

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# Hello Future

IN January, we agreed on a theme for our first issue of *GASCO News* 2020 on the premise that this decade would open a new chapter in global history. 2020 would mark the start of a pivotal decade of action against climate change. It would usher in new technology and a new sociocultural ethos. Paradigms in energy would shift, with markets and consumption evolving in unpredictable ways. For us at The NGC Group, 2020 would bring the curtain down on our current Strategic Plan, and actuate discussions around our goals for the next five years. We saw 2020 as the threshold into the future.

Within a few short weeks, this theme has assumed a new dimension. Humanity has come up against a threat unlike any we have encountered in modern times. A tiny pathogen is felling tens of thousands of people across the world and bringing economies to their knees. The very strength of our new world order – our interconnectedness – became our vulnerability. If it wasn't before, it is now patently clear that the future before us does not just bring opportunity, but unprecedented risk.

For us at The NGC Group, the COVID-19 pandemic has alerted us to the need for constant vigilance and business resilience. Had we been unable to mobilise in response to this crisis, the consequences for Trinidad and Tobago could have been severe. Fortunately, we have been standing with other frontline responders to ensure our critical services to the country continue to be delivered.

Even though the full impact of this unfolding crisis will not be obvious for some time still, certain lessons are already clear to us in our particular business context. We need to have strong response systems in place to ensure business continuity, which includes having the flexibility to execute work processes remotely. Among other things, this means taking full advantage of the technology available in all our functional areas.

OPEC developments are dealing a simultaneous blow to energy markets on top of COVID-related disruptions. This has underscored the importance of having a varied portfolio of investments that can buffer against income



*Mark Loquan, President, NGC*

losses in any one sector. This holds true for both the NGC Group and the wider national economy.

Importantly, we have also learnt the value of collaboration, and the opportunities we have to grow as a country if we take this spirit of co-operation into the future. Recognising how different segments of our economy intersect – how one can impact another – can help us appreciate the value of strengthening alternative economic sectors that we might otherwise take for granted.

In this issue of *GASCO News*, we will highlight some of the ways we are responding as a Group to these important lessons. We are investing to grow our business, we are investing to grow national jurisdictional competitiveness, we are investing to grow alternative industries.

Whatever the future that lies beyond COVID-19 has in store, we will meet it with courage, conviction in our purpose and an indomitable spirit. ■

**Mark Loquan, President**