



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Trade, Investment and Tourism

Caribbean Music Awards – Welcome Reception

Remarks by
Senator the Honourable Satyakama Maharaj
Minister of Trade, Investment and Tourism

Friday, September 18th, 2026

Good evening.

On behalf of the Government and people of Trinidad and Tobago, I warmly welcome each of you to our shores.

To our Caribbean family joining us from across the region and the diaspora: welcome home.

The Caribbean has never been short on rhythm, creativity or a story to tell. After three successful years in Brooklyn, the Caribbean Music Awards has come home to the Caribbean for the first time and Trinidad and Tobago has been chosen to host this defining celebration.

This is a return to the source.

It says that Caribbean people do not have to leave the Caribbean to see Caribbean excellence celebrated on a world-class stage. We can build that stage here. We can set the standard here. And we can welcome the world here.

Tonight, the Caribbean comes home.

What better place than the land that gave the world the steelpan, calypso, soca, chutney and Carnival? But while Trinidad and Tobago is proud to host, tonight belongs to the entire Caribbean.

As our Jamaican family would say, **“Wi likkle, but wi tallawah.”**

We may be a region of small states, but there is nothing small about what Caribbean people have given the world.

Our music has crossed oceans. Our rhythms have moved generations. Our creativity has carried the Caribbean into living rooms, concert halls and communities across the globe.

Sounds born across our islands have become a global cultural force. Tonight, we honour the people who continue to create, shape and carry them forward, the creators and custodians of our culture.

This weekend is about more than celebrating great music. It is about recognising the economic and cultural opportunities that emerge when culture, tourism, business and investment come together.

The journey that brought the Caribbean Music Awards to Trinidad and Tobago demonstrates the power of purposeful engagement. International outreach facilitated by Global Trinidad & Tobago helped create the pathway for this major regional event to come to our shores.

That is how opportunity is created: a conversation becomes a connection, a connection becomes a partnership and a partnership opens doors for our people.

My hope is that this weekend sparks new partnerships and a renewed appreciation for the creativity, energy and immense potential of the Caribbean.

We want international visitors to experience the richness, creativity and energy of our country but we also want them to see Trinidad and Tobago as a place where ideas can take root, businesses can grow, partnerships can flourish and investment can create lasting value.

We are not only a place to visit. **We are a place to create, to partner and to build.**

We are also particularly pleased that the weekend will conclude with the STARS & STEEL Concert and Award Show, celebrating our national instrument and laying the groundwork for what we hope can become an International Steelpan Awards platform for the future.

Pan represents the genius of our people. We took steel shaped by industry and gave it rhythm, emotion and soul. We transformed the ordinary into something the world had never heard before.

That is the Caribbean spirit: we do not simply accept what we inherit, we reimagine it.

To every artist being celebrated this weekend: thank you for carrying our stories and our sound into the world.

To every young Caribbean person who will see this moment: your accent is not an obstacle, your story is not too local and your dream is not too large. The world is already listening.

And, to all of our visitors, I encourage you to enjoy the music, celebrate the awards and to experience the country, our people, our culture, our food and our hospitality.

Again, I extend a warm welcome to all of you and I trust that this weekend will be more than a celebration of Caribbean excellence. May it be a catalyst for meaningful partnerships, genuine cultural exchange and connections that translate into lasting opportunities for our people, our businesses and the wider Caribbean.

One region. Many rhythms. One stage. And for this historic moment, that stage is home.

Welcome to Trinidad and Tobago.

Welcome to the Caribbean Music Awards.

Let the music begin.

I thank you.