

## **CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME MESSAGE AGM 2016**

### **Salutations**

- Honorable Minister Jacques Rousseau, Minister of Public Works, Transport & Communication Haiti
- Honorable George Lightbourne, Minister of Home Affairs, Transportation, and Communication TCI
- Mr. Maarten Boute Chairman of the Digicel Haiti and host of this event
- Mr. Carlos Caceres, Chief Executive Officer, Digicel Haiti
- Mr. Jean Marie Guillame, General Director, CONATEL
- Mr. Leon Williams, Vice Chair of CANTO
- Mrs. Helma Etnel, Treasurer of CANTO
- Board of Directors of CANTO
- Mrs. Teresa Wankin, Acting Secretary General of CANTO
- Senior Government Officials and Regulators
- Members of CANTO
- Sponsors and exhibitors
- Other invited guests
- Ladies and gentlemen

### **Introduction**

It is for me an absolute pleasure to be hosting this AGM in Haiti for the first time. I have always believed that it was very important to support Haiti by having this AGM here. I'm happy about that decision. And here's another first - It's the first time that Digicel is hosting the CANTO AGM.

It is indeed an honour and a privilege to be Chairman of CANTO for the past year. As chair this is my first AGM. I thank you, the members, for the opportunity to serve.

Very challenging times lie ahead. Network operators are facing not only the onslaught of a rapidly evolving converged environment which creates further competition, but also a decrease in revenues as a result of over-the-top players. This is having a major impact on the operators. At the same time, we are required to spend vast amounts of capital to deliver high speed Broadband to all of our Caribbean consumers. Our CANTO organization, therefore, is even more relevant today as it

provides an opportunity for establishing common ground to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

Let me remind you of **Our Vision**: To become the leading authority in shaping information and communication in the Caribbean.

So how did we perform in 2015? **Let's look at our achievements.**

First – our Working Committees:

- We are trying to provide our members with more value and opportunities for working closer together. During the year we introduced two new working committees, the Vendor working committee and the newly introduced Technology Trends working committee. This brings the total number of working committees to eight (8). We have restructured our working committee meetings at the AGM to give more time for members to consider key issues and report back to the Board of Directors. Instead of having our working committee meetings on a Sunday morning we now have these meetings Monday morning allowing sufficient time for discussions and giving the individual member the opportunity to attend 2 or more meetings. We want committees to be more focused on deliverables – we have requested at least 3 deliverables every 6 months as a target – ultimately increasing the value to our membership. At our Board meeting on Saturday, to promote 'good corporate governance' we agreed that our working committee chair persons would have 2 year terms, which is renewable upon review of the CANTO Board.
  
- During this AGM you will be hearing about the work of our committees.

Lobbying: This was probably our most significant achievement in 2015.

- We successfully lobbied for future mobile services in the UHF Band to go forward to the World Radio Conference
  - CANTO successfully lobbied Caribbean countries to vote for mobile service for the UHF Band at the Inter-American Telecommunications Commission meeting (CITEL). Mobile

- Services in the UHF band went forward to WRC 15 as a Multi-Country proposal;
- Background: In our CITELE region - previously 13 countries mainly from South America voted for 'no change' in the UHF band e.g. for the exclusive use for Broadcasters;
  - We lobbied for a number of months to obtain at least 3 Caribbean countries to support mobile service as the primary allocation in the UHF band;
  - On the 19<sup>th</sup> August at the CITELE meeting four (4) Caribbean countries officially declared their support for mobile services bringing the total countries opposed to eight (8) countries. This allowed us to have the more than 50% needed to block the 'no change' vote. This action meant that the 13 countries that supported the broadcasters were not able to go forward with a CITELE Inter-American Proposal (IAP) to the World Radio conference in Geneva held from 2-27 November, 2015. Mobile services for the UHF band in the Caribbean region (ITU Region 2) was still alive;
  - A new Multi-Country Proposal was drafted by the FCC and GSMA that supported mobile services for the UHF band – this was presented at the World Radio Conference in Geneva;
  - One should note that because of this lobbying by CANTO, CITELE was the only regional body out of the six (6) Global ITU regions that did not support 'no change' for the UHF Band at the World radio conference.
  - After the CITELE conference I received **Feedback from the Federal Communications Commission, the Chief of the International Bureau, Mindel De La Torre:** and I quote "just a note to thank you for your extraordinary efforts on the UHF band with the Caribbean countries. We really couldn't have done it without your leadership." End of quote. In other words **well done CANTO.**
  - At the WRC meeting – working with the GSM Association a new allocation strategy was adopted to attract more countries but allowing members to support part of the UHF band for mobile services
  - We saw increasing support from a number of countries
  - GSMA Statement at the end of the WRC summarised the outcome; "Allowing both mobile and broadcasting in the

UHF band gives these governments the ability to respond to the changing needs of their citizens”. The GSMA went on to say:

- “The sub-700MHz band is now available for mobile in markets covering more than half the population of the Americas and, in addition, several major markets within the Indian subcontinent announced their intention to use part of this band for mobile broadband.”
  - This momentum all started at the CITEL meeting where Caribbean countries came together for a common cause – CANTO was a driving force.
  - Ladies and gentlemen – CANTO Lobbying works!
- **Another achievement - Unsolicited Texts – CANTO encouraged the BVI Regulator to accept a voluntary code of practice rather than introducing new regulation.**
    - Background: After a meeting between the Regulator and the operators (Digicel, Lime and CCT) it was agreed that a voluntary code of conduct would be used where operators would liaise and come up with an industry solution informing customers of their ability to opt out of receiving marketing texts. In fact the Regulator is here in the audience – I would like to recognize and thank Mr. Guy Malone, CEO BVI Regulator for his support to CANTO over many years. Guy could you stand please? (Please show your appreciation). Guy has been attending CANTO for more than 25 years.
    - CANTO was involved in an industry led solution with the Regulator rather than introducing new regulation. This initiative was supported by the CANTO regulatory working committee.
    - Ladies and gentlemen this is what can happen when you build relations with all of our stakeholders. Building relations is paramount for the CANTO organisation.

In terms of building relationships we are actively seeking new partnerships which ties into our theme: **Inspiring ICT Innovations:**

## **Building an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem through Sustainable Strategic Partnerships.**

- Building a partnership with ECLAC - the ECLAC project on Disaster Risk Management – a joint initiative with the United Nations economic Commission for Latin America & the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the CANTO Disaster Recovery Planning working committee. This project seeks to evaluate Disaster Planning and Response processes and to develop methodologies for assessing Damage and Loss Assessments for the telecom sector in the region.
- We are building relations with LACNIC – the Regional Internet Registry for the Latin American and Caribbean regions.
- Also building relations with ICANN – the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
  
- We are focusing more on ‘CANTO Public Relations’ – our members are attending conferences on behalf of CANTO to help spread the word about CANTO and its work.
  - For example: in August I presented at the Technology and Innovation for the Digital Economy conference – on the topic ‘Incentivising Broadband’– based on our regulatory committee paper
  - In October, Christa Onika Leith (TSTT), a member from our Regulatory committee attended the GSMA conference in Brazil – she presented a Case Study: Plans and strategies for the 700Mhz band in the Caribbean. This presentation is discussed in the latest Cancion magazine.
  - In December the Vice Chair of our CSR Committee, Gervon Abraham (TSTT) presented at the 5<sup>th</sup> ITU Green Standards Week in the Bahamas
  
- In addition, a number of outstanding CANTO Staff matters have been dealt with – I believe that our staff are highly motivated and ready to serve our members

We are very focused on deliverables for our members, every year we will report back our achievements at the AGM – this is very important so our members see the value.

## **The Conference and Exhibition last year**

With over 500 delegates at the 2015 Conference and Exhibition in Miami, our status as the number one ICT/Telecoms event in the Caribbean has certainly been confirmed.

### **CANTO Secretariat Leadership**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> October Mrs. Teresa Wankin was appointed the Acting Secretary General of CANTO. Our Vice Chair, Leon Williams made an important observation at one of the Board meetings. Leon commended the leadership of the Secretariat on the handling of the transition process. He indicated that he visited with the Secretariat Staff in Trinidad, and was pleased that there was no disruption whilst the Secretariat was in transition.

### **In Conclusion**

So as you can see we are working towards **our vision**: To become the leading authority in shaping information and communication in the Caribbean.

### **I would like to give some Acknowledgements**

Throughout the year, my Directors have consistently demonstrated their commitment and support. Their enthusiasm has played an essential role in responding to the challenges experienced in 2015. I am truly grateful to my colleagues and Directors for their efforts in ensuring the Organisation's continued progress.

In the face of increasing competition and converging technologies, CANTO's overall performance would not have been possible without the commitment, teamwork and dedication of the CANTO Secretariat Management and Staff. Your ever-present will to succeed is admirable and very much appreciated.

I would like to give special thanks to the staff from Digicel Haiti. Thank you very much for your support in hosting this event.

Finally, to all our full and affiliate members and indeed all stakeholders, I express my heartfelt thanks for your continued patronage and support

to the CANTO organisation. We will continue to support you in 2016 and well into the future.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank you all and best wishes for 2016. I wish you all a successful CANTO AGM

Thank you and God Bless.

Julian Wilkins  
CANTO Chairman