



Media Release

LOCAL MUSIC INDUSTRY IMPORTANT TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF T&T

February 18, 2017:- The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) in collaboration with its state agency and subsidiary company, The Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited and the Trinidad and Tobago Music Company Limited hosted a Workshop on Friday 17 February, 2017 at the National Academy of Performing Arts, Port of Spain on the Business of Calypso, featuring, Dr. Linda Mc Cartha Monica Sandy- Lewis also known as Calypso Rose.

Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry, in delivering the featured address indicated that, ***'Calypso Rose is an outstanding example of a Calypsonian who has excelled and shattered the proverbial glass ceiling in the process. She made her way into the calypso fraternity, at a time when this art form was primarily male dominated, and became the first female Road March winner and the first woman to win the Calypso Monarch title. She also copped the Calypso Queen title for five consecutive years from 1972 to 1977.'***

Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon assured members of the audience that, ***'the Government of Trinidad and Tobago appreciates and understands the social, cultural and economic importance of Calypso Music to our nation and beyond. Calypso Rose, in collecting her French Grammy, signalled that Calypso was not limited to any country, any language, any culture, or any gender. Indeed, this Government remains fully committed to the development of the Creative Sector of which music, indigenous to Trinidad and Tobago, is a key component. In fact, this facility, the National Academy for the Performing Arts, is testament to our Government's vision to diversify the economy through investment in infrastructure to bolster the Creative Industry.'***

According to Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, ***'in order to succeed, small and medium enterprises in the Music Industry must have greater access to financial support. The Ministry of Trade and Industry, for instance, has been working with the World Bank to establish a Secured Transaction and Collateral Registry where movable property would serve as collateral. By that I mean non-traditional assets such as equipment can be used as collateral. Another area which needs strengthening is that of intellectual property. Those wanting to make a career***

in the Music Industry, including songwriters, singers and producers must therefore be well-versed with assessing the value of their intellectual property and must use mechanisms to protect these assets to ensure their rightful income streams.'

According to Price Waterhouse Coopers, revenue from the global Music Industry is expected to grow from 42.93 billion U.S. dollars in 2015 to just over 47.7 billion in 2020. Trinidad and Tobago's burgeoning Music Industry is therefore not only critical to the preservation of the culture but also to the country's sustainable development. Production, sound engineering, composing, recording and publishing were highlighted as viable career choices. Also referenced was a 2016 report by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) which listed the creative arts as an industry with the potential for the highest employment in Trinidad and Tobago along with fields such as medicine and engineering, according to data from the University of the West Indies.

During a panel discussion, the dynamic Calypso Rose gave the audience which comprised of budding and established artistes, a road map to her success. She stated that, ***'God said I made you in my own image and likeness. Anything you want in life you can get it. As long as you build your faith and hope and you say I will, I will, I will, you are going to succeed.'*** Calypso Rose also made a call for culture to be taught in the Nation's Schools. ***'I have taken Trinidad and Tobago's culture, our Carnival all over the world. We need to teach culture in the schools in Trinidad and Tobago,'*** she said.

In delivering remarks, Dr. the Honourable Nyan Gadsby-Dolly, Minister of Community Development, Culture and the Arts affirmed that, ***'most times we look at Carnival as participatory. How we participate, how we sing, how we enjoy our Carnival and we tend not to look at it from the aspect of what it can bring for us because the enjoyment tends to be what we concentrate on. But we are at a time now, where others have taken their creative arts and done so much with it and a time where our oil and gas reserves are being threatened ... this is the time now where we have to look at our creativity as a way for diversification and as a way for bringing economic returns into the country.'***

The workshop served as a medium through which calypso and the people who make it a reality, could gain insights into commercializing their skills and expanding opportunities. It included panel discussions on the story and history of Calypso Rose; essentials in composing calypso – then and now; calypso music production and the music business/finance /marketing of calypso.

The panellists comprised distinguished contributors in the local music industry. Among the areas highlighted were the benefits of ongoing training to perfect one's art or performance, hard work and commitment, valuing local creativity, protecting one's intellectual property, strategising for commercial/financial viability, branding, and online marketing. Effective communication, including between the more experienced music entrepreneurs and those less experienced, was also stressed.