

Meeting with Standing Committee for the Strategic
and Sustainable Development of Tourism

February 12, 2016

farrells

2016

Getting all our citizens involved in the Tourism effort is of singular importance not only in diversifying the economy away from energy but in creating a rallying point to motivate and stimulate action on the part of our citizens.

I want to start with this in order to point out the sudden high relief that the tourist industry has attracted in the face of flagging energy prices.

The requirement is urgent for the sector to step up and provide to this country an alternative provider of foreign reserves and employment.

This is a mammoth task and one that we take on in a sober manner.

It is why this standing committee is so important.

You are mandated to use scientific means to provide to us recommendations that will allow us to embrace this new mantle.

I wish to quote Vision 2020 in order to provide you the guidance for your deliberations

Vision 2020

By the year 2020 the Trinidad and Tobago tourism product will be a significant economic sector contributing significantly to the nation's GDP through job creation and increased revenues driven by a uniquely differentiated, internationally competitive product complemented by comprehensive, fully functional physical infrastructure, modern competitive institutional framework, and supported by the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

This is the vision that we embrace and wish to achieve.

Terms of reference are sometimes very specific and can be stifling.

In this instance it is broad.

You are being asked to take this Vision, flesh out the constituent parts, do the research and analysis and provide us with some meaningful recommendations.

Included in this vision is a requirement for the support of the people of Trinidad and Tobago so that it is expected that you would include comprehensive public education programmes in your recommendations as they may be appropriate. I see this as an important aspect of our overall thrust. The people of Trinidad and Tobago must also understand the need and the importance of being a part of the tourism effort

You may have many questions to refine your focus and we are here to discuss those questions.

The direction is clear.

I would like to see an initial report in six weeks as to your considerations and directions and we can have further discussions then on what you are developing.

However at this meeting we shall take the opportunities to deal with questions that can help you refine your parameters and focus.