



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
**MINISTRY OF TOURISM**

Address by

The Honourable Shamfa Cudjoe  
Minister of Tourism

At the

Handover of Package 1 of the Maracas Beach Facility Improvement  
Project

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2017

Maracas Beach, North Coast Road

- Senator the Honourable Rohan Sinanan, Minister of Works and  
Transport
- The Dr the Honourable Nyan Gadsby-Dolly, Minister of Community  
Development, Culture and the Arts and MP for St Ann's East
- Mr Herbert George, Chairman, NIDCO
- Permanent Secretaries
- Other Specially Invited Guests
- Members of the Media
- Ladies and gentlemen

*On any given Sunday, Maracas Bay is never empty. Its beauty – off white sand, palm trees and blue-green waters – attracts beach lovers to this crescent coast line which stretches for 2 km. Call it a pilgrimage if you will. The tumbling waves, with an average height of 1 meter (3 feet), make it an ideal place for body or board surfing. The expanse of beach is enough to accommodate the sunbather who likes her space or the nature lover who welcomes the sea blast as they set up camp. Maracas Bay has also garnered the reputation for being the lunch spot with an idyllic view. Known as the home of bake and shark, this destination is host to a variety of vendors who prepare the tasty offering. The secret, they say, is in the sauce. Really, the sauce – the tamarind sauce, the pepper sauce, garlic sauce – as these give the edge in deciding the best bake and shark among the huts that sell them.*

*The most popular beach in Trinidad, Maracas Bay is home to great tans, exciting surf and the wildly popular local street food known as bake and shark.*

Good Morning.

Isn't this a wonderful way to start our work day? Here we are in this idyllic setting of sun, sea, and sand – the picture perfect scene which brings thousands of residents and visitors to this popular liming spot. And with the enhancements which the Maracas Beach Facility is currently undergoing, the setting which will bring many, many more vacationers to this well-known and well-loved beach.

It has been over 15 years that Maracas Bay facility had been carded for refurbishment. Year after year, contractor after contractor, government after government, minister after minister...we've been hoping and waiting, some even praying that this project would come to completion.

Ladies and gentlemen you may recall that the upgrade of the Maracas Beach Facility was transferred by Cabinet decision to the Ministry of Works through the National Infrastructure Development Company (NIDCO) and the Programme for Upgrading Roads Efficiency (PURE). Cabinet also vested the Maracas Beach

Facility to the Ministry of Tourism to institute the management and operational arrangements for the site.

The Ministry of Tourism now has the responsibility for the Maracas Beach Facility's:

**Security**- we intend to improve security arrangements and additionally, under the Ministry's Development Programme, the Ministry has identified funding to install security surveillance systems and WIFI throughout the facility;

**Janitorial Services** – We will ensure that the highest hygienic standards are met and exceeded;

**Leasing of facilities** – Following consultations with the Commissioner of Valuations, lease arrangements will be entered into with the respective vendors in keeping with the booth allocation process; and

**Revenue Collection** - A pricing structure for the use of the carpark and the washroom facilities is currently being determined and the public will be advised.

**However in the interim, the Ministry wishes to advise the public that the carpark will be available for use at no cost for the month of December.**

Ladies and gentlemen, today I am pleased to note the progress of the work being undertaken to improve this site, and I want to congratulate the Minister of Works and Transport and the members of his Ministry for their efforts in ensuring that this Maracas Facility meets international standards.

Phase by phase, we are positively changing Maracas Beach to better suit the needs of the many persons who regularly use this location for rest, recreation, rejuvenation and to enjoy quality time with family and friends.

I don't want to steal Minister Sinanan's thunder, but I believe the upgraded carpark can hold over 350 cars and I am certain we have dealt with problem of flooding and the potential danger of pedestrians having to cross the North Coast Road to access the beach. Of course the vendors' booths will no longer occupy the car park space but will be on the beach which will more accessible to their customers. So there are a lot of changes in progress and much more to look out for at Maracas.

I also wish to add that in view of the improvements at the Maracas Beach Facility, the Ministry of Tourism intends to utilise this site as a unique selling point in our international marketing and promotional campaign. Whether you arrive by sea, air or you are staying to get away, this Maracas Beach Facility will be prominently featured in all our marketing campaigns.

At the Ministry of Tourism we understand the impact a successful tourism sector can have on our economy and we want Trinidad and Tobago to get a larger slice of the lucrative international tourism market.

But it's a very competitive market, with a diverse range of offerings and all aspects of our destination must meet and hopefully exceed international standards and expectations.

Our aim is to have both locals and visitors appreciate and embrace what we have to offer and, especially for our visitors, we want them to tell positive stories about their Trinbago experience.

So let's take care of our Maracas Beach Facility and all the other beaches and attractions we have throughout our country. Let's enjoy the beauty, serenity, adventure and excitement that's Trinidad and Tobago.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you.