

NGC Sanfest Pan Ensemble Finals
Remarks by Fofi George
CR Officer, NGC
November 3, 2017

Good morning.

Today is not a day for speeches. Today, we want pan to do the talking, so I will be very brief in my greetings this morning. Just as The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (NGC) is thrilled to be a part of NGC Sanfest, I am thrilled to be here to see these young children make music. There are three things in particular about this event that make me especially happy, and they have to do with what this event tells me about our past, present, and future.

Firstly, the musical theme selected for this event says to me that our past is still being honoured and celebrated. Calypso Rose is one of our nation's most accomplished singers. Her music has travelled all over the world and taken the name of Trinidad and Tobago with it. She is still making music, but her early melodies made history. They are an important part of our cultural past that should never be forgotten, so I am happy that the Pan Ensemble Finalists will be revisiting our past through music.

Of course, history can only be preserved if people in the present day make an effort to remember and celebrate it, which brings me to my second point. Do you think you would know what your great-grandparents looked like if your parents or grandparents didn't show you photographs? If they didn't put those pictures up around the house, or keep them in an album, those people would be lost to memory, forgotten. You would never know they existed. The fact that today you are getting ready to play songs that Calypso Rose sang many years ago is a heartening indication that your teachers, parents, guardians and of course the organisers of NGC Sanfest, are making sure you know your history. They are making sure that the children of today know of the greatness that came before them, and that is a wonderful thing.

And finally, looking at this audience, your eager faces, bright eyes, young hands getting ready to make music, I am so excited about the future. I have not even heard a single performance, but I can tell just from the number of young pannists here today - who have no doubt spent days, maybe weeks, learning and practising their pieces - I can tell that the future of our national instrument is secure. As long as there is interest and passion among our youth, pan will endure, and I'm sure that makes *all of Trinidad and Tobago* happy.

My friends, I know you are anxious to get started today, and we cannot wait to hear you fill this venue with the sweetness of our Rose on pan. I want to wish you all the very best for a successful performance, and most importantly, I hope you enjoy every minute of it.

Thank you.