

2016



WELCOME REMARKS

**Delivered by
Mr. Davlin Thomas
Director, Tourism Development Company**

**Meet the Convention Bureau Business Forum
Banquet & Conference Centre
MovieTowne, Port of Spain**

**Friday 19th August, 2016
8am – 12noon**

- **The Honourable Shamfa Cudjoe, Minister of Tourism**
- **Mrs. Vidiah Ramkhelawan, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Tourism and other Permanent Secretaries**
- **Mrs. Satie Jamraj- Marimuthu, Deputy Permanent Secretary(Ag.), Ministry of Tourism**
- **Mr. Richard Duncan, Chairman of the Board of Directors and other Board members of the TDC**
- **Mr. Warren Solomon, Chief Executive Officer (Ag.), TDC**
- **Ms. Connie Kinnard, Vice President, Multiculturalism Tourism & Development, Greater Miami Convention Bureau**
- **Ms. Arveon Mills, Sales Manager, Trinidad and Tobago Convention Bureau**
- **Management and Staff of the TDC and Ministry of Tourism**
- **Heads of Tourism Stakeholder Organisations**
- **Industry Partners**
- **Specially Invited Guests**
- **Members of the Media**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**



Good morning.

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the “Meet Your Convention Bureau” Business Forum. Thank you for taking the time to spend the morning with us.

The Tourism Development Company is on a mission to make Trinidad and Tobago the meetings and conferences capital of the Caribbean. MICE – the industry-term for Meetings Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions – is a specialised field, dedicated to planning, booking and facilitating conferences, seminars, meetings and other events. It is considered the pearl in the tourism crown since, according to the International Congress and Convention Association, business tourists tend to spend more than the leisure traveller.

Here in Trinidad and Tobago, our local research shows that the average daily spend for a business visitor is US\$161.50 and for a MICE visitor, it is US\$146.20. Compare this to our average leisure visitor spend US\$87.40 per day.



Thus, given our country's reputation as the business capital of the Caribbean, our nation's ranking as having the largest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the English speaking Caribbean and second largest in Latin America and the Caribbean, and of course the higher spending by business travellers, MICE is choice niche for us to pursue and develop.

This morning's forum forms a part of our campaign to raise awareness of the services of our Convention Bureau, which exists to ensure that our goal of increasing Trinidad and Tobago's share of the MICE market is increased through effective and targeted marketing in collaboration with all key stakeholders.

The Bureau offers a comprehensive suite of complimentary services to help you with the hosting of exhibitions, meetings and conferences, including assistance with international bidding – something that can be tedious, time consuming and expensive. You will hear more about the other great services we offer to meeting



planners to ensure the successful planning and execution of your events from our next speaker.

Once again, it is a pleasure to welcome you all to the Meet your Convention Bureau Business Forum. I trust that the information provided today will give you the confidence to consider hosting your next meeting, conference or exhibition right here in Trinidad and Tobago. We have the expertise, facilities and infrastructure to ensure well-executed MICE events. And of course, you have the Convention Bureau to hold your hand every step of the way. In partnership with you, we can indeed become the Meetings and Conventions capital of the Caribbean.

Enjoy the morning with us. Thank you.