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NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEMO TO CONDUCT TSUNAMI EVACUATION DRILL EXERCISE IN UNION ISLAND TO TEST UNION ISLAND TSUNAMI EVACUATION PLAN

The National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO) will conduct a Tsunami Evacuation Drill in Union Island on Thursday 5th March, 2020.

The main objective of the Tsunami Evacuation Drill is to test the Tsunami Inundation Evacuation Plans developed for Clifton and Ashton Union Island under the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and its Caribbean Tsunami Information Centre Tsunami Recognition Programme.

Residents of Union Island, students of the Mary Hutchinson and Stephanie Browne Government Schools and owners and operators of businesses along the coastal areas will participate in this exercise. According to Director of the National Emergency Management Organisation, Michelle Forbes, participation in the Tsunami Evacuation Drill will give residents a better understanding of where they live or operate business in relation to the tsunami risk, the areas likely to be flooded by the tsunami waves and the assembly areas outside the tsunami inundation zone.

Miss Forbes is also appealing to the public that this is just an exercise and not a real event. It is just an exercise to simulate or pretend that an earthquake occurred off the coast of Venezuela and present a Tsunami Threat to Union Island. NEMO will activate the National Tsunami Warning Protocols for St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the residents of Union Island will also activate the Tsunami Evacuation Plan for Union Island.

Once again the public is asked to note that this is just a pretend scenario and this means the Union Island is not under a real Tsunami Threat.

The Tsunami Evacuation Drill Exercise will be held in collaboration with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and its Caribbean Tsunami Information Centre (UNESCO/IOC-CTIC) and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) with funding from the United States Agency for International Development Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA).

The Exercise will be held on Thursday from 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon.

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Additional Information:

The National Emergency Management Organisation is implementing the UNESCO IOC CARIBE EWS Tsunami Ready Pilot Programme in the Parish of St. George and Union Island. This project is funded by the USAID/OFDA with support from the Caribbean Tsunami Warning Protocol Programme of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The project commenced in October 2018 and will end on March 31, 2020. Some of the activities included in this project are:

- Development and presentation of Tsunami Inundation Maps
- Capacity building training for tsunami evacuation mapping
- Fabrication and installation of tsunami signage
- Development and review of Tsunami Standard Operating Procedures for St, Vincent and the Grenadines
- Establishment of a National Tsunami Ready Board.