



**The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited**

**UWI-NGC Research Awards 2014**

**Wednesday October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014**

Speech by Mr. Roop Chan Chadeesingh  
Chairman

The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (NGC)

Senator the Honourable Fazal Karim, Minister of Tertiary Education and Skills Training;  
Members of the diplomatic corps and representatives of international agencies;  
Professor Clement K. Sankat, Pro-Vice Chancellor and Principal of the UWI St. Augustine Campus;  
Professor Wayne Hunte, Pro Vice Chancellor - Research of The University of the West Indies;  
Mr. Ewart Williams, Council Chairman for The UWI St. Augustine Campus;  
Permanent Secretaries and representatives of government Ministries;  
Distinguished awardees;  
The Presidents and members of the Executive of the UWI Guild of Students and Postgraduate Student Association from the various UWI Campuses;  
Specially invited guests;  
Members of the media;

Good evening.

It is indeed an honor to keep the company of such great minds as are gathered here this evening, and to be a part of this celebration of excellence. As co-sponsors of this event, we at The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (NGC) are truly pleased to join with the University of the West Indies (UWI) in recognizing this year's deserving awardees.

For NGC, the decision to collaborate with UWI on the presentation of these Research Awards was an easy one to make, for several reasons.

Firstly, NGC recognizes that universities are incubators for innovation, and it was easy for us as a rapidly evolving company in a rapidly evolving industry to appreciate the



## **The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited**

importance of supporting the production of new knowledge. The enterprise of research plays a pivotal role in progress, and is especially vital to the modernization of our industry. It is therefore imperative that we, as an industry leader, encourage this enterprise and reward the achievements and breakthroughs of its intellectual vanguard.

Secondly, NGC has an extensive Corporate Social Investment- or CSI- portfolio, through which we support initiatives in sport, youth and community development, the arts and culture, and education. As a premier tertiary level institution, UWI has been a recipient of NGC support since 1994, and we have steadily increased our sponsorship of and involvement in its activities over the years. We have lent our assistance to the Institute of Engineering, offered grants for BSc students in the Petroleum Geoscience programme, made contributions to the university's Graduate and Research Fund as well as its Development and Endowment Fund, and sponsored the 2010, 2011 and 2012 Conference on the Economy. Our CSI policy is guided by the principle that what we put in should pay dividends in the form of a healthier society, and the initiatives of UWI that we supported over the years proved to be most rewarding investments. Consequently, it was a simple task for NGC to expand its sponsorship in 2012 to include the UWI Research Forum, Research Expo, a Chair in Innovation and Entrepreneurship and of course, the Research Awards Ceremony.

Beyond these reasons, there are clear correspondences between NGC and UWI that make our collaboration a natural one. NGC is a locally grown company with a mandate to ensure that the wealth derived from our country's natural gas development does not accrue to foreign pockets, but profits the nation as a whole, and we continue to deliver on this mandate through our significant contributions to government revenues and our CSI initiatives.

UWI, like NGC, has one of our nation's most valuable resources in its care- namely intellect and its immeasurable potential energy- and UWI, too, is charged with ensuring



## The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited

that this resource benefits our country. One only has to look at its accomplished alumni, its seminal publications and its vast research enterprise to know that this institution has indeed been serving this country. More than that, a cursory read of the research titles of this year's honorees reveals that UWI has not been churning out ivory tower intellectuals with vaulting academic aspirations, but is rather dedicated to finding real solutions to real problems.

At the heart of it, what UWI and NGC share are a vision and an existential purpose to further *endogenous* development- to enable and empower our country to direct its own growth.

If you look at development initiatives around the world, you notice that most external interventions, although solid in their ink and paper iterations, fail to fulfill their promises of growth and salvation. These grand plans to deliver the poor out of poverty, to move nations out of stagnation, are crafted by the most brilliant minds, the most experienced practitioners of development, yet they frequently do not succeed. The reason is so often that appropriated technologies and methodologies simply do not fit with local realities, or are not pertinent fixes for the problems they try to solve. Poverty, malnutrition and unemployment may be universal social ills, but culture can transform them into entirely different beasts in different settings.

That is why endogenous development is so critical, and why I commend UWI and its work. When we use local expertise, local experience and empirical learnings, we can devise customized, pertinent solutions to our nation's problems. That is exactly what the researchers and faculties being honored today have sought to do, and it is a testament to the value that UWI adds to our country.

This evening, I want to congratulate and thank all you scholars who have devoted years of impassioned study to bettering your respective fields; all you faculty who have provided guidance and instruction to channel the energies of brilliant minds into



**The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited**

productive pursuits- your work matters, you have effected change, you have enriched your society. I admire your industry and applaud your achievements.

On behalf of NGC, I wish to renew our commitment to supporting UWI and its initiatives. I challenge you as an institution to seek greater heights and bear the standard as our country marches ever forward.

Thank you, and good evening.