



WELCOME ADDRESS

**MR. SELBY WILSON, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD
AND TOBAGO**

***ICTs 4 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE***

19th – 20th AUGUST 2014

HYATT REGENCY, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

- Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Science and Technology, Ms Ingrid Serattan
- Professor Tim Unwin, Secretary General, Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization
- Members of the Board of Directors, Management and staff of the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago
- Workshop Facilitators from the Omar Dengo Foundation
- Distinguished Guests
- Members of the Media, Ladies and Gentlemen



It is both an honour and a pleasure and to welcome everyone to the **“2014 ICTs 4 Skills Development and Entrepreneurship Among Young People”** which is being hosted by the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT) in collaboration with the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization (CTO) and the Omar Dengo Foundation.

I am taking this opportunity to especially welcome to Trinidad and Tobago, Professor Tim Unwin, Secretary General, Commonwealth Telecommunications Organizations as well as Mr. Eduardo Monge, Director, Project Development and International Relations, Omar Dengo Foundation. Thank you for not only for journeying to Trinidad and Tobago to facilitate this workshop, but also for your collaboration with the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago to make this event a reality.

This workshop, ladies and gentlemen is the final in a series of events undertaken by TATT over the past six months to celebrate TATT's 10th Anniversary.



For your information, a snapshot of previous events included:

- Commemoration of the International Telecommunications Union's "***Girls in ICT Day***" in April, with a career seminar for approximately two hundred female students of secondary schools in Tobago.
- Hosting of the International Telecommunications Union's ***Regional Radiocommunications Seminar 2014*** for the Americas which was held in mid-July in Tobago and
- Launch of the TATT/UWI Cyber Security Awareness project which is a collaborative initiative between UWI and TATT to increase awareness of the dangers of Cyberspace to students.

Today's workshop, as mentioned earlier, is collaboration with the CTO with assistance of the Omar Dengo Foundation of Costa Rica. Its primary aim is to help young people develop entrepreneurial skills and to find innovative ways of doing business in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) arena.



This workshop has been on the minds and hearts of the Board and Management of TATT since the need for such an initiative was highlighted during discussions with CTO members in the region about two years ago. Included in the discussions were representatives from Jamaica and Grenada as the need to identify how ICTs can best contribute to skills development and entrepreneurship within the Caribbean was being discussed. This workshop signals the fruition of those discussions for Trinidad and Tobago.

Ladies and gentlemen, you may wonder why TATT is involved in hosting this workshop. The overall mandate given to TATT upon its establishment a little over ten years ago, was to develop Trinidad and Tobago's telecommunications and broadcasting sectors. Some of you young people may be old enough to be aware that prior to the establishment of TATT in 2004, consumers could only access mobile telephone service from one provider and there were just a few Internet service providers, just to give you a sense of this country's former ICT landscape.



I am sure we can all agree that the landscape has been transformed. According to statistics recently issued by TATT, in its Annual Market Report for the Telecommunications and Broadcasting Sectors - at the end of December 2013 there were 1.94 million mobile telephone subscriptions. I would like you to compare this figure to those released at the end of 2005 when it was reported there were 924,059 mobile telephone subscriptions. Thus the number of mobile telephone subscriptions has almost doubled since then.

Ladies and gentlemen with respect to the Internet, the 2013 report has also revealed that as at the end of 2013, 51 out of every 100 homes had either a fixed Internet subscription and /or a mobile Internet subscription.

You just need to add this scenario to the number of devices such as smart phones, desktops, laptops, tablets, e-readers, connected to a single fixed Internet connection and you would see that it is quite possible that almost everyone in this country has access to the Internet.



The above provided a glimpse of this country's ICT landscape. This landscape was shaped by deliberate strategic initiatives undertaken by TATT over the last ten years.

The initiatives included the development of a wide range of regulations, policies and guidelines to ensure orderliness.

Additionally, other initiatives are currently in train for implementation within the next twelve months which would continue to develop the ICT landscape - such as the complete establishment of an Internet Exchange Point (IXP) which will allow locally originated Internet traffic to be routed locally. Along with this development, will be the introduction of Number Portability which will afford consumers the opportunity to switch from one service provider to another without the headache of having to change telephone numbers.

Added to the above, TATT has developed a Consumer Rights and Obligations Policy for which there will soon be regulations aimed at further protecting consumers of telecommunications and broadcasting services. A Universality Framework has also been developed for which initiatives to shrink the 'Digital Divide' will soon be undertaken.



These and other initiatives, ladies and gentlemen, are required in a robust ICT sector which in 2013 generated an estimated TT\$5.5 billion dollars and which as percentage, equates to 3.1 of this country's Gross Domestic Product.

In such a booming ICT sector, there will be several opportunities for budding entrepreneurs. Participants, you are here today because you have either already, or intend to position yourselves among the ranks of such ICT entrepreneurs.

The ICT industry has no shortage of opportunities – strong product and service demands, to meet an increasing number of needs and wants, is resulting in a slew of innovativeness. Inside of such a scenario, it is possible for almost every idea to become reality. Throw your minds back in history to 1876 when Alexander Graham Bell's idea for the telephone became reality. Or are you aware that the idea to transport images over long distances became a reality right here in Trinidad and Tobago, when in 1914, Scotsman John Logie Baird performed experiments in Santa Cruz which led to the invention of the television. Yes, right here in Trinidad.



Ladies and gentlemen there are numerous opportunities for down-stream ICT industries. There are many opportunities to start and grow a business venture utilizing the telephone, or the internet etc. So ladies and gentlemen the options are varied.

These two days of workshops afford you the opportunity of injecting life into your ideas or businesses to make them successful. You have the unique opportunity to have with you over the next two days the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization, based in London. His presence here is as a result of his interest in this activity and to add his support and injection of expertise.

Secretary General, I thank you not only your overwhelming support of the activity evidenced by your traveling to Trinidad and Tobago for the event, but also the personal touch I have been told you have added to the activity and the energy, drive and interest you have been putting into the planning.

Participants you also have at your disposal representatives of the Omar Dengo Foundation from Costa Rica who will be facilitating the sessions.



We also have two well-known local presenters Mr. Kyle Maloney, founder of **F1rst.com** and Mr. Donnie Bachan, Founder and Startup Advisor at **SixBerries Ltd.**

Participants you have been presented with an opportunity of a lifetime in this workshop, I therefore urge you to make the most of it. Ask many questions, pay attention and leave here on Wednesday evening with a sound foundation to start or continue building your own ICT businesses.

I thank you