



**High Commission of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Pretoria, South Africa**

Ladies and Gentlemen

I bring you greetings from the Government and people of Trinidad and Tobago.

I also wish to express my appreciation to the management of ISEGEN for the tremendous privilege you have bestowed upon me to participate in this ceremony, which represents one of the greatest milestones in Trinidad and Tobago / South Africa relations in the current post-apartheid era.

Of course, I am extremely grateful for the opportunity afforded me to visit this beautiful city which, I am convinced, is the most vibrant and progressive region in all of South Africa.

I believe, ladies and gentlemen, it would be somewhat difficult for you to appreciate the intensity of the emotions that I am feeling at this moment, as you may not be aware that this event represents the first major tangible evidence of enhanced bilateral ties between Trinidad and Tobago and South Africa, since I assumed office in Pretoria some eleven (11) months ago.

When, in September, 2003, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago took the very inspired decision to establish a Diplomatic Mission in Pretoria, this decision was based upon a clear understanding and recognition, not only of the dominant role that South Africa is playing in the social, economic, political and cultural landscape of the entire continent of Africa, but also upon an appreciation of the prospects that existed for a quantum leap in the enhancement of the economic and commercial ties we enjoyed.

Today's ceremony is, therefore, an event of special significance for me, as it demonstrates the fact that Trinidad and Tobago and South Africa are poised to embark on a glorious journey together; a journey which has the capacity to bring important economic benefits to our respective populations.

I am extremely confident, Mr. Chairman, that this is only the beginning, for in the coming years, I know that we shall continue to make even greater strides, as we set about the task of integrating the human and other resources of these two States, and, in so doing, we shall succeed in enhancing the quality of life of our citizenry.

On behalf of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, I wish to thank ISEGEN for the confidence it has bestowed upon the people of Trinidad and Tobago, in its decision to establish its plant on our shores.

I wish to assure you that you will not regret this decision, as I am conscious of the fact that we have in Trinidad and Tobago a Government which has adopted a range of policies that are extremely supportive of the activities of the business community, both domestic and foreign. We are also blessed with a population that is extremely skilled, literate and industrious; elements which are guaranteed to make a success of this initiative of yours.

And I know that, having established your maleic anhydride facility in Trinidad and Tobago, you will not rest on your laurels, for you will soon recognize (if you have not yet done so) that there are tons of other business opportunities just waiting to be exploited by men of vision, as exist within the management team of ISEGEN.

Within the petrochemical sector alone, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has already identified several priority areas for investment. These include, to name a few:

Projects downstream of ammonia, methanol and natural gas liquids such as formaldehyde, dimethyl ether, DMT, methylamines, MMA, formaldehyde resins, nitric acid, ammonium sulphate, UAN, as well as such products as acrylonitrile, cumene, acrylates, iso-propyl alcohol, oxo-alcohols, MTBE, butadiene and sulphuric acid.

The National Gas Company (NGC) is quite eager to attract investment for the production of one or more ethylene derivatives, as well as derivatives of propylene. In short, Trinidad and Tobago is committed to a strategy of continually seeking opportunities to upgrade its gas-derived resources to the greatest extent possible, so as to maximize the returns from our exploitation of this important natural resource.

And we pursue this objective through the establishment of partnerships and alliances with *important players in the global industry, such as ISEGEN, who share our vision in pursuing the development of viable downstream industries.*

Ladies and gentlemen, in closing, I wish to urge you to take a close look at the investment opportunities currently existing in Trinidad and Tobago, of which I have only mentioned a few in the energy sector.

I also trust that you will spread the word in the right circles that Trinidad and Tobago is overflowing with business opportunities, and please do not lose sight of the fact that my High Commission in Pretoria is available to facilitate any initiative that you may wish to pursue.

You can call on us at any time, and we shall be only too happy to extend to you the courteous, energetic and friendly service for which we, the people of Trinidad and Tobago, are internationally known.

My husband, John, and I thank you for the invitation to participate in this important ceremony, and, as always, we do appreciate the warm and generous hospitality of the residents of the city Durban.

I wish ISEGEN every success in this initiative, and hope that we shall all derive important benefits from the seed that you are planting today.

Ladies and gentlemen. I thank you.