is just about to lose it because of health related challenges. As we continue our celebrations in this festive season; celebrating the birth of the Christ child, Jesus, I'd also like to celebrate us as Nurses and Midwives.

We have done much as Nurses and Midwives to improve the health and wellbeing of our peoples in the region. However, we are conscious that there is much work still to be done. The 72nd World Health Assembly has designated 2020 as The International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife. This decision effectively shines a global spotlight on Nursing and Midwifery.

The *Nursing Now Campaign*, One of the biggest events in 2020, was launched in February 2018 across 6 regions. It is a World Health Organization- International Council of Nurses (WHO-ICN) collaboration which aims to position Nurses and Midwives as integral partners in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The global campaign will coincide with the 200th birthday celebration of Florence Nightingale but will run until December 31st, 2020. Several of our countries have launched Nursing Now Campaigns within the region. This is very commendable.

The strengthening of Nursing and Midwifery is pivotal for the achievement of the SDGs with its 17 goals and 169 targets; Universal Access to Health care and Universal Health Coverage.

We have much to celebrate. We have achieved much; such as the completion of our Strategic Plan for 2020-2024. The Year 2020 is deemed the year of perfect vision...I urge us not to be myopic in our view, but expand our peripheral vision to embrace the opportunities as well as challenges that await us. I also urge us to coalesce our collective professional and intellectual resources for repositioning Nursing and Midwifery in the region.

Today I express sincere and profound gratitude to all. I deeply appreciate your commitment in consistently and selflessly giving of your time, energy and effort towards the strengthening of Nursing and Midwifery throughout the region. To our spouses, children, stakeholders and collaborators, we say thank you and look forward to continued collaborative efforts towards the strengthening of Nursing and Midwifery and the achievement of the SDG's.

As 2020 dawns, and as we celebrate the birth of a new era, a new decade, the Year of the Nurse and Midwife, Florence Nightingale's 200th birthday, let us continue to be strategic in our operations; working towards perfecting our vision and leading our team as visionary leaders.

May God continue to bless us all as we redouble our efforts and multiply our successes in 2020 and beyond!!!