



The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited

Launch of NAAA Championship Month

Wednesday 20th April, 2016

Radisson Hotel, Trinidad

Remarks by

Mr Kenneth Allum, Member of the Board of Directors, NGC



The Honorable Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs, Mr Darryl Smith

Secretary for the Division of Education, Youth and Sport, Tobago House of Assembly, Mr

Huey Cadette

Chairman of the Sport Company of Trinidad and Tobago, Mr Michael Phillips

President of the Trinidad and Tobago Olympic Committee, Mr Brian Lewis

President, NAAA, Mr Ephraim Serrette

Games Chairman, NAAA, Mr Allan Baboolal

Sponsors

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning,

There is a fever going around that is affecting billions of people in every country, and on every continent — and I'm talking about Olympic fever. In just a few short months, the world of sport will come alive to the event that every athlete dreams of being a part of- the 31st Olympic Games hosted in Rio de Janeiro.

Of great significance for us Trinbagonians is that 2016 marks the 40th anniversary of Hasely Crawford's achievement of this country's first Olympic gold medal in the 100-metre dash. Years later, NGC welcomed Hasely as part of its Community Relations team. As Head of Department, Hasely brought both his understanding of athletic development in T&T, and his strong sense of compassion and social conscience to the many sporting and community programmes NGC sponsored over the years.

It is against this backdrop that we proudly launch Championship Month 2016. This is the culmination of a series of events managed by our partner, the National Association of Athletics Administrations of Trinidad and Tobago. Our official partnership through sponsorship of the ¹NAAA started in 2013, although NGC had a working relationship with the association long before that, through Hasely's close relationship with that body.

Naturally, some of the sponsorship funds have gone into fulfilling practical and important needs such as the acquisition of equipment, as well as the costs associated with the staging of various championship events such as the one we are launching today. But a large portion of NGC's funding has quite rightly been invested in the development of athletes, coaches and volunteers, as well as constitutional reform.

You will appreciate the importance of coach training to produce better athletes, and of club strengthening to improve organisational efficiency. This improved governance; constitution reform, increased manpower, and organisational restructuring speak to streamlined and efficient operations and an improved chance at sustainability and accountability.

¹ Pronounced N3As

At this juncture, I want to mention the NAAA themselves. As the governing body for track and field in T&T, they recognise that sport is not just a pastime, but an integral part of our existence, and that this country is overflowing with talent just waiting — in some cases to be discovered, and in others to be honed. Their efforts have invested like NGC, in the development of our society and young people.

I also want to thank the members of the media for their continued coverage of events leading up to this, and their input to come. Our national public is hungry for sport and is relying on you to keep them up to date and aware of the Olympic fever that will not just grip Trinidad and Tobago but the world over.

I wish the athletes the best of luck in the upcoming events ...but I know that for them it's not a simple matter of luck at all. Their participation at this level is the result of sacrifice, hard work and dedication, and I acknowledge them for this. In fact, as a lover of the steel pan, I like to think that athletes share something in common with musicians. When preparing for the main event, nothing can sway them from their intent. This is what champions are made of.

At these upcoming Championships, we will see the best ... and those who aspire to become the best. We are sure to enjoy a month of exciting competition, and we hope that some of the athletes who will stand on the podium over the next few weeks will grace athletic arenas in the region and internationally.

Finally, ladies and gentlemen I want to remind you that as a wholly owned local company we have as much of our hearts invested in our athletes as you do. We feel the same thrill when we see our national flag flying in the breeze on foreign soil. We long to hear our national anthem being played as our athletes stand on the podium. This is why we pour so much effort into our people. On behalf of NGC I wish the athletes the very best of luck. I encourage them to do their best and make our country proud.

I Thank you.