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Welcome Remarks

Delivered By

Moonilal Lalchan
President

Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of
Industry
and Commerce

**On the occasion of the Chamber's
9th Annual Business Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony 2013
Regency Room, Hyatt Trinidad Hotel
Saturday 16th November 2013
5:00PM – 9:30PM**

Good evening and welcome to the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce's 9th Annual Business Hall of Fame Gala Dinner and Induction Ceremony!

Such a large presence here this evening, as we all meet in honour of another three of our local business greats, symbolises to me, the great esteem in which we hold our successful business men and women of our country, and I am proud, as President of the Chamber, to be the host for an evening such as this.

Each year, our Business Hall of Fame seeks to fill that niche that we alone can fill, as the Chamber that represents ALL business sectors, whether large or small, throughout our twin island Republic. Our Business Hall of Fame, open to all sectors recognises our prominent business and community leaders who have made extraordinary contributions to Trinidad and Tobago, earned the respect of the local - and even international - business community and helped to shape the quality of life which our citizens enjoy today.

Each year, those individuals inducted into our Hall of Fame are chosen because they have, over many years, demonstrated business excellence, took great

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risks, been courageous thinkers, had great vision, were innovative and inspiring leaders, and were community minded.

And this year, it is no different.

I am therefore pleased and honoured, on behalf of the Board, Management and staff of the Chamber, to share this evening with you and our Inductees and the families of those who are no longer with us. I say congratulations to:

- Mr. Victor E. Mouttet,
- the late Mr. Carlton K. Mack, and
- the late Mr. Harry Sooknarine.

I am sure Mr. Mack and Mr. Sooknarine are both here with us in spirit.

Please join me in congratulating our 2013 Inductees.

(ROUND OF APPLAUSE)

I also acknowledge and welcome our Feature Speaker, Mr. Brendan Paddick, CEO and Chairman of Columbus International Inc., who has flown into Trinidad just to attend this function, and spend some time with us discussing the topic: "Maximising Business Opportunities in the Caribbean Region". Mr Paddick's extensive resume is a very impressive one and, despite his youthful looks, his experience spans over decades in the international telecommunications industry.

But what impressed us the most, is that Mr Paddick is a visionary - he sees where the opportunities and needs are and he sets about to fill them, and this is a

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testimony to his ability to have built the very successful global brand Columbus International Inc is today. Mr Paddick - welcome and thank you for taking the time to be with us this evening.

I am certain I speak on behalf of everyone when I say that we are looking forward to hearing and learning from your story of opportunity and success.

Our Inductees and our Feature Speaker clearly show us that successful business leadership ultimately results in leaving a successful legacy for generations to follow.

I daresay in the same way, the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce has also been a success story in leadership, having been the premier Voice of Business, serving the needs of the private sector in Trinidad and Tobago for over a century. In fact, next year, in 2014, we will celebrate our 135th Anniversary! We are certainly proud that we have continued to thrive and weather the test of time to be a strong force for lobbying and advocacy on behalf of our Membership.

I am also proud to say that we continue to grow our Membership month after month. To us at the Chamber, and certainly to me, as President, it shows that the private sector continues to see the Chamber as a leader and a viable partner for business growth and development in Trinidad and Tobago.

Being a leader is a responsibility that we do not take lightly. As such, we have continued to evolve and provide services to our Members that, quite often, not only benefit them, but are to the benefit of the wider business and national community as well.

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Our Trade and Business Development Unit has led our business community on various informative and rewarding trade missions to several potential trading partner nations, from those in the emerging Latin America region, to those in the well established European Union.

This Unit, which is key in the provision of services to our Members, has continued to respond to daily calls from our Membership to provide them with vital research information and other requests that are needed. They also make several one-to-one business connections for our Members through meetings with incoming business Missions, such as the one we hosted this year with Argentina.

We also lead the way in international trade issues, as our International Trade Negotiations Unit represents our Members' views on various trade negotiations - whether with CARICOM, the European Union or, more recently, Canada and Latin American countries.

Many of our activities are carried out through the volunteer contributions and talents of the employees of our Membership. We are ever so grateful to our Members for giving of their time to help the Chamber deliver on our agenda to focus on public education on various topics including Crime, SME Development and Economic development.

We have also been instrumental in championing the establishment of various initiatives to build our nation, such as the T&T Debates Commission, Crime Stoppers and the Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre.

Our Events Unit continues to execute various functions for business networking, such as this Gala event, and our Marketing and Communications Unit continues

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to find new and creative ways to reach out and communicate with our Members and offer them innovative promotional BUSINESS TO BUSINESS (B2B) opportunities.

Our Tobago Division, under the able stewardship of our Tobago Chair, remains active in leading the charge for lobbying on behalf of business interests in Tobago. We are the only Chamber with a Division dedicated solely to the development of the private sector in our sister isle.

So you see, ladies and gentlemen, that just as our Inductees into the Business Hall of Fame, the Chamber's leadership over the years has proven to be visionary and strong - anticipating the needs of our Members and responding to their call.

We certainly understand the hard work and dedication that it takes to build and sustain a successful business, and so it would be remiss of the Chamber if we did not take the time, through our Business Hall of Fame, to celebrate and honour those who have been working assiduously to build the economy of Trinidad and Tobago, and make our country a better place to live and do business.

And so, I wish to recognise our Corporate Investors of the 2013 Business Hall of Fame, who have once again made it possible for this celebration to happen. We have been privileged to have First Citizens as an Investor for a 7th consecutive year - this year as our Exclusive Platinum Investor. For the first year, we have introduced additional corporate investment opportunities, and I am pleased that our Membership has risen to the challenge. So we welcome Columbus Communications as our Exclusive Diamond Investor, and Shell Trinidad and Atlantic as Gem Investors.

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Ladies and gentlemen, you have allowed me to say much this evening, but before I close, please permit me to say one more thing. Our Business Hall of Fame would not be possible without the involvement of you, the business community, letting us know of those deserving to be inducted into the Hall. I therefore make the call, in advance, for nominations for our 10th Annual Hall of Fame, to be held in 2014. If you know of a business man or woman who has made a significant contribution to Trinidad and Tobago - both through enterprise and community service - I invite you to contact our Events team as early as possible with your nomination.

With that said, ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for your indulgence, and I now invite you to sit back, relax and enjoy the evening of entertainment that we have planned for you. I thank you.

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