

**REMARKS DELIVERED BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AND  
CARICOM AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
AT THE COMMEMORATION OF THE 196<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
INDEPENDENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF PERU**

Friday, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017

6:30 p.m.

It gives me immense pleasure to share your company this evening as we celebrate together the 196<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Peru. On behalf of the Prime Minister Dr. the Honourable Keith Rowley and the Government and People of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, I extend warm congratulations as you commemorate this auspicious occasion.

Trinidad and Tobago and Peru established diplomatic relations on February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1968 and, over the past forty-nine (49) years, the two countries have maintained strong, positive relations, particularly at the multilateral level, given the convergence of our foreign policy interests and shared commitment to the rule of law, democracy and the pursuit of peace and international security. I am truly delighted to observe that, within the past two years, the bilateral agenda has greatly intensified, triggered, in part, by the re-establishment of the Embassy of Peru in Port-of-Spain in 2015, after an absence of more than two decades. The decision of the Peruvian Government to re-open an Embassy in Trinidad and Tobago reflects the importance attached to

enhancing bilateral ties and strengthening the bonds of friendship, dialogue and cooperation between both nations.

Since 2015, both Governments have renewed their resolve to construct a solid, formalized framework for cooperation in a number of strategic areas, including security and defense cooperation, disaster preparedness and cultural cooperation. We are also continuing to explore new areas for South-South Cooperation and the sharing of best practices and insights in areas as diverse as intellectual property, fisheries, mining, technical cooperation and scholarships. Trinidad and Tobago and Peru will also evaluate the feasibility of a Partial Scope Trade Agreement and a Bilateral Mechanism for Political Consultations in order to provide a space for focused discussions to track our progress and jointly identify new possibilities.

The commitment and role of diplomatic representatives in guiding and energizing the bilateral agenda should not be discounted. As such, on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017, Trinidad and Tobago welcomed the formal accreditation of your Excellency Luis Rodomiro Hernández Ortiz as the first resident Ambassador of the Republic of Peru to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago since the re-establishment of the Peruvian Mission. As a sign that both countries are working in concert even in ceremonial aspects, H.E. Dr. Paul Byam, non-resident Ambassador of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the Republic of Peru, presented his Letters of Credence

to H.E. Pedro Pablo Kuczynski Godard, President of the Republic of Peru, only one day prior (May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017).

As we look forward to the celebration of the fiftieth year of the establishment of diplomatic relations next year, I am convinced, Excellency, that your experience and enthusiasm, as well as that of your Trinidad and Tobago counterpart, will result in concrete successes that we can all celebrate in 2018. You can, of course, count on my personal support and that of all arms of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, as you discharge your duties during your tenure.

As Peru celebrates its National Day, there is much to cite as a source of pride, such as the country's vibrant culture, fascinating history, diverse landscapes and iconic wonders like Machu Picchu. Peru has pursued a policy of openness to the world, finalizing over the years 18 free trade agreements with 52 countries, and it has also been one of the region's fastest-growing economies, with an impressive average growth rate of 5.9 percent over the past decade.

When President Kuczynski assumed office one year ago, he promised to build a more inclusive society in which all segments of the Peruvian population would have the possibility to participate fully in the benefits of economic growth. His inspirational inaugural address emphasized a number of aspirations, including

ensuring access to water, education and health care for all Peruvians. He also announced an all-out battle against drug trafficking and corruption.

These are development challenges that we in Trinidad and Tobago also face and our gratitude is extended to Peru for doing its part to bring these persistent and common issues to the fore at the international and hemispheric levels. I refer here specifically to the June 2017 announcement by H.E. Ricardo Luna Mendoza, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Peru, that the theme of the Eighth Summit of the Americas, to be held in April 2018, will be "Democratic Governance against Corruption." Peru has tremendous experience in the hosting of large-scale international Conferences, such the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference and the 2016 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit. Trinidad and Tobago is therefore confident that the forthcoming Summit of the Americas will be a great success with Peru as the host country.

Trinidad and Tobago also takes note that one of the principal foreign policy objectives of Peru is to gain membership of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). As we seek to maintain macroeconomic stability and avoid unfair labelling, Trinidad and Tobago greatly looks forward to having a like-minded State represented on a body such as the OECD and expresses its hope that Peru will be a voice for the Caribbean, given its familiarity with the

unique vulnerabilities and significant handicaps of Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Ladies and gentlemen, I invite you to join me in a toast to the Government and people of the Republic of Peru in the celebration of the achievements of one hundred and ninety-six years of independence and to the enhancement of the strong ties between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Republic of Peru.

I thank you for your attention.