

**Remarks delivered by Senator the Honourable Dennis Moses,
Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs on the Celebration of
the United States of America's Independence Day**

June 28th, 2017 at the O2 Park, Chaguaramas.

Mr John McIntyre, Chargé d' Affaires a.i. of the Embassy of the United States of America;

Ms Flora Zylfijaj; (Zeal-jaj)

The Honourable Mr. Justice Ivor Archie, Chief Justice of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago And Mrs. Denise Rodrigues-Archie;

Acting Chief of Defence Staff Hayden Pritchard;

Ministerial Colleagues;

Esteemed Heads of Mission and Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Other Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to join you this evening as we celebrate the 241st Independence Day of the United States of America. I am pleased to extend congratulatory greetings on behalf of the Government and the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

I am honoured to be in your presence as we reflect with great pride on the strength, progress, and pioneering strides of your esteemed country in its quest for liberty. From as early as 1776, the United States of America has led the charge toward freedom, equality, and justice, standing tall and strong as a beacon of hope to all.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am inclined to draw your attention to the choice of venue this evening, which lies within a region of particular significance to the people of Trinidad and Tobago. The Chaguaramus Peninsula, previously a US naval base during World War II, has a rich history in the struggle for freedom and independence from the early days of our Amerindian ancestors, to the historical handing over of the land to the people of Trinidad and Tobago in 1967.

The peninsula, initially earmarked for the capital of the West Indian Federation, was the location for the signing of the Treaty of Chaguaramus on July 4, 1973, which established the Caribbean Community CARICOM, ushering in a new era of Caribbean identity. This treasured part of our island continues to be developed and preserved for the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

Today, as we celebrate the achievements of your nation, we must also take a moment to reflect on the longstanding relationship of cooperation and collaboration between our countries. Our fruitful diplomatic relations, spanning more than fifty years, have paved the way for the expansion and reinforcement of Trinidad and Tobago's economic, security and development initiatives. I would like to take the opportunity to reaffirm Trinidad and Tobago's strong desire to continue the longstanding collaboration and cooperation with the United States of America, thereby strengthening the partnership between our nations that was built over many years.

The United States of America has continued to demonstrate dedication to cooperation in the areas of trade, security and strategic engagement, which are of mutual interest to our countries. In the area of Security, collaboration is evidenced by support for the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI). It is in this context that I recognise the recent signing of the Memorandum of Intent concerning the implementation of the Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES), and the continued discussions on the Federal Air Marshals Agreement between our countries. These initiatives, among many others, affirm the continued commitment of both Governments to cooperate in the interest of national and regional security.

Trinidad and Tobago continues to look forward to increased interaction in the areas of trade, economic development, energy, and education under the Caribbean Strategic Engagement Act of 2016. It is hoped that this act will foster improved dialogue between our nations, and open channels for collaborative projects between the United States of America and countries of the Caribbean region.

A country's sovereignty is the cornerstone of its legacy in the world, and I take great pride in sharing this evening's festivities to mark such a magnificent milestone in your history. Distinguished guests, it is my honour to extend, once again from the Government and people of Trinidad and Tobago and on my own behalf, congratulations to the Government and people of the United States of America on its 241st year of Independence.