

The Hon. Dr. Bernard J. Nottage, M.P.

Minister of National Security

**Remarks and Introduction of the Prime
Minister, The Rt. Hon. Perry Gladstone
Christie**

**CANTO 30th Annual Conference & Trade
Show**

Atlantis; Paradise Island

Sunday, 10th August, 2014

Thank you Mr. Emcee.

**Thank you Mr. Currie, Chairman of CANTO,
for inviting me to bring remarks to this august
body of ICT Ministers and Telecom professionals
assembled here in this your 30th Annual
Conference and Trade Show.**

**The Bahamas has hosted this event four
times. Last in 2008, before that 2003, which I**

am told still holds the record for the best CANTO ever, and you were here in 1995.

The Bahamas was one of the five founding members of the Caribbean Association of Telecommunications National Organizations, thirty years ago.

With your permission, I will rest on the established protocols.

This is the second time I am serving as a Minister responsible for Telecommunications In The Bahamas.

Telecommunications came to The Bahamas in 1892, that is 122 years ago. This was made possible when the Government of The Bahamas in a Joint Venture with Marconi built a Telegraph Submarine Cable between Jupiter Florida and Nassau, The Bahamas.

I was first appointed in 1988 as the Minister responsible for Telecommunications.

It was in my first year of appointment, 26 years ago, that the first cellular network was built in The Bahamas.

So that you may have a sense of what I am talking about, Steve Jobs did not announce the Apple iPhone until January 2007.

When I was first appointed Minister responsible for Telecom, there was no Internet, no WWW, no TDMA, no GSM, no CDMA, no GPRS, no EVDO, no LTE, IP, MPLS.

POTS then meant Plain Old Telephone Services, I did not know what PAN, LAN and WAN meant.

The cloud in 1988 meant something different in 2014. I did not know that ATM meant Asynchronous Transfer Mode. I thought it was

the machine at the Bank where you go to get money from.

The point I am making is, ICT, is an Acronym Boutique. One has to first know the language before one can begin to understand the concepts. There were no CDs, DVDs, Blu-ray nor were there any Tablets, iPads or Laptops.

I really want to know how we made it back then. I have seen BTC/BaTelCo grow from no cellular phones to over 300,000 subscribers.

I have seen BTC/BaTelCo grow from no Internet Services to High Speed DSL Services. I have witnessed the installation of a National Broadband network connecting 14 islands of The Bahamas with Fiber Optic Submarine Cables. BTC built this network nudged by the Government of The Bahamas at a cost of some \$70 million in 2006.

ICTs is essential to national security of our country. Providing ICTs to 700 Islands, Rocks and Cays covering 100,000 miles of the Atlantic Ocean is challenging.

But this Nation has over 25 Airports, two of the three US Pre-clearance Airports in the Caribbean are located here. One in Nassau and one in Freeport.

The Government's, LAN, WAN, CCTV and all its attendant ICT infrastructure use BTC's network for carriage.

More than 5 Million Tourists visit our country every years. It is important to the Government of The Bahamas that whether they are here for business or pleasure, their Telecommunications experience is seamless and their reality exceeds their expectations.

ICTs as the third pillar of our economy after Tourism and Financial Services, in many ways is

the fabric on which the sustainable of the macro economy hinges on.

I cannot imagine how in the last two years we have become so dependent on our cell phones and the Internet. What would we do without them?

As the Minister whose portfolio BTC falls under, on behalf of my Ministry, I would like to welcome all our visiting ICT Ministers.

Please enjoy this conference. Enjoy this beautiful property, the Atlantis; this beautiful country and please, please come again.

Now it is my privilege to introduce to you, one of The Bahamas' first Athletes in Field Events, a lawyer by profession, a politician who has won his parliament seat five consecutive times even as an independent candidate, a Member of Parliament who has been selected by his peers to serve as Prime Minister twice.

Ladies and Gentlemen, can you please stand and welcome the Right Honourable Prime Minister of The Bahamas, Perry Gladstone Christie.