



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

Launch of the Live Music District App

REMARKS

SENATOR THE HONOURABLE PAULA GOPEE SCOON
MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

6TH SEPTEMBER, 2019

SALUTATIONS:

- Chairman, CreativeTT – Mr. Calvin Bijou
- Chairman, MusicTT – Mr. John Arnold
- General Manager, MusicTT – Ms. Melissa Jimenez
- Specially Invited Guests
- Members of the Music Community
- Members of the Media
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning to you all.

It is a pleasure to be here today at the formal launch of the Live Music District App and Booking Website referred to as AMPT (pronounced amped). Let me commend MusicTT on this initiative which is aligned to the Government's *National Development Strategy 2016–2030, Vision 2030* which promotes, among other objectives, the development of technology-driven innovation and entrepreneurship. I am certain that AMPT will be an important marketing tool for creative practitioners, entrepreneurs and performance venues alike.

The app, which you can download onto your apple or android device, fully automates various aspects of the Live Music District (LMD) and provides background information on the artistes and all of the participating venues.

Since its launch in March 2017, the LMD has provided local artistes with an opportunity to showcase their talent throughout the year. To date, 580 performances have been held, in 35 out of the 58 venues that signed onto the LMD throughout Port of Spain and environs. Currently, there are 210 artistes registered. The introduction of the App and Booking Website will undoubtedly enhance the LMD and encourage greater participation of artistes, patrons and venues. This success of a vibrant music district will ultimately provide greater financial opportunities for all stakeholders, thereby contributing to the country's economic growth and development.

The economic potential of the Music Industry for all stakeholders is considerable. To this end, the Government is constantly monitoring global trends to keep abreast of the strategies required to modernize and monetize our local talent.

The Music Industry adds further value to the economy by fostering innovation and creativity while providing a viable platform for diversification and the generation of export earnings. A 2015 IDB report on the Orange Economy stated that since iTunes launched in 1998, there were more than twenty-five billion (25,000,000,000) songs downloaded at a cost of US\$0.99 per song.

The Global Music Report 2018, published by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) which provides annual updates on the state of the industry, noted that after 15 years of decline, global recorded music achieved its third consecutive year of growth in 2017, with more fans listening to music around the globe in increasingly novel ways. It also highlighted that in 2017, digital music revenues grew 19.1%, which amounted to US\$ 9.4 billion and, for the first time ever, accounted for over half (54%) of total recorded music industry revenues worldwide. The global surge in streaming was a key driver that led to this increase. In this same year, revenues from physical formats declined by 5.4%. As a Government, we want to ensure that the revenues earned by our creatives continue to grow.

As alluded to in the National Development Strategy, Vision 2030, the Government recognises that a functioning system of intellectual property rights is fundamental to successful commercialization and must be upheld in order for our Music Industry to thrive. These rights regulate ownership, add value and facilitate the sale of creative goods and services. Copyright ensures that the economic benefits redound to the artiste. It is important for the artiste to be acknowledged and be paid fairly for his or her creation.

In this vein, I am pleased to see the outcome of the collaboration among MusicTT, the Intellectual Property Office of Trinidad and Tobago (IPO) and the World Intellectual Property Office (WIPO) in the form of the IP Video which will be shown this morning. The video focuses on the need to respect the rights of creators by demonstrating the effects of copyright infringement, and it demystifies existing perceptions about IP; more importantly, the video inspires others to become creators and to protect their work. Trinidad and Tobago should be proud of this collaboration given that this video will premiere at a WIPO meeting in Geneva, Switzerland to representatives from 191 countries.

I also wish to commend previous efforts by MusicTT, the IPO and WIPO to promote awareness on Intellectual Property through the well-subscribed workshop on “How to Make a Living from Music” which was held in 2017, among other fora.

We are pleased to be at the cusp of a new era of music development in Trinidad and Tobago. The Government stands ready to bolster local artistes through the creation of an enabling environment and implementation of programmes to propel them into the international spotlight. These programmes which are primarily implemented by MusicTT are a direct response to the most critical success factors identified by the industry’s stakeholders.

One of the current flagship programmes of MusicTT is Spotlight, which was formerly known as the Artiste Portfolio Development Programme (APDP). Spotlight takes in a cohort of ten (10) artistes on the verge of export-readiness each year, and provides them with customized training in areas such as music business, entertainment law, brand development, stage presence, pitching strategies, developing business and marketing plans, developing an online presence, and monetizing music intellectual property.

Since the launch of this programme in December 2017, it has provided training and support for ten (10) artistes. A second cohort of ten (10) artistes was selected on May 3rd, 2019 to commence training in the 4th quarter of 2019.

Through the programme, some musicians have been able to collaborate with major artistes and represent Trinidad and Tobago on the international stage.

Some of their accomplishments include winning the Discover Me Artist of the Month in October 2018, Breakout Artiste of the Year, as well as a nomination of Female Artiste of the Year and Song of the Year at the Gospel Music Awards in January 2019. One artiste was even accepted into the cast of Disney's Lion King Musical, which begins later this year in the United Kingdom.

This and other programmes implemented by MusicTT will build and strengthen the music industry to support our artistes on the road to commercial viability.

In closing, I wish to congratulate MusicTT on the introduction of the LMD App and encourage those interested in enjoying Live Music to use it. The Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs, through the Intellectual Property Office (IPO), must also be commended for the work that they are doing to promote Intellectual Property Rights and continuing to work collaboratively with MusicTT and all stakeholders.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you.