



THE NATIONAL GAS COMPANY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO LIMITED

**Induction Ceremony of Professor Brian Copeland as Principal of UWI, St Augustine**

**Address By Gerry C. Brooks | NGC Chairman**

**July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

GOOD EVENING.

IT IS A GREAT HONOUR TO BE INVITED TO ADDRESS YOU AT THE INDUCTION OF PROFESSOR BRIAN COPELAND AS PRINCIPAL OF THE ST AUGUSTINE CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES. THE ASSUMPTION OF HIGHER RESPONSIBILITY BY ONE WHO HAS DISTINGUISHED HIMSELF AS A VISIONARY THINKER, AN INNOVATOR AND A TEAM-BUILDER IS A SOURCE OF SPECIAL PRIDE AND CAUSE FOR OPTIMISM IN THE FUTURE OF THE UNIVERSITY. GIVEN THE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES FACING TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND THE WIDER CARIBBEAN, HIS APPOINTMENT TO THE HELM OF THE ST AUGUSTINE CAMPUS, UWI COULD NOT BE MORE OPPORTUNE.

IN PROFESSOR COPELAND, THE UWI HAS FOUND A RESPECTED SCHOLAR, AN EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATOR AND A LEADER IN WHOM THE ARTS AND SCIENCES CONVERGE. HE IS AN INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED AND RESPECTED ENGINEER. HIS PIONEERING ACHIEVEMENTS INCLUDE THE PATENTED DEVELOPMENT OF THE G-PAN FOR WHICH HE RECEIVED THE COUNTRY'S HIGHEST AWARD. LET US CONGRATULATE HIM!

PROFESSOR COPELAND'S CAREER UNDERSCORES HIS BELIEF IN TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AS A POWERFUL PLATFORM FOR CREATING NEW AREAS OF ENTERPRISE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP WHICH CAN AND MUST FUEL ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. THIS IS A PHILOSOPHY TO WHICH THE NATIONAL GAS COMPANY IS FULLY ALIGNED AND TO WHICH IT HAS COMMITTED SUBSTANTIAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT OVER THE YEARS.

DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, OVER THE LAST TWO DECADES, NGC'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE UWI HAS EXCEEDED \$15 MILLION IN THE FORM OF RESEARCH GRANTS, ACADEMIC PROGRAMME SUPPORT, BURSARIES AND SCHOLARSHIPS. WE ARE PARTICULARLY PROUD OF OUR CHAIR IN INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP, OUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TREVOR BOOPSINGH ENDOWMENT FUND AND OUR WORK IN ENGINEERING. WE ARE COMMITTED TO WORKING WITH THE UWI TO LEVERAGE THESE INVESTMENTS TO MAKE A TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE IN LOCAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION.

PROFESSOR COPELAND, THE NGC-UWI RELATIONSHIP MUST CONTINUE TO BE PREDICATED ON A SHARED VISION AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMPORTANCE OF STRONG LINKAGES BETWEEN ACADEMIA AND INDUSTRY. RESEARCH, TRAINING AND APPLIED KNOWLEDGE ARE INTEGRAL PILLARS OF AND PATHWAYS TO INDIVIDUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT AND INDUSTRY AND SOCIETAL DEVELOPMENT. THIS CRUCIAL LINKAGE MUST EXPRESS ITSELF IN THE ACCELERATION OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ON THEMES SUCH AS MONETISATION OF MARGINAL GAS FIELDS, RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS INCLUDING SOLAR AND WIND PROGRAMMES AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY. WE ALSO WELCOME THE UWI'S PARTNERSHIP AS WE EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES IN GHANA, GUYANA, CUBA AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL JURISDICTIONS. WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER, AND NGC LOOKS FORWARD TO DEEPENING AND CEMENTING OUR LEGACY IN ENERGY THROUGH THIS PARTNERSHIP.

THIS INDUCTION IS ALSO A SOURCE OF PERSONAL PRIDE AS A FORMER STUDENT, TUTOR, LECTURER AND DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS OF THE UNIVERSITY. INDEED, FOR MANY OTHERS ON OUR BOARD, THE NGC-UWI RELATIONSHIP GOES BEYOND AN ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION. IT IS A RELATIONSHIP IN WHICH WE ARE HIGHLY INVESTED. WE ARE PRODUCTS OF THE UNIVERSITY AND SHARE ITS VISION TO ACTIVELY DRIVE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S DEVELOPMENT.

THEREFORE, PROFESSOR COPELAND, BE ASSURED THAT AS THE BATON CHANGES HANDS, IT IS A RACE WE WILL RUN TOGETHER, AS WE AT NGC ARE COMMITTED TO A CLOSER COLLABORATION AND A STRONGER PARTNERSHIP WITH THE UWI. WE AT NGC WISH YOU CONTINUED SUCCESS AND MAY YOUR LEGACY BE DEFINED BY CLARITY OF VISION, COURAGE AND POSITIVE TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE. BOTH UWI AND OUR SOCIETY REQUIRE IT.

I THANK YOU.