

**NATIONAL ADDRESS BY PRIME MINISTER TILLMAN THOMAS**  
**ON THE OCCASION OF KIRANI'S GOLD MEDAL PERFORMANCE**  
**AT THE IAAF CHAMPIONSHIPS 2011**  
**IN DAEGU, SOUTH KOREA**

**St. George's, August 30, 2011** – The Grenada Government and the National Democratic Congress (NDC) have described star athlete, Kirani James, as a “great Grenadian,” saying Tuesday’s victory in the World Championship is a “momentous occasion” for the nation.

In the final of the 400 meters in Daegu, South Korea, James outran his competitors to claim the gold medal in a personal best time of 44.60 seconds.

Celebrations immediately erupted in Grenadian communities in the Diaspora and at home, including in James’ hometown of Gouyave, St. John. The celebrants included Prime Minister Tillman Thomas and Sports Minister, Patrick Simmons, who visited St. John in the carnival-like activities.

“Kirani is a great Grenadian who continues to make us all proud,” a government official said. “He is the pride of his family, his community, the nation and the Caribbean.”

The official also paid tribute to Rondell Bartholomew, another Grenadian who was a finalist in the 400 meters. Bartholomew, who is from St. Patrick, placed sixth.

“Rondell gave of his best and, like Kirani, has raised our profile on the athletic and world stage.”

Senator Arley Gill, Public Relations Officer of the ruling NDC, hailed the efforts of James and Bartholomew.

“Grenada owes a ton of gratitude to these two young men. It was a momentous occasion on Tuesday watching our small nation represented by two athletes in the final of World Championship 400 meters,” Sen. Gill said.

“The National Democratic Congress is delighted in the outcome of the race, especially the victory of Kirani. We congratulate him.”

James, who turns 19 on Thursday, was a student at the University of Alabama until recently deciding to become a professional athlete.

Commenting on his victory after the race, James said: "It's a great feeling, but it's great just being here representing my country.”

Olympic champion LaShawn Merritt, who was second in Tuesday’s race, described the Grenadian as “a great athlete.”

Prior to James, the best Grenadian in international track was Alleyne Francique. He was a winner and record holder at the World Indoor Championship.

