

Minister of Traffic, Transport and Urban Planning, Mrs. Suzanne Camelia-Römer

Distinguished co-host, the CEO of UTS, Mr. Paul de Geus

Distinguished Chairman and members of the Board of CANTO,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good evening and welcome to Curaçao!

It is a pleasure for us to have you here once again, this time for CANTO's 33rd Annual General Meeting (AGM) & Mini Expo. We truly hope that your meetings here will be successful in moving CANTO and its members closer to the objectives of CANTO as an association during this year.

We also hope that you will find some time during your stay on our beloved and diverse island to enjoy some of the good things that Curacao (which we believe is the Pearl of the Caribbean) has to offer to its visitors and to visit friends and families that undoubtedly many of you will have here. Both UTS and the Bureau of Telecommunication and Post consider you as our longtime close friends, and we have done everything in our capacity to make this a memorable event for all of you.

Last September, the Bureau hosted an international conference on the topic of converting Curaçao beyond 2020 into a smart nation. Many of you and your respective countries also have such objectives. It is therefore with delight that I have taken notice of this year's theme for CANTO's AGM: ***“Reimagining ICT as a Tool for National Growth and Development”***.

This theme focuses on ICT connectivity as a catalyst for changing the economic infrastructure, and therefore a catalyst for real economic growth.

In my introduction of tomorrow I will elaborate on the key issues of connectivity for small economies like ours.

Just to give you a heads up we believe the only way to guaranty sustainable connectivity is through synergy created by collaboration. In contrary to 20 years ago where liberalization was a hype today we have learned from the past. Liberalization does not stand on its self. It should be merely a way of making peoples life more affordable. The question we should have asked ourselves is, should we have focused on infrastructure liberalization or service based competition. Key components:

- Single infrastructure
- Service based competition instead of infrastructure based competition.

Thank you all for being here.

Enjoy.