

Opening Remarks
by
Regenie Fräser – Secretary General CANTO
at
30th Annual General Meeting
“Strategic Alliances for Sustainable Broadband
Development”
25th to 28th January, 2014
Half Moon Hotel
Rose Hall, Montego Bay, Jamaica
Co-hosted by: LIME

- Minister Julian Robinson, Minister of State, Ministry of Science, Technology, Energy and Mining, Jamaica

- Reverend Marc A.M Mullings, J.P.

- Mr. Garfield Sinclair, CEO, LIME Jamaica

- Mr. Dirk Currie, Chairman of the CANTO Board of Directors

- Mrs. Karen Bevans, Vice Chair of the CANTO Board of Directors

- **Board of Directors of CANTO**
- **Board of Directors and Management of LIME Jamaica**
- **Members of CANTO**
- **Members of the Media**
- **Sponsors and Exhibitors**
- **Other Invited Guests**
- **Ladies & Gentlemen**

Good Evening.

Thirty years for any organization is a laudable milestone. Upon the heralding of our pearl anniversary, CANTO, which started with 8 operators from 8 Caribbean countries in 1984, is proud that 30 years later the association has overcome various challenges to enjoy a membership compliment of 134 members in 34 countries. During this time, stakeholder satisfaction has continued to increase with the latest results showing a move

from 2012's survey result of 82.5% to 2013's result of 86.7%. Stakeholders have also expressed satisfaction with CANTO's social networking presence and our newly launched website. Notwithstanding, one of the key goals for this AGM is the identification of ways in which CANTO can serve its membership better through the identification of new and existing value-added services.

Other objectives for this AGM are the identification of our members' training needs, the development of strategic partnerships that support the goals of CANTO and the creation of a challenging work plan for the year 2014. The focus of this year's AGM is aligned with CANTO's overall 2014 theme: **“Strategic Alliances for Sustainable Broadband Development”**. This theme exudes CANTO's desire to enter into Strategic Alliances to accomplish most especially, **broadband infrastructural development throughout the Caribbean**. This is an acute need at this juncture as the demand for high-quality

broadband in the Caribbean, especially that of a wireless nature, far exceeds supply.

The six working committees of the CANTO Board namely, Marketing and Communication, Human Resources, Regulation & Emerging Technologies, Financial Advisory, Disaster Recovery Planning and Corporate Social Responsibility met earlier today, enjoyed lively discussions and identified issues to be addressed in 2014 for approval by the membership. Tomorrow morning the Committee chairs will present their reports in what promises to be a very informative session. The 30th AGM and Mini Exhibition Agenda has been designed to deliver more value added services to delegates and will include sessions with the following foci:

- Technology Trends and its Impact on Caribbean Operators
- Financing Broadband Infrastructure in the Caribbean - *a strategic move to begin the conversation around incentivizing investment in broadband throughout the Caribbean.*
- “Pardon the e-Waste Interruption!” Creating an Enabling Environment for the Sound Management of e-Waste in the

Caribbean Region

- Americas Spectrum Issues and its Impact on Caribbean Operators

- Presentation of an update on the CANTO/IDB Broadband Infrastructure Inventory and Public Awareness in the Caribbean Project

- Voting for Board of Directors positions
- Mini Exposition comprising technology suppliers showcasing products and Services
- Dialogue on the future of CANTO

Two hallmarks of truly successful organizations are **constant evolution** and **strong investments in their human resource capital**. To this end, CANTO is happy to announce new and exciting initiatives to realize these objectives. The first is the development and implementation during this year, of a Reputation Management Plan for CANTO by its Secretariat. This

aligns to the objective of constant evolution. Successful organizations maintain success by consistently learning and adapting to the environment around them.

For CANTO, this means having our “ear to the ground” and being aware of our reputation, the proper management of which is critical for our future growth and development. Having a reputation management plan in place and its successful implementation, will allow the organization to move to be proactive in understanding and continually improving one of its most valuable intangible assets, being how the association, its products and services are perceived by its key stakeholders. These key stakeholders comprise members, sponsors, customers, employees, partners, shareholders, governments and regulatory bodies. The genesis of this *Reputation Management Plan* started with the results of a survey of 17 CANTO members including CANTO Directors and Senior Managers to determine the viewpoint CANTO’s key stakeholders hold of the association.

The second initiative, in response to the objective of strong investments in human capital, is a Human Resource Restructuring Drive. In 2013, the Secretariat embarked on the restructuring of the Human Resources and Operating Procedures of the Organization in order to align them to better equip the Association for full actualization of its maximum potential. *The Employee Handbook and Operations Manual* were completed in 2013 and a performance appraisal system that includes company and personal objectives was introduced. Work is continuing in this regard.

One of the key fulcra, forming a major plank of CANTO's efforts to affect broadband rollout within the Caribbean, is the Broadband Infrastructure Inventory and Public Awareness in the Caribbean (BIIPAC) Project. This project, currently in its first phase, serves Barbados, Belize, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad & Tobago. BIIPAC is divided into four components namely:

- Production of broadband diagnostics and infrastructure maps
- Review of legal and regulatory framework and current sector trends
- ICT awareness and capacity building in the Caribbean
- Preparation of public policy recommendations for the design of national Broadband strategies

BIIPAC has as its objective, supporting the design of national broadband strategies in the Caribbean and identifying the regional aspects that need to be incorporated into these strategies to support the region as it evolves towards universality in Broadband access and service, regardless of the location (ubiquity) or the social strata (equity) of its citizenry.

Recruiting for component one is complete, with recruiting for components two and three now in train. Component four is slated to begin upon the completion of component one.

We are thrilled to announce that very advanced plans are currently afoot for a BIIPAC Phase II Project! In this phase two, CANTO would partake in the necessary extension of the reach of BIIPAC through partnership with the Compete Caribbean Programme and the IDB. BIIPAC - Phase II would serve Antigua and Barbuda, St. Kitts and Nevis, Dominica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, and St. Lucia, and commitment letters vouching their support for the project and provision of in-kind support, have already been received from each country.

On the matter of broadband rollout in the Caribbean and CANTO's efforts to incentivize investment in broadband in the region, please see our annual report. Therein you will find, *inter alia*, frank viewpoints from Caribbean Ministers responsible for ICTs on the delicate tightrope they have to walk on matters of taxation of ICT services and equipment, ICT service providers, Universal Service Funds and other means of funding broadband rollout, financial agreements with the IMF, and other such

matters.

In this regard, the ICT Ministers in their meeting of 17 January 2015 in Grenada, urged the CARICOM Secretariat to accept the offer made by CANTO in the presentation on “Incentivising Broadband...”. Therefore the statement and invitation by CANTO to co-host a public-private sector meeting was welcome and well received.

With so many exciting initiatives on the table for 2014, no least of which is our 30th Annual Conference and Trade Exhibition, which will be held in the Bahamas from the 10th -14th August, 2014 at the Atlantis Resort & Casino, and co-hosted by BTC, CANTO is amped and ready! The association will focus its 30th year on creating strategic alliances with all stakeholders to bolster and develop broadband infrastructure in the Caribbean. This will create a more economically viable Caribbean for all and in so doing strengthen the social fabric of our beloved region.

A successful AGM depends on you and your enthusiastic participation! We thus depend on you to engage our speakers and

make the most of your time in the captivating Montego Bay. Please also be sure to fill out the feedback forms so we can continually involved and improve. Thank you for your presence and continued belief in CANTO and may we have a most successful AGM!