



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Public Administration

**Address by the Honourable Maxie Cuffie,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Public Administration, at the
Interfaith Service to mark the 15th Anniversary of the
Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago
Government Campus Plaza,
Port of Spain,**

Monday July 1st 2019.

Salutations

- Mr. Gilbert Peterson SC, Chairman Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago
- Mrs. Cynthia Downes, Chief Executive Officer, Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago
- Mrs. Joan Mendez, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Administration
- Members of the Board of Directors of the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago
- Mr. Selby Wilson, Telecommunications Strategist at the Caribbean Telecommunications Union
- Mrs. Teresa Wankin, Secretary General of Canto
- Representatives of our stakeholders
 - Mr. Darren Campo FLOW
 - Mr. Kirk Henry iGovTT
 - Ms Sylvia Lalla- NIHERST
 - and any other persons I may have missed
- Management and Staff of the Authority
- Specially invited guests
- Members of the Media

Good morning Ladies and gentlemen, I am happy to be here with you to congratulate The Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT) on achieving its 15th Anniversary.

Today is indeed a remarkable day, because 15 years ago when this organisation commenced operations it was extremely small with just a board of directors and a handful of staff who were tasked by law with a very big mandate to achieve, among others things, the liberalisation of this country's telecommunications and broadcasting sectors whilst developing competitive sectors in an orderly way and to ensure the protection of consumers who use those services.

As regulator of the telecommunications landscape TATT has done its job. They have met and continue to achieve their mandate.

Trinidad and Tobago has the same services as our counterparts globally and often at a better quality than is available in other more developed countries. These countries have the same challenges that we do in terms of connectivity and broadband availability in the speeds that consumers demand; and... let me tell you the same challenges about the content that they wish to view.

Today, it is TATT's achievements that are paving the foundation for the Government of Trinidad and Tobago's (GoRTT's) NICT Plan that is the ICT Blueprint is Trinidad and Tobago's five-year National Information Communication Technology (NICT) Plan for 2018 to 2022. The NICT plan is built on five strategic thrusts:

Improving connectivity to create a world-class ICT infrastructure to facilitate increased availability, improved connectivity speed and increased affordability of telecommunications and broadcasting services to end users. This includes Access to free and secure public WiFi coverage for citizens, in libraries, waiting areas in hospitals and health centres, transport hubs, and in underserved areas.

Increasing Human Capacity by enhancing digital literacy and developing the skills to enable productivity and innovation.

This will be achieved through increased ICT usage in education; more efficient access and use of ICT Human Resources; and more productive usage of Internet access for citizens in less developed areas.

In addition, we will establish ICT Access Centres where there will be the provision of WiFi and Computers for use by the communities in which they are located. – Marac, Penal, Cumana, Guayaguayare and Todd's Road to name a few.

Digital Government – we will leverage digital technology to allow for easier interaction among the Government, citizens and private sector.

The aim is to ensure the use of ICT to transform the delivery of public goods and services and strengthen institutional capacity.

To this end a range of projects to introduce systems to bring the public sector closer to its customers: citizens, residents, visitors and businesses such as:

- GovNett NG - the Government Communication Backbone/Network Infrastructure will support communication and collaboration through the Government's Data Centres.
- ttGovChat - an online platform delivered via the ttconnect website facilitating direct engagement between citizens and government.
- GovPayTT - simplifying the acceptance of payments across Government.
- e-Identity - offering citizens access to a wide range of public facilities and high-security technologies.

Fostering Economic Development, here Government aims to create an environment for an innovative, entrepreneurial and vibrant ICT sector

through the development of a pro-e-Enterprise environment | Promote the use of ICTs with a focus on digital financial services, e-transactions, e-payments and tax incentives.

Enhancements to the | Single Electronic Window (SEW) for Trade and Business Facilitation - www.ttbizlink.gov.tt; to make doing business made easy by substantially reducing the need to send duplicate information to multiple agencies and improving the exchange of information between government agencies.

Advancing the Environment for Societal Benefit by managing the use of ICTs to minimise possible damage to the natural environment of the islands of Trinidad and Tobago

This plan is a collaborative effort, that is grounded in our National Development Strategy, Vision 2030, and driven by the country's national, regional and international obligations. It is the Blueprint to a future characterised by Empowered People, Competitive Businesses and Transformational Government.

The competitive telecommunications and broadcasting landscape that was developed by TATT is a Key Enabler to the government's agenda for sustainable Information Communications and Technology (ICT) development and consequential socio-economic gains, particularly in the area of connectivity and broadband.

For example, the Authority's initiative to make spectrum available for broadband wireless access and opening of the market to new fixed broadband service providers has driven the government's broadband agenda. As you know consumers demand for high-speed connectivity and in particular mobile connectivity that is driving telecommunication spend world over.

The work of the Authority is most prominent in improving connectivity – the continued deployment of ICT infrastructure to support securely connected people, businesses and government. Most notably is the government’s TTWiFi initiative – access to free and secure public WiFi coverage for citizens, in libraries, waiting areas in hospitals and health centres, transport hubs, and in underserved areas.

TATT is fulfilling phase 2 of this initiative, utilizing its universal service fund (USF) to deploy TTWiFi in public libraries, hospitals and health centres and public transport hubs. The Authority is also utilizing the USF to fund broadband deployment in underserved areas in Trinidad and Tobago. Additionally, the Authority’s planned universal service initiative to provide Assistive Technologies to persons with disabilities will serve to connect the demographics that are unconnected.

Digital government

- Embracing the use of digital technology to allow for easier interaction among the Government, citizens and private sector, projects such as GovNett NG, ttGovChat, GovPayTT and e-Identity
- Fostering economic development – creating an environment for an innovative, entrepreneurial and vibrant ICT sector, which includes the National Single Electronic Window (SEW) for Trade and Business Facilitation - www.ttbizlink.gov.tt | Business made easy by substantially reducing the need to send duplicate information to multiple agencies and improving the exchange of information between government agencies.
- Advancing the environment for societal benefit – managing the use of ICT to minimise possible damage to the natural environment of the islands of Trinidad and Tobago, which include an Environment Impact

Assessment of ICT and ICT usage and public awareness and education on the role of ICTs in improving environmental benefits.

Government's aim is to improve the country's ratings achieve these main targets for Trinidad and Tobago by or before 2021:

1. Increase to 5% in the ICT Sector's contribution to GDP
2. 85% broadband access of a minimum download speed of 100 Mbps for households and businesses
3. 5 High demand/volume, strategically important Government services as end-to-end eServices
4. 5 Enterprise-wide applications operationalized to run routine functions of Government
5. 50% Adoption of Government shared services
6. 50% Adoption of shared infrastructure
7. 30,000 direct jobs created
8. 500,000 Users participate in eForums moderated by Government
9. # 1 in the Caribbean on Relevant increases in the World Economic Forum (WEF) Network Readiness Index (NRI)
10. # 1 in the Caribbean on the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) ICT Development Index (IDI)

Improvements in these indices will improve this country's digital rankings internationally and by extension its investment position significantly.

The Vision of the plan will ultimately to support the National Development Strategy 2016–2030, Vision 2030, which outlines the country's aspiration to attain "first world nation status" by 2030. Whilst supporting Vision 2030, fastforward II is also expected to meet the country's anticipated social and

economic needs. Taken together, the proposed five Strategic Thrusts seek to enable Trinidad and Tobago to achieve a connected digital nation.

Ladies and Gentlemen TATT has been integral to getting us where we are. Lets, therefore, join together and wish this small but mighty organisation Happy 15th Anniversary and may TATT and its successes last another 15 times 15 years.

I thank you.