

The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited

Media Launch: **National Gas CNG Derby 2012**

Date: September 2012

Remarks by: Roop Chan Chadeesingh
Deputy Chairman, NGC

Good Afternoon to all the media, the Horse Racing Fraternity and other specially-invited guests who have come here today for the launch of the National Gas CNG Derby 2012. Thank you to our hosts, The Arima Race Club, they are the people who, come rain or shine, keep the historic sport of horse racing vibrant and alive in this country.

In fifty years time, for the nation's Centenary Independence Anniversary when someone from NGC is standing here talking about our sponsorship of Derby Day he or she won't be trying to sell to you the audience on the benefits of compressed natural gas – CNG. The N.G.C. would have already been there and done that.

That I guarantee you.

Compressed Natural Gas is the fuel of the near future. It is clean, it is green, it is safer, it is abundantly available in Trinidad and Tobago and it costs a fraction of gasoline or diesel fuel. Fourteen months ago when I last stood before you, when NGC had just taken up the sponsorship of the Derby, we had just begun studying the feasibility of expanding CNG usage in our country.

I must say converting a vehicle is a lot easier than converting the human mind. People don't generally like change or to convert things, even when the benefits of that change far outweigh any negatives.

NGC envisages new gas station sites around the country. One day soon, if your company has a big fleet of vehicles, you may wish to consider the option of converting to CNG fueled vehicles. The monthly cost of refueling for example the six-tonne CNG truck compared with a six-tonne diesel truck is very, very appealing.

How does our sponsorship of the CNG Derby Day fit in with our whole approach to corporate social responsibility? You the Arima Race Club is the promoter of Horse Racing in our country. An industry that employs over 2500 persons, most of whom are unemployable and your industry has survived over 100 years thereby contributing to our economy. Accordingly the N.G.C. see it fit to partner with you in staging your blue ribbon event in our golden 50th year of Independence. NGC is both proud and humble by the fact that when we "put a han" in a pan yard, or a cultural event, or a school, or community centre, or any sporting event be it cricket, basketball or horse racing, we act as a catalyst which can transform the project or sport. There are many extraordinary people and Companies doing extraordinary things in Trinidad and Tobago. Our involvement and know how helps their talent realize their fullest potential.

Some of our CSR partnerships are becoming very well known, by virtue of their popularity such as *NGC Bocas Lit Fest* celebrates Caribbean authors and rekindles the passion for reading.

We have a close association with the Trinidad and Tobago Cricket Board, today NGC supports local cricket from the grass roots level to a National and International standing. Sunil Narine was just awarded – most talented young player by I.C.C. in the world. Keiron Pollard and Dwayne Bravo some of the most exciting players in the world play with the N.G.C. Logo on their chest with

hundreds of millions of people watching - world class players sponsored by a world class company.

One of my particular favourites – not so well known unless you were fortunate to pass through it yourself – is the NGC *Right on Track* programme. We created this programme ‘in-house’ in 1999. It’s aimed at nurturing athletic talent in young girls and boys. *Right on Track* is a structured, science-based track and field programme. We identify the potential in our youngsters and give them the tools and training to develop their potential to the fullest. For some of our young people who live in difficult and trying circumstances, *Right on Track* is a beacon of hope to them.

As a matter of fact, it was through this NGC programme that our nation’s newest Gold Medal Olympian, Keshorn Walcott’s talent, was discovered. In an interview with the Newsday, track and field icon and our country’s first Gold Medal Olympian, Hasely Crawford, our former Head, and now Consultant of Community Relations responsible for CSR at NGC praised the *Right on Track* programme and it’s role in unearthing Walcott’s talent. He said, “Through the programme Athletes were exposed to all the state-of-the-art equipment and some coaching, and Keshorn arose out of that programme.” Interestingly, Crawford added that due to the programme’s success in Trinidad & Tobago it had been taken to St. Lucia, Dominica and Grenada. He said, “That is how Kirani James the 400 meter gold medalist was found,”

So we have much to be proud of at NGC just as you the Arima Race Club with your 100 year plus old Derby. Only yesterday in the newspaper you would have seen and read of the (1) NEC is working with a Danish Company and U.T.T to produce a Uni Bio single cell protein feed stock from natural gas for fish and chickens etc. – maybe feed for horses? And (2) Our Ministry of Energy – advising of the successful deep water bid for drilling in the East Coast within the next year

which will amount to billions of dollars in expenditure and hopefully discovery of more oil and gas for our country. More good news about our country.

I also take this opportunity to announce that the N.G.C. will give the sum of \$10,000.00 to the author of the best published article in the local daily or weekly newspapers between the 20th – 30th September, 2012 on the topic. “Why and how must we change to CNG”. Published articles should be sent to the N.G.C. where our panel of judges will adjudicate.

In closing, I would like to thank all of you again for being here today. Your effort and interest make our effort worthwhile. I know you, too, are concerned that the sport of horse racing should continue to strive and to benefit from the corporate support provided by NGC. On behalf of NGC and our host and lead partners for the National Gas CNG Derby, The Arima Race Club, may we all experience a safe and enjoyable racing event on Republic Day.

I very much look forward to seeing you all there.

I thank you.