

**Message delivered by Ms. Reita Toussaint, Permanent Secretary (Ag.)  
on behalf of Senator the Honourable Dennis Moses, Minister of Foreign and  
CARICOM Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago,  
on the celebration of the National Day of Canada**

***(Wednesday June 27, 2018, the Anchorage, Chaguaramas 6.30-8.30 p.m.)***

Your Excellency Carla Hogan Rufelds, High Commissioner for Canada;

Ministers of Government;

Your Excellencies Heads of Mission and Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Your Worship the Mayor of Port of Spain, Alderman Joel Martinez;

Members of the Consular Corps;

Staff Members of the High Commission and members of the Canadian community  
resident in Trinidad and Tobago;

Other Distinguished Guests;

Members of the Media;

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is indeed an honour to be part of this evening's celebration of Canada's 151<sup>st</sup> Anniversary as a self-governing nation under the British Crown. I would like to extend, on behalf of the Government and people of Trinidad and Tobago, and on my own behalf, congratulatory greetings to the Government and people of Canada on this auspicious occasion.

Your Excellency, this year marks 56 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Trinidad and Tobago and Canada. Throughout this period, the relationship between Trinidad and Tobago and Canada has been

characterised by cooperation, reciprocity and mutual respect. The bilateral collaboration between our nations continues to be strong and vibrant, particularly in the areas of security, health, information technology, education, training and agriculture and the environment.

As we celebrate the East Coast of Canada, it is incumbent on me to share its historical significance in shaping the trade relations between Trinidad and Tobago and Canada. Your Excellency, you may recall that in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Trinidad and Tobago traded sugar, rum, cotton and spices with Halifax in exchange for cod, timber and flour. As I reflect, it pleases me greatly to convey that the scope of our relationship has since expanded, with Canada becoming one of Trinidad and Tobago's top trading partners.

Your Excellency, I take this opportunity to acknowledge the leading role Canada continues to play in the international arena on global issues such as gender equality, climate change and the environment. In this regard, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago noted with interest Canada's contribution to advancing gender equality at the Eighth Summit of the Americas where the Government of Canada launched an Inter-American Task Force on Women's Leadership and Empowerment, an initiative which will no doubt advance the sustainable development goal of greater opportunities for women's participation in political, economic and public life. On this note, I wish to convey that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has also embarked on a number of initiatives aimed at raising awareness of human rights including women's rights. I am therefore pleased to recall that in May 2018, Trinidad and Tobago hosted the 10<sup>th</sup> Gathering of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality. In addition, earlier this month, Trinidad and Tobago successfully fielded the

candidature of Professor Rhoda Reddock for election to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

With respect to Climate Change and the Environment, Canada has continued to demonstrate support, at the highest level, for small island states which are most vulnerable to this phenomenon. It is noteworthy in this regard, that in April 2018, at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), Dr. the Honourable Keith Rowley, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, engaged in meaningful discussions on the need for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and coastal states to build resilience and capacity to respond to climate change.

Your Excellency, as I conclude, allow me to reiterate the significance which Trinidad and Tobago attaches to its relations with Canada. As we look toward the future, I wish to assure you that Trinidad and Tobago remains committed to deepening and enhancing this important partnership, governed by mutual respect, cooperation and friendship.

It is therefore an honour and a pleasure on behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and on my own behalf, to extend best wishes once again to the Government and people of Canada on your National Day. I ask you to raise your glasses as we toast to the Government and people of Canada on this celebratory occasion.

I thank you.