



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Tour of Tamana Intech Park

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ADDRESS BY

SENATOR THE HONOURABLE PAULA GOPEE-SCOON
MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

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10 FEBRUARY, 2017

Good morning

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am honoured to welcome you to the Caribbean's largest science and technology park – Tamana InTech Park (TIP). This Park, which spans 1,100 acres of land, is guaranteed to increase Trinidad and Tobago's visibility on the global map as a commercial centre primarily for technology and innovation.

HISTORY OF TAMANA INTECH PARK

Ladies and gentlemen, as you may be aware, it was the People's National Movement that had the foresight and that first envisioned a fully developed Science and Industrial Park with state-of-the-art infrastructure and support systems, where new technologies could flourish and companies in high value manufacturing and services could operate.

In fact, the concept for this Park was originally put forward in the 1980s as part of Trinidad and Tobago's National Physical Development Plan, which was meant to serve as a catalyst for entrepreneurship, research, development and innovation. Subsequently, critical research and analysis, as well as in-depth feasibility studies were conducted, to ensure that the Park was developed in accordance with international best practices. Several areas throughout Trinidad and Tobago were considered to house the Park, including San Fernando and Chaguaramas. However, Wallerfield was selected because it met all the criteria that are critical to the success of a Park of this nature. Construction commenced in 2006 under a PNM Administration and now, over a decade later, we are here to fully realize that vision of a world-class Science and Industrial Park.

In 2010 when the PNM demitted office, over 75% of the Project was completed. From 2010-2015, the former Administration sought to outfit the Flagship Building (which was largely completed by 2010) with little or no emphasis placed on developing lots for the tenanting of companies and this is why we are here today.

In September 2015, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, through the Evolving TecKnologies and Enterprise Development Company Limited (eTecK) prioritized the completion of Tamana InTech Park, and in particular, the civil engineering works on 21 lots (over 74 acres) and the fiber optic network and electrification of the Park. I am pleased to say that all of these Works are complete, and all within budget.

CURRENT STATUS OF TIP

Today, the Tamana InTech Park can boast of the following:

- A completed and partially tenanted Flagship Building with 130,000 sq. ft. of office space
- 21 lots ranging from 0.35 to 8.38 hectares each
- Natural gas supply
- Street lighting and a 132 kilo-VoltAmps T&TEC substation
- A Utility Building
- Potable water
- A Waste water treatment plant
- Telecom/Fibre Optic infrastructure
- Road and drainage network

IMPACT OF TAMANA INTECH PARK

With weaker energy prices and increased competition, there is an urgent need more than ever to diversify the economy. But today's diversification is different from diversification decades ago. The key differentiator is perhaps science and technology. Science and technology not only allow for increased efficiency and productivity for existing firms and sectors, but in and of itself, is a vast and growing industry that can attract invaluable foreign direct investment. This is important for developing countries, but especially important for an energy-exporting economy such as Trinidad and Tobago.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is on this basis that we see the critical role Tamana InTech Park plays in the advancement of Trinidad and Tobago. This Technology Park is a great step in becoming an innovation-driven economy. It is envisaged that TIP will be home to major technology players and perhaps a place where groundbreaking innovative ideas emerge. Very importantly and in line with the top Science and Technology Parks in the world, Tamana will have a unique blend of environmental appeal along with industrialization. To reinforce the appeal of the Park, one of its largest tenants, The University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT), which may commence operations in the Park as early as September 2017, will offer research and development facilities, as well as a pool of industry specialists who can be harnessed to attain the highest standards of performance required to be globally competitive. Furthermore, the presence of UTT at Tamana will create the necessary synergies between industry and academia required for cutting-edge research and managing innovation and intellectual property. Remember, while Tamana's core objective is to act as a catalyst for national economic development, it also serves to facilitate the knowledge transfer from universities to companies, and vice-versa.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

While Tamana InTech Park will be one part of our proposed national Special Economic Zones regime, it will unequivocally be the focal point for advanced industries that bring together innovation, high-value products and services, premium quality investments—both domestic and foreign, that will transform our national economy and raise our profile internationally. In addition to Business Process Outsourcing (BPO), Tamana will offer unique investment opportunities in other ICT areas such as Software Development and Animation, as well as High-value Manufacturing .These are areas that in some instances are new or nascent to Trinidad and Tobago, and we recognize the need to provide tailor-made incentives and terms and conditions to attract the best and most promising firms from across the Americas, Europe, Africa and Asia.

BUSINESS PROCESS OUTSOURCING

In the area of BPOs, some countries have a long history and are better positioned than others. Those that have sustained success in attracting diverse investments in BPOs have an advantage by complementing traditional BPO skills with the requisite soft skills that machines cannot replace. Trinidad and Tobago definitely has the necessary prerequisites to develop a robust and attractive BPO sector, which is indicative of investments by companies such as Scotiabank in recent years.

ANIMATION

The size of the global animation industry was about USD244 billion in 2015 and one of the fastest growing industries today. Very promising for Trinidad and Tobago is the rapidly expanding outsourced computer animation production market, which is increasingly being tapped by North American and European film and television program producers. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago intends to tap into this lucrative market and is investing strategically to develop our already advanced human capital.

IT-ENABLED SERVICES

Given the complexity of the global economy, the high level of competition among and within countries for foreign direct investment, the need for developing countries to fully exploit their human potential, and the growing demand for services, policy-makers have an important role in providing the space and infrastructure to facilitate firms in the area of ICT, and in particular, Information Technology-enabled Services. To take advantage of these opportunities, I am pleased to indicate that the Ministry of Trade and Industry is working with the Ministry of Planning and Development on an IDB-funded programme – the Global Services Promotion Programme. This Programme is designed to advance Trinidad and Tobago's positioning as a renowned location for global provision of IT-enabled Services (ITeS) and is expected to increase exports and employment within the ICT sector.

To underscore this Government's commitment to diversification and more specially, the IT-enabled Services sector, significant effort and resources have been directed to visualize, create and operationalize TIP, among other strategies being applied holistically to the sector. This Park not only reflects our resolve to create a space in which firms can confidently and comfortably set root and grow, but it also underscores our commitment to create opportunities for our highly skilled and educated population. Ladies and gentlemen, the main goal for the TIP at this time is to ensure its full operationalization through tenanting. In this regard, as part of the thrust to diversify the economy towards industries outside of the energy sector, the core activities of TIP will be focused around the following sectors:

- ICT – 4 lots have been provisionally allocated;
- Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) – 2 lots have been provisionally allocated;
- Data processing / centres – 4 lots have been provisionally allocated;
- Animation and software development – 3 lots have been provisionally allocated;
- High value manufacturing / assembly – 3 lots have been provisionally allocated; and
- Financial Services – 5 lots have been provisionally allocated.

The Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago has agreed that the tenanting of TIP will be led by investTT, which has recently completed a new strategic plan for the period 2017-2020. It is envisaged that investTT will be restructured to more effectively facilitate investors' needs.

CONCLUSION

Ladies and gentlemen, as I close, I am sure you will all agree that the diversification and strengthening of the non-energy sectors is critical to the future of Trinidad and Tobago. The aim of TIP therefore is not only to be the catalyst for economic activity and growth within the ICT sector, but aid in the ultimate goal of diversification, while placing Trinidad and Tobago as the premier investment destination of the region.