



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

Opening Ceremony of the Creative and Cultural Industries Workshop

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FEATURE ADDRESS
SENATOR THE HONOURABLE PAULA GOPEE-SCOON
MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY
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Hilton Trinidad

Salutations

- Ms. Lara Quentrall-Thomas, President, Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries (TTCSI)
- Members of the Board of Directors, Management and Staff of Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries (TTCSI)
- Ag, Permanent Secretary Ministry of Trade and Industry Ms Frances Seignoret
- Representative from the Delegation of the European Union to T&T Mr. Ulrich Thiessen
- Services Specialist, Caribbean Export Development Agency Ms. Allyson Francis
- Technical Trade Advisor, GIZ Ms. Sanya Alleyne
- Representatives from Regional and International Organizations
- Senior Government Officials
- Distinguished guests
- Members of the media
- Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning

It is indeed a pleasure to bring greetings at the opening of this workshop. Let me take this opportunity to welcome the regional participants who are here to take part in this valuable exercise. The Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries (TTCSI) is to be commended for organizing this event, in collaboration with the European Union, GIZ, German Cooperation and the Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export) to sensitize participants to the export opportunities available for creative and cultural industries under the CARIFORUM-EUROPEAN UNION Economic Partnership Agreement (EU-EPA).

In 2006, two years before the EPA was signed, Caribbean academic Dr Keith Nurse and colleagues, pointed out that the term creative and cultural industries describes an area in which Caribbean countries have some comparative advantage in production as well as a competitive one. They cited the music industry, fashion, audio visual, the performing arts, and festivals, among others, as most pertinent to the Caribbean region.

Dr Nurse and his team suggested that the Caribbean could benefit from increased commercialisation of the arts in the expanding digital and knowledge economy, as well as from the growing acceptance by developed countries of different genres and world cultures. Nurse et al concluded therefore that "... investing in the cultural/creative industries provides worthwhile returns because it draws on the creativity of regional artists, cultural entrepreneurs, and communities, generates high value-added forms of employment, production, and exports, and

aids in the competitiveness of tourism and other sectors through market diversification, destination branding, and media value.”

Today, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago recognizes our attachment to the creative sector that the country must move away from its full dependence on oil and natural gas exports, and that the possibilities within the creative and cultural industries to contribute to export diversification must be exploited. As such, in keeping with the National Development Strategy, our Vision 2030, the sector’s development has been prioritised as we aim to build globally competitive businesses and support firms producing high value products and services that can compete in export markets.

It is against this background, that the Government supports the TTCSI’s work to promote and develop the services sector, including creative and cultural industries.

According to UNESCO, such industries can be defined as “those sectors of organized activity that have as their main objective the production or reproduction, the promotion, distribution or commercialization of goods, services and activities of content derived from cultural, artistic or heritage origins.” Given that the Caribbean region is teeming with such services and activities, the TTCSI’s partnership with Caribbean Export, the EU, GIZ and German Cooperation is important to spur the advancement of the region’s creative entrepreneurs.

We recognize the work of GIZ, in supporting sustainable development and regional integration in the Caribbean, as well as the strengthening of private sector competitiveness to access the EU market. But, more importantly in this particular instance, GIZ is here to ensure that the relevant regional and national institutions in both the public and private sectors meet the requirements of the CARIFORUM- EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EU-EPA). Trinidad and Tobago and, I am certain, the countries in the wider Caribbean are appreciative of the continued support of the GIZ.

Ladies and gentlemen, Carnival 2019 concluded a mere three (3) weeks ago, where the country displayed an abundance of creative and cultural wealth through its various art forms. The “greatest show on earth” was the culmination of high quality work accomplished by talented citizens in multiple art forms which undoubtedly can continue throughout the calendar year. Bear in mind, that Trinidad and Tobago’s carnival is but one example of such creativity we can

add CARIFESTA that can be commercialized as a product that not only adds value to a country's GDP, but also contributes as a significant export to the rest of the world.

As you may be aware, the Creative Industries are billion dollar global industries in their own right. According to a 2018 report from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the size of the global market for creative goods has expanded substantially, more than doubling in size from US \$208 billion in 2002 to US \$509 billion in 2015.

Further, while it is generally difficult to capture data on trade in services in Small Island Developing States (SIDS), it is instructive to note that, according to UNCTAD, the average annual growth rate of trade in creative services between 2011 and 2015 for developed countries was at 4.3 per cent, more than double that of all services. It was further indicated that this positive trend was maintained despite the global slowdown in overall trade in services in 2014. This is evidence indeed of the creative sector's growing strength globally and we must be part of that.

Therefore if the region is to monetize its creative talent, we must establish mechanisms to harness, develop and commercialize that talent.

This workshop is therefore opportune as those attending can learn of the tools required to market, brand and protect their work in this digital economy. From the programme, I see a number of sessions which will cover such key areas as Intellectual Property Rights for Export Promotion, Branding and Marketing, Quality and Standards, Value Proposition and Pricing. Mastering of these elements is critical in the sustainable development and global competitiveness of the sector.

Relationship with the EU

CARIFORUM's relationship with the EU has been a longstanding and cordial one that has provided significant opportunities for our creative talents. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago, along with our regional counterparts in CARIFORUM, have seen the benefit of trade in the EU market and our country has in this regard been able to make strides under the EPA.

In this specific context, the benefits accrued from such a dynamic relationship will be twofold through the Regional Strategic Plan for Cultural and Entertainment Services and the Protocol on Cultural Cooperation.

CARIFORUM Ministers have mandated the development of a Regional Strategic Plan for Services for eight priority services sectors, which includes cultural and entertainment services. The objectives for this sub-sector (Cultural and Entertainment Services) comprise the development of specialized institutional support and an incentives regime for the industry. It is anticipated that this Plan, once completed, will see practitioners benefitting from increased access to incentives, as well as improved access to reliable data on the industry. There will also be the increased availability of business coaches to help firms secure financing and become export ready. The plan will be implemented over a five (5) year period.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry has completed national consultations with stakeholders on the Regional Strategic Plan for Cultural and Entertainment Services while CARICOM is currently engaging the other Member States for their respective inputs. We hope to have a final Regional Strategic Plan for Services in mid-2019.

CARIFORUM Member States are also working toward the implementation of the Protocol on Cultural Cooperation. The Protocol will establish a framework upon which the Parties to the EPA will cooperate in facilitating exchanges in cultural activities, goods and services including the audio visual sector and performing arts sector. Local practitioners can expect to benefit from training in areas such as marketing and intellectual property among others.

Additionally, there will be increased access to information on key organizations within the EU that can provide technical and financial support to strengthen the local industry. The Protocol on Cultural Cooperation in the EPA was prioritized to focus on four broad elements namely the audio visual sector, the performing arts sector and the protection of sites and historical monuments.

From the national perspective, the Ministry of Trade and Industry through our agency CreativeTT, has developed strategic plans in the areas of film, fashion and music. The work of this umbrella agency certainly complements the outcomes of this workshop.

The strategy of the respective plans is based on enlarging the pool of our creative talents, promoting Research and Development (R&D) within the industries and facilitating the entry of our creative enterprises into the global exports market, particularly in the EU. The implementation of these plans includes several frontline projects such as the Live Music District, the Fashion Value Chain Investment Programme and the Ultra Bespoke Tailoring Programme.

All of these initiatives will help build the capacity and competitiveness of the region's services subsectors to effectively compete in the EU and take advantage of the benefits of the EPA. This will ultimately lead to an increase in export levels, foreign exchange earnings and international exposure.

As I close, I want to congratulate the TTCSI for facilitating this workshop. It demonstrates the private sector's commitment to playing an important role in the nation's path to economic sustainability. The partnership with the EU, German Cooperation, GIZ and Caribbean Export can only bear fruit and we wish to encourage such synergies.

To our participants here today, I encourage you all to take advantage of this once in a lifetime opportunity and apply the knowledge gained today to your work. I dare say that it will be well worth the effort.

I thank you.