

**DRAFT MINUTES OF CANTO'S 37<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
9<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2021 (VIRTUAL EVENT)**

**Time: 1.00pm**

**Board of Directors Present**

Mr. David Cox - Chairman – Cable & Wireless Grenada Ltd.

Mr. Mike Antonius – Vice Chair, TELESUR, Suriname

Mrs. Helma Etnel - Treasurer – TELEM, St. Maarten

Mr. Julian Wilkins – Digicel Trinidad & Tobago

Mr. Delreo Newman - Director - ATN International, USA

Mr. Justin Nedd – Director- GT&T, Guyana

Ms. Christa Leith - Director -TSTT, Trinidad & Tobago

Ms. Melesia Sutherland – Director- Cable & Wireless Antigua & Barbuda Ltd.

Mrs. Teresa Wankin - Secretary General – CANTO

**EXCUSED**

Mrs. Desha Clifford - Director - Digicel, Turks & Caicos Ltd.

**FULL MEMBERS PRESENT**

Antigua Public Utilities Authority

C&W Antigua & Barbuda

C&W Cayman

C&W Communications

C&W Dominica

C&W Grenada

Cable Bahamas

Digicel - Trinidad

ETECSA

Guyana T&T co.

ALIV Limited

SETAR

Speednet

TELEM

Telesur

TSTT

ATNI

Innovative Telephone Corporation (Viya)

Antigua

Cayman Islands

USA

Dominica

Grenada

Bahamas

Trinidad

Cuba

Guyana

Bahamas

Aruba

Belize

St. Maarten

Suriname

Trinidad

USA

USVI

## MEMBERS REPRESENTED BY PROXY

BTC	Bahamas
C&W Barbados	Barbados
C&W Anguilla	Anguilla
C&W BVI	BVI
C&W Jamaica	Jamaica
C&W Panama	Panama
C&W St. Kitts & Nevis	St. Kitts-Nevis
C&W St. Lucia	St. Lucia
C&W St. Vincent	St. Vincent
C&W Turks & Caicos	TCI
Col. Comm Curacao	Curacao
Col. Comm Trinidad	Trinidad
Digicel - Aruba	Aruba
Digicel - Bermuda	Bermuda
Digicel - Bonaire	Bonaire
Digicel - Grenada	Grenada
Digicel - Turks & Caicos	TCI
Digicel Anguilla	Anguilla
Digicel BVI	BVI
Digicel Cayman Island	Cayman Island
Digicel Dominica	Dominica
Digicel St. Kitts & Nevis	St. Kitts-Nevis
Digicel St. Lucia	St. Lucia
Digicel St. Vincent	St. Vincent
UTS	Curacao

## OPENING

The Secretary General thanked the members for their participation in the conference sessions on the previous day, highlighting that they are now on the second day of the AGM, during which the statutory obligations of the organization would be met. She indicated that this meeting is the first (1<sup>st</sup>) virtual AGM meeting due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. A roll call was taken to officially determine attendance.

The Chairman welcomed the members to the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting, reiterating that due to the pandemic this meeting was done virtually. He stated that due to the current environment, special rules and protocols were developed for this virtual meeting. He then took the members through the Virtual AGM Protocols by reading the instructions to them. Members were requested to write their company's name on their zoom titles. He advised that the traditional head table will be used; that is Chairman, Vice Chairman and Treasurer.

After a few questions were addressed on the protocols, the Chairman inquired whether there were any further questions pertaining to the instructions, there being no more, he proceeded to convene the meeting.

### **NOTICE OF MEETING**

The notice convening the meeting was circulated to the members on 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2020 and proposed such as being read by all members in attendance.

### **INTRODUCTION OF DIRECTORS**

The Chairman introduced the Directors: Mr. Mike Antonius - Vice Chairman, TELESUR - Suriname whom he advised would join later as he was at another meeting and sent his apologies; Mrs. Helma Etnel – Treasurer, TELEM, St. Maarten; Mr. Julian Wilkins – Digicel Trinidad & Tobago; Ms. Christa Leith - Telecommunications Services of Trinidad & Tobago; Mr. Delreo Newman – ATNI, USA; Mr. Justin Nedd - GT&T, Guyana. He commended each director individually for their distinct support in their respective areas of expertise, paying recognition to each of their extraordinary contributions on the Board. He complimented them, stating that he appreciated their efforts, loyalty and dedication to the work they have been doing on the Board. He informed the meeting that Mrs. Desha Clifford was not present due to illness and he wished her a speedy recovery.

### **PROXIES AND QUORUM RECEIVED**

The Secretary General was called upon for verification of a quorum. Mrs. Teresa Wankin, who functioned as Secretary of the AGM, confirmed that there was the required quorum for the meeting.

She reported that twenty-five (25) proxies were received and seventeen (17) full members were present. The Secretary General announced that there was a total of forty-two (42) full members representing a quorum of 95% of the membership. The Secretary General confirmed that the required quorum of thirty (30%) of the active members of the association were present, being either a member entitled to vote or a duly appointed proxy holder or representative of a company so entitled; and had thus been satisfied.

## **ITEM 1: CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The Chairman advised all present that they would have received the Minutes of the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting and as such it was taken as read. He then asked if there were any proposed changes or amendments to the text. As there were no changes, he moved the motion to confirm the Minutes of the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting. On a motion moved by Cable & Wireless Antigua & Barbuda, seconded by TSTT, the minutes were approved as presented. The motion was declared unanimously carried.

## **ITEM 2: MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

The Chairman asked if there were any questions regarding the Matters Arising from the Minutes of the last meeting. There were no hands raised, therefore, the Chairman moved to the next agenda item.

## **ITEM 3: PRESENTATION OF COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Presentations of all Working Committee reports were compiled as one amalgamated report and presented via a power point presentation. The major achievements for 2020 and plans for 2021 were highlighted for each of the eight committees.

The Chairman opened the floor for any questions, comments or any issues or challenges on the presentation, and invited the respective Committee Chair-person to respond. He recognised that there were no raised hands and concluded to move to the next agenda item.

The Chairman thanked the Committee Chairs for their work for the last two (2) years to support CANTO. He stated that the work of the committees is important to the Association; pointing out that they had broadened the scope of the work of CANTO; brought a depth of richness in experience to the organization and indicated that they had broadened CANTO's reach and helped it to be a better organisation. He acknowledged the hard work of the committee members who have taken their time to contribute to the mission of CANTO.

## **ITEM 4: SECRETARIAT REPORT**

The Chairman invited the Secretary General to provide the main highlights of her report, which was previously circulated to the membership via the Annual Report, and was taken as read.

The Secretary General reported that they had to refocus for 2021 and noted that when the 36<sup>th</sup> AGM was convened last February at the Melia International in Cuba, no one could have ever imagined the horrific reality that a microscopic virus would have on their lives, livelihoods, and the world's socio-economic well-being.

She recognized that at the current, 37<sup>th</sup> AGM, members could not meet in person; but rather as the new-normal dictates – a virtual gathering of colleagues sharing a digital space was required.

She indicated that the 37<sup>th</sup> AGM and supporting activities marked their second virtual networking event - citing **CANTO Connect 2** which was held in 2020, – was targeted to all members and stakeholders in the ICT Industry. Therefore, the pandemic helped the Secretariat to realign its focus and strategies. She indicated that the slide presented said it all – highlighting the changes which were required to deal with the “new normal.”

She noted specifically, that while the AGM in February 2020 was held in Cuba, participants of the present AGM were forced to work in their own offices or homes or wherever else, their work-stations were located.

Reflecting on the subject of how the Secretariat managed to navigate the pandemic with forty-four (44) members in over thirty (30) countries in the region and internationally, the Secretary General reported they did so by keeping in communication with the members via the following:

### **COVID-19 Task Force**

The COVID-19 Task Force was quickly activated shortly after the pandemic began. The platform was used to communicate with all the members. She reported it is still alive, although the meetings were closed, the products of the Task Force are ongoing and are being delivered.

The COVID-19 Taskforce established in March 2020 had approximately 90% of the membership present in the Task Force meeting. It was the first time all the members came together relatively quickly to share information and provide updates and highlights on what was happening in their respective countries about COVID-19 and how they were dealing with it.

### **eMarketing Campaign**

The eMarketing Campaign was developed due to the fact that the Secretariat was working virtually and had to find a way to communicate with members quickly and identify what type of information the members needed help with in light of the pandemic.

## **CANTO Conversations**

With commitment from the CANTO Secretariat, Board of Directors and membership, CANTO was able to organize and successfully execute thirty-six (36) CANTO Conversations with almost 95% of the members having been represented in those conversations, discussing how they dealt with the pandemic. Approximately, 5% of the membership are still to be scheduled in order to complete the exercise. CANTO Conversations will resume in February 2021.

Members were informed that most of the content of the CANTO Conversations are on Facebook and YouTube and the Secretary General encouraged participants to view them.

## **Digitalization of Publications**

The Secretariat agreed on digitalization of the Cancion Magazine and Annual Report which allowed it to reap the following benefits:

- Increase the reach to audiences through the region and internationally
- Ads and articles are more interactive – customers can reach your website by a click of a mouse
- Saved resources at the Secretariat – handling and mailing costs
- Saved operating expenditure – printing costs

Members were requested to view the publications online.

## **Best Practices and Guidelines**

The Disaster Response Management (DRM) Committee produced a document on the Work from Home Protocol which received Board approval for issue to the membership. A document was also produced in collaboration with CARILEC and CDEMA on Lock Down Guidelines. This is also being circulated throughout the membership and other organizations for research.

The Regulatory Committee also developed a document on understanding Cyber Security in the region, that is being used by members in their research and development initiatives.

## **Partnership with Cenerva**

The Secretariat partnered with Cenerva and delivered three training sessions, the responses received were good and the CANTO members were able to get huge discounts. CANTO was also able to achieve some revenue from the partnership. Members were encouraged to go on the website for more information as the courses were ongoing.

## **Tech4Girls Workshop**

CANTO Collaborated with the Women in ICT Committee (WICT) and delivered Tech4Girls workshops in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. Cooperation was received from Digicel, Flow and Bmobile (TSTT) in Trinidad and Digicel and Flow in Jamaica. Over 200 girls were trained and this workshop will be continued throughout the region as it was well received by all the girls who took part.

## **E-Waste Recycling Project**

Piloted in Trinidad and Tobago with a roll out soon for the entire region for 2021. CANTO in partnership with Bmobile (TSTT), Digicel Trinidad and Tobago, Piranha and Lion's Club in Trinidad is presently working with Basel Convention to take this project throughout the region to ensure that other members in other countries reap the benefits of this project with CANTO.

## **Social Media**

The Secretary General reported that one of their mandates at the last Annual General Meeting was to improve their Social Media presence. She stated that she was pleased to report that the graph on her report showed that CANTO's social media profile was increased and that this will be continued in 2021.

Members were requested to "Stay connected – like us on Facebook; follow us on Twitter and LinkedIn; and to complete the survey" on the AGM proceedings.

The Secretary General expressed heartfelt thanks and a renewed commitment from the Secretariat team; she noted that they would not have been able to do this without the leadership of the Chairman, Board of Directors, and the membership.

She reported that she is committed to: dialogue with members to ensure CANTO is meeting their needs; address the concerns of the Associate Members; align the

delivery of services to the membership needs and implement the recommendations from the committees and surveys.

In closing the Secretary General thanked the members and Board of Directors and the Secretariat Team. She urged the members to “tell us what you think, we want to serve you better”.

The Chairman invited questions or comments from the members on the presentation of the Secretariat Report.

Director Sutherland thanked the Secretary General indicating the report spoke of a leader’s support; she remarked that this was formidable leadership style. She emphasized that it was because of the work by the Secretary General that the organization is afloat, noting that all companies could take a page from her book. In closing she thanked the Secretary General for keeping CANTO alive.

The Chairman endorsed Director Sutherland’s statement noting that it was due to the hard work of the small team at the Secretariat that they were able to pull off an excellent job given the pandemic. The Chairman also asked members to give them a round of applause.

The Chairman opened the floor for any other questions or comments; no hands were raised. The Chairman then read a resolution for the Secretariat Report for 30 September 2020 be received and adopted. On a motion moved by Digicel Trinidad and Tobago and seconded by ATNI the motion was unanimously carried.

## **ITEM 5: 2021 CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

The Chairman commenced by wishing all a safe and healthy 2021, and wished the delegates and their families, a safe passage through what he described as perilous times. His humble prayer, was that all who were with them now, would be with them in 2022, when CANTO next holds its AGM.

He indicated that when he spoke at the last AGM in 2020, it was in person. Many of them were privileged to have been physically present in Varadero, Cuba, and recalled that 2019 was a year of transition for CANTO. 2020 seemed a year of possibility. They were excited about the theme, which was - **Adapt. Enable. Innovate.**

He emphasized that little did they know how prescient that theme would prove to be. The Chairman further indicated that throughout these unprecedented times, the only constant for CANTO had been change. The changes were necessary for survival. While the COVID-19 pandemic changed the trajectory of their personal lives and the fortunes of their businesses, he was proud to state that CANTO, through the hard work of the Secretariat, truly lived out the theme, adapting to impossible challenges, enabling



talents in new and unseen ways, and innovating with new ideas and strategies, all in an effort to survive.

### **CANTO's Performance**

In a year in which our computers, tablets, smartphones and broadband connections became our lifeline to the world, and Telecommunications Operators joined the ranks of essential services, CANTO remained resilient. From the onset of the lockdowns, ways to stay engaged with membership and add value to their operations were sought. CANTO was among the first associations to establish a COVID-19 Task Force. As member countries battled the pandemic, the task force was created to share best practices on government engagement, work-from home policies, and support members by identifying common challenges brought on by COVID-19.

A series of webinars focused on the impact of the pandemic on the telecoms industry called CANTO Conversations was launched. These webinars, numbering approximately thirty-six in total; were broadcast live via Facebook and YouTube, and brought together Ministers of Government, CEOs, Senior Executives and ICT experts from across the globe, to share strategies on how the industry was coping with COVID-19. These webinars provided updates on how businesses adapted to the health crisis and provided insight to the many innovations being used by operators to meet the needs of governments, suppliers and consumers.

Unsurprisingly, there were setbacks as well. The 36th Annual Conference and Trade Exhibition had to be cancelled. The Secretariat was unbowed by this. Unwilling to accept defeat, the Secretariat sought new ways to keep CANTO strong. In September 2020, over 400 members and stakeholders attended **CANTO Connect - A Virtual Networking Event**, the first of its kind in the Caribbean telecommunications industry. The Secretariat staff was commended for their tremendous efforts in organising that event and the Chairman thanked the presenters and those who attended, for making CANTO Connect a resounding success. It was noted that this 37<sup>th</sup> AGM has been billed as CANTO Connect 2 and delegates were invited to take advantage of all the networking opportunities afforded at the virtual AGM.

He further commented that CANTO was not the only organization which was forced to adapt to the terrible circumstances of the pandemic. Operators faced a slew of challenges in 2020. In many cases, even the members were forced to develop strategies to enable entire workforces to work from home in a matter of days. They were also forced to make critical decisions about where to reduce spending. Some operators were forced to reduce the number of their employees. And nearly every network experienced a dramatic jump in demand for broadband services. Despite these challenges, operators were resilient, weathering one of the most economically challenging periods in the industry's history.

The Chairman also noted that throughout 2020, CANTO remained a potent and sober advocate on behalf of the telecoms industry, working hard to provide input and

support to governments and regulatory bodies across the region, and never missed an opportunity to highlight the adverse consequences of the pandemic on operators. Whether through direct meetings, interviews in regional press, or lobbying efforts with regional regulatory personnel, he confirmed that the advocacy continues.

### **Next Steps**

The Chairman questioned, where will they go as an Industry in a world still grappling with COVID-19. He noted that a few things became obvious. First, if 2020 had proven anything, it was that despite unprecedented challenges, the world's need for connectivity is stronger than ever. Across the globe, customers were demanding higher broadband speeds, and better and more consistent quality of service. Understandably, governments are also increasingly concerned about gaps in the provision of broadband services. Telecoms operators will likely have to do more to close these gaps, meaning that greater investments will be required in our markets, at a time when revenues are most challenged. This means that greater collaboration with governments in the region will be essential. To overcome the shared challenges, they face as a region, partnerships among all stakeholders will be more important than ever.

With respect to CANTO's journey, he reiterated that the association remains committed to the path of change on which they set out in late 2019. The Board and the Secretariat will continue to be guided by feedback from the membership. He stated that the outcomes of the strategic review undertaken last year will be continued and implemented, meaning they will continue to push CANTO in new and interesting directions, to promote growth, and resilience, and enhance relevance.

In signs of the unprecedented times in which the association is operating, last year's theme of "Adapt. Enable. Innovate" will continue. He remarked, that although the development of vaccines, means that the end of the pandemic is at least in sight, it was clear that organisations will all continue to deal with the consequences of the pandemic for years to come. Given that situation, he thought of few themes that better capture the behaviours needed to be adopted to ensure their collective survival.

As the fortunes of 2021 was highlighted, he expressed special thanks to his fellow Board of Directors, who gave so much of their time, expertise and energy to CANTO in the last year. He thanked them for their commitment to CANTO, and further added that he knew the Secretariat was deeply appreciative of the support they've received. He also offered personal thanks, for the support they have given to him as Chairman, over the last two years.

He concluded by stating their biggest debt of gratitude was owed to their doughty Secretary General and the amazing staff of the Secretariat. They could not have done this without their drive, their focus, and their creativity last year. CANTO is very lucky to have them.

### **Comments**

The Treasurer Mrs. Helma Etnel thanked the Chairman for the report indicating that he is very humble and kind. As a chairman, he was persistent and kept the Board engaged. She also remarked that besides the wonderful job done with regards to the Secretariat, he was able to keep the Board focused. He listened to what they wanted and also kept the Secretariat engaged. She expressed heartfelt gratitude to him for his time and dedication in making this dream continue to exist, and indicated that she thought it was an incredible achievement.

She stated that the transition from being in person to being virtual and to keep the real CANTO blood alive came from him and the Secretary General. In closing, she stated as a Board member she is proud to have him as Chairman which showed that in these times he is there for CANTO and thanked him for keeping them engaged.

Mr. Jeffery Baptiste of C&W Dominica endorsed the contributions of the Chairman noting that he saw an incredible number of communications coming from CANTO via the conversations. He stated that he was proud to say that the Chairman's leadership steered the Secretariat in the right direction. He commented that he saw enough in the middle of the pandemic from CANTO which demonstrated that the entire organisation was engaged and focused on keeping the entire industry engaged.

Mr. Delreo Newman of ATNI echoed the sentiments from everyone and congratulated the Chairman for a great job and also to the Secretary General and her team.

Director Sutherland indicated that the Chairman had to put a lot of work to keep the organisation on track leading towards a good future. Fellow Directors were aware of the effort put in behind the scenes. She acknowledged that he worked very hard to represent CANTO and reminded all that CANTO is an organisation for the entire region, so it is important that the organisation survives and does well, as they need a regional organisation to speak for the region. She closed by thanking the Chairman.

Director Wilkins thanked the Chairman for his time and dedication noting that it has been a rough road which he handled extremely well and kept all the Directors together. The Chairman's idea of CANTO conversations was most definitely, one of their success stories and showed that CANTO can adapt and change in most circumstances. He mentioned that he certainly knew the time and effort put in the work of CANTO to ensure CANTO continues. He stated that he enjoyed working with

the Chairman, noting it was absolutely wonderful what he had accomplished and thanked him for keeping CANTO going.

The Treasurer then asked the members if there were any further comments. There being no comments, she thanked the Chairman and handed back the Chairmanship of the meeting.

The Chairman thanked the members for their comments noting that he was overwhelmed with their generosity. He remarked that he really appreciated the comments, and indicated that he reflected frequently that participation in CANTO is all voluntary. Yet it was always inspiring to see people so dedicated to the Association. He emphasized that this was because of what the institution stands for, that it is Caribbean; that it was focused on our region and about us and our development as a people; fundamentally that was why people made the contribution that they did. He reiterated that he was overwhelmed and thanked the members for their kind words.

The Chairman was then informed that the Vice Chairman – Mike Antonious was now present and he took the opportunity to thank him for his dedication and welcomed him to the meeting.

## **ITEM 6: PRESENTATION OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The Chairman reported that these statements were previously circulated and requested they were taken as read. He called upon Mrs. Helma Etnel, Treasurer to present an overview of the Audited Financial Statement

Mrs. Etnel shared her presentation on the review of Financial Statements for the year ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and reported as follows:

### **Assets & Liabilities**

There was a decrease in the total Balance Sheet Statement of \$308k, the primary reasons were the Current Assets. There was also a reduction of \$200k mainly due to provision of bad debts. A decision was taken to create this because, it was felt that the outstanding debts were uncollectible which resulted in a major decrease in Current Assets.

The major decrease in reserves in 2020 was due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the fact that the association was unable to host the Annual Conference in July 2020.

### **Reserves**

She reported that in the past when the telecom industry was very lucrative and as a result fees were generally high and there were huge profits, CANTO had built two (2)

reserves. One Contingency Reserve that was set as a Cash Reserve to be used in case of emergency, in the event there was a decrease in the operational income.

The General Reserve was for value added services to the members and also for capital expenditures, both reserves required Board approval for its use which were never used.

She reported that due to the decline in revenues and the loss in the past few years the Board decided to clear these reserves. These reserves were built from money out of retained earnings so it was decided to eliminate these reserves because they were no longer relevant, so the amounts were put back in the retained earnings. She underscored that in essence it was more of an accounting change so what was taken from the retained earnings and put in Reserves has been put back in Retained Earnings. The Board approved this to allow the true financial position to state the current position, so those two reserves were no longer in the books of 2020 but the amounts are now on the Retained Earnings where they belong.

### **Statement of Income**

In total, there was a deficit of \$315K compared to a minor profit of \$62k in 2019.

Total Income went down by \$524K in 2020, the main reason being the cancellation of Annual Conference in July due to the pandemic. On the income side, membership fees are near the same level as last year, the Secretariat was able to keep the members engaged. Advertising was a little lower. Other Revenues included items such as the 2020 AGM in Cuba. Total Income amounted to \$582K compared to \$1.1m in 2019, reduction mainly due to the absence of the Conference (an effect of \$552k).

### **Total Expenses**

Total expenses in 2020 was \$901k compared to \$1.07m in 2019. Administrative Expenses decreased slightly but Operating expenses increased somewhat due to the provision of bad debts of approximately \$225k against a decline due to lower expenses for conference, travel and work from home.

### **New Auditors**

The Board decided to change the Auditors to apply best practices and agreed that the Auditors be changed every four (4) years. RFPs were issued, a bid process was undertaken and DSB Financial Solutions was selected as the new Auditor for this year, 2021.

In her summary, she reported that in the year 2020 there was a deficit due to the pandemic and from the report by the Secretary General swift actions were taken to improve the revenue.

The Treasurer reported the mini conference had showed that in record time, they can still remain relevant and she was really impressed with how CANTO went from live events to virtual events in a very efficient way. There were many attendees and sponsors so these new income streams would replace the ones which were lost.

She reiterated that although the cancelled July conference created a loss, CANTO is still relevant and the presentation of the budget will identify that the association is very creative and will ensure that it can still pay for its expenses.

She reported that reviewing the Balance Sheet, CANTO is still able to pay its short term and long-term obligations, its liquidity is still healthy, the viability is also healthy and that costs are being kept low to overcome this difficult year. Therefore, CANTO is still a financially healthy organisation. She thanked the members and asked if there were any questions.

As there were no questions a motion was moved to receive and consider the Audited Financial Statements.

The Secretary General then read the following resolution to receive and adopt the Financial Statements. “Be it resolved that the Audited Financial Statements of the year ending September 30th September, 2020 be received and adopted.” TSTT moved that the resolution be accepted and it was seconded by Cable & Wireless Communications. The motion was carried unanimously.

#### **ITEM 7– AUDITOR’S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2020**

The Chairman invited Mr. Jimmy Rodrigues, Financial & Administrative Manager of CANTO, in the absence of a representative from Audit firm, PKF Chartered Accountants & Business Advisors (Trinidad); to read the Auditors Report as presented in the 2020 Annual Report.

The Secretary General then read the following resolution to receive and adopt the Financial Statements. “Be it resolved that the report of the Directors and Audited Financial Statements for the year ending September, 30th 2020 be received and adopted.” C&W Antigua & Barbuda moved that the resolution be accepted and was seconded by ATN International. The motion was carried unanimously.

#### **ITEM 8: RESOLUTION TO APPOINT AUDITORS 2020/2021**

The Chairman invited the Secretary General to read the resolution to appoint DSB Financial Solutions as Auditors for the year ending 30th September, 2021. Be it

resolved that DSB Financial Solutions be reappointed as the Auditors and that the Directors be authorized to fix their remuneration for the ensuing year.

The Chairman then invited a proposer and a seconder to the resolution. ATNI moved that the resolution be accepted and TELEM seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

The Chairman encouraged members to complete the survey for the AGM – CANTO Connect 2 advising the members that their feedback is important to the Association and will help improve their services and urged members to give their thoughts.

## **ITEM 9: PRESENTATION OF THE 2020/2021 BUDGET**

Mrs. Helma Etnel presented the 2020/2021 budget under the theme Adapt, Enable and Innovate. The target for this year is \$41K which is much higher than last year's 2020 deficit. She reported that this can be achieved by the following key points:

### **Income Key Points (\$737k)**

- Membership growth (7 new Affiliate Members)
- Virtual AGM
- Virtual Annual Conference (previous year cancelled)
- Advertisement

### **Expense Key Points**

- AGM Virtual reduced costs
- Employee Cost
- Fully Digital Magazine (reduced cost)
- Annual Conference to be held virtually (less expenses than for a live event)
- Other costs stable. Staff works from home/less office expense/ less travel cost

The Treasurer noted that the budget showed that the CANTO Secretariat is very creative, noting that staff have really adapted and innovated and made sure even if COVID is lasting they can still survive from the means of the membership and the conferences. In closing she complimented the Secretariat for an ambitious and realistic budget as she was concerned that due to COVID-19 the organisation may not have been relevant and questioned how they would have gotten people to attend virtually. Given the success of the virtual events, she expressed satisfaction with the way the Secretariat adapted quickly to the new normal. She stated this budget signified that they have a passion to continue to bring this organisation to the next level.

The Chairman opened the floor for comments or questions on the budget estimates from the Treasurer, and there being no questions, the Chairman read the resolution to adopt the Budget.

The Chairman read the following resolution to receive and adopt the Budget Estimates for 2020/2021. “Be it resolved that the Budget Estimates for 2020/2021 as approved by the Board of Directors and presented by the Treasurer be received and adopted.” Digicel Trinidad & Tobago moved that the resolution be accepted and was seconded by ATNI. The motion was carried unanimously.

#### **ITEM 10: TELL US WHAT YOU THINK**

Members were urged to provide feedback by completing a survey. A link was placed on a chat application to allow members to provide feedback virtually.

#### **ITEM 10 - ELECTION OF DIRECTORS**

The Chairman handed over the proceedings to Mr. Linus Rogers, Presiding Officer, who introduced himself as the Returning Officer. He reported that he checked and verified that there were sufficient members present to satisfy statutory obligation. He declared that there were forty-two (42) members eligible to vote for the election. There was one member who was not in the virtual room at the time but was listening, and was thus included, that being, ETECSA. Speednet from Belize was not in the room as they seemed to have dropped off. However, they were listening offline. He reported there were 17 members present and 25 proxies.

##### **Election Process**

The Presiding Officer reported that there were seven (7) vacant positions on the Board of which all members are eligible to be re-elected or elected, the positions being Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and four (4) Directors. The Presiding Officer advised that only full members were entitled to nominate or be nominated or to second a person’s vote and or ask a question in accordance with the By-laws. All voting members were asked to keep their cameras on and to have their company names in their Zoom on screen titles.

He indicated that persons must unmute their microphones and give his or her name and the member they represent and give the names of the companies they wish to nominate.

At the start of the elections process, he reported that he would declare the positions of Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and four (4) Directors vacant. At that time the officers at the head table would be asked to take their seats in the form of taking down their titles from their positions.



He advised that at the call for nominations, members wishing to make a nomination would be asked to unmute their microphones and give his or her name and the member they represent. They would proceed to nominate the person by giving the name of the person or the company they represent, following this they are expected to mute their microphones. He would then proceed to call for nominations, for seconders for the nomination and he would look to see who caught his attention and call upon that person to second the nomination. The person seconding the nomination should do so by giving the name of the person and or the organisation that they represent following which they will mute their microphone. Once the nomination has been seconded, he would call for other nominations and would continue the process until there were no nominations after which the nominations will be closed. At the end of the nominations, if there are more nominees than positions, they will then proceed by secret ballots in accordance with the CANTO's By-laws.

The Presiding Officer informed the members that in the event the election had to be done by secret ballot, they would receive instructions on how the voting would be conducted by email. Members were advised that each nominee's name would be placed in the election voting application. Each member would receive a voter ID and voter key which must be used for voting and the guidelines to follow in the casting of their vote via email. If members did not receive the instructions, they were asked to check their spam. Once the email was issued, members would be given a minute to check their inbox or spam. Members with proxies would be given a weighting on their vote, if they have five (5) proxies they would have a vote for themselves plus the 5 proxies.

The ballot collected would be counted for each position and the successful person would be announced. Voting would be continued for each position in the same manner.

Upon completion of the election, a motion would be moved to have the ballots destroyed and all information on the voting process. He would ask for a seconder and then he would ask for an affirmation by the Directors to have this done. After the positions were declared, control of the meeting would be handed over to the Chairman.

**Call for Nominations:**

The Presiding Officer then proceeded to invite the nominations for the vacant positions commencing with the position of Chairman, followed by Vice Chair, Treasurer and the four (4) Directors. The results were as follows:

<b>Position</b>	<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Seconded</b>
Chairman	David Cox - C&W Grenada	Digicel T&T	GT&T Guyana

Vice Chair	Mike Antonius - Telesur	Digicel T&T	ATNI
Treasurer	Helma Etnel - TELEM	Digicel T&T	TSTT
Director	Delreo Newman- ATNI	Viya	Digicel T&T
Director	Justin Nedd - GT&T	Viya	Digicel T&T
Director	Julian Wilkins – Digicel T&T	C&W Grenada Ltd	TSTT
Director	Melesia Sutherland – C&W Antigua & Barbuda	C&W Grenada W Ltd	TSTT

There being of no further nominations, Mr. David Cox, representing Cable & Wireless Grenada Ltd. was appointed Chairman, and Mr. Mike Antonius representing TELESUR as Vice Chairman unopposed.

There being no further nominations, Mrs. Helma Etnel was appointed Treasurer and the following persons as Directors of CANTO:

Mr. Delreo Newman - ATNI

Mr. Justin Nedd – GT&T

Mr. Julian Wilkins – Digicel Trinidad & Tobago

Ms. Melesia Sutherland – C&W Antigua Ltd.

The Presiding Officer moved the motion that the election information be destroyed. Cable & Wireless Grenada moved the motion for the election information to be destroyed. Cable & Wireless Communications seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously carried.

The President Officer congratulated the newly installed officers and handed over the proceedings to the Chairman who will install the Directors and Officers.

Newly installed Directors were invited to present themselves to the organisation and were requested to recite the following pledge:

“I hereby solemnly swear to faithfully discharge my responsibilities as a member of the Board of Directors of CANTO and commit myself to support the aims and objectives of the organisation, so help me God”.

#### **Director Melesia Sutherland**

Director Sutherland thanked the members for their support for CANTO the and the people who were elected to the Board. She promised to continue to look at ways as to how she can add value to people of this region. She thanked everyone for their support and time.

#### **Treasurer Helma Etnel**

Treasurer Etnel thanked everyone for their trust they placed in her, indicating that she would continue to ensure that the financials of CANTO are done in a sound manner. She also committed to generate income; keep costs under control; maintain proper financial administration and commit to the objectives to bring CANTO to the next level. In closing, she stated that in this virtual world we were forced to become modern and a relevant organisation and thanked the members for voting for her.

#### **Director Julian Wilkins**

Director Wilkins expressed that it was indeed a great honour to once again be elected to the CANTO Board of Directors and looked forward to serve again. He remarked that he was very delighted and would be guiding CANTO with the rest of the team through this pandemic. He thanked the members for the honour and privilege to serve.

#### **Director Delreo Newman**

Director Newman thanked all for re-electing him on the Board and extended congratulations to his fellow Board members and looked forward in the future to working with them and also looked forward to their support.

Unfortunately, the Vice Chairman had to be called away and was not able to address the members at the moment.

#### **Director Christa Leith**

Director Leith expressed her profound gratitude to all those present today for continuing to support the Board during these difficult times and allowing them to serve through these uncharted waters. Director Leith stated that she looked forward to working with all her fellow Directors and those newly appointment, as they continue to chart their course during this pandemic and as they headed into the post pandemic era. In closing she thanked the Chairman.

The Chairman thanked the members for the confidence they placed in him noting that he was immensely humbled by the fact that the CANTO family had seen it fit to nominate him and gave him the opportunity to lead the organisation for the next two (2) years. He stated that it had been a difficult two years but he truly enjoyed being part of the extended family and also enjoyed the camaraderie of the Board of Directors. He looked forward to working with the Board and all members to make CANTO a strong and vital organisation that came through this difficult pandemic stronger and more relevant, more well-known and more respected than ever before. He again expressed thanks for everyone's time, participation and support today noting that it meant a great deal to the organisation and to the staff of the organisation which would continue to work hard.

The Chairman reported that this concluded the formal business of the Annual General Meeting and thanked members for their interest and support in the Association. He

stated that he hoped to build a greater sense of commitment among the membership to achieve greater results. He thanked the staff of the Secretariat and their incredible Secretary General for the amazing job that they had done, given the very difficult circumstances in Trinidad & Tobago, they had indeed done the organization proud.

In closing, he noted that he also looked forward to meeting all in person to share a drink or on the dance floor when the pandemic was over and hoped each attendant today would be there to celebrate in person.

He indicated that CANTO's 2021 Conference will be virtual and will be held from the 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> July and looked forward to seeing members there and thanked the attendees once again. The Secretary General also thanked the membership for their support.

The meeting ended at 3.30pm