

## Opening Remarks: Southern Sub-Regional Workshop

- Professor Sarim Al-Zubaidy, President of The University of Trinidad and Tobago
- Ambassador Aad Bisebroek, Head of the Delegation for the European Union to Trinidad and Tobago
- Mr Colin Colin Young, Regional Maritime Adviser for the Caribbean region of the International Maritime Organization
- Lt. Commander Ronald Alfred, Director Maritime Services Division
- Pilot Master Kurt Duncan- Trinidad and Tobago Marine Pilots Association
- Senior Maritime Administrators
- Online Viewers
- Colleagues

Good morning

On behalf of MTCC Caribbean, I extend a very warm welcome to all of you to MTCC Caribbean's 2<sup>nd</sup> Southern Sub Regional Workshop. This project, the Global MTCC Network is funded by the European Union and implemented by the International Maritime Organization. We are very grateful to the EU and the IMO for this continued investment in the developing world. The initial phase of the GMN spans 4 years which began in 2016 and is expected to close in December 2019. As MTCC Caribbean and all its sister MTCCs enter the closing stages of its initial pilot projects and capacity building initiatives across the globe in 2019, the GMN will begin mobilisation for the next phase of maritime climate action. In this respect I am very happy to report that MTCC Caribbean is on track to deliver on all its objectives as scheduled.

Capacity building for climate mitigation in the maritime sector is the core of the GMN project. In furtherance of this objective, MTCC Caribbean committed to delivering eight (8) capacity building workshops, six (6) in specifically targeted sub-regions and two (2) regional workshops, targeting participation of all sixteen (16) territories falling under its purview. In this regard we are happy to advise that this initiative has been successfully implemented to date. This sub-regional workshop represents the last of the six sub regionals. The final regional workshop is scheduled to take place during the period of July 1-3<sup>rd</sup> at MTCC Caribbean's home base, the Centre for Maritime and Ocean Studies (CMOS), Chaguaramas Campus of The University of Trinidad and Tobago.

With respect to our pilot projects, the MTCC continues to assiduously pursue alliances to foster participation in its data collection. The five Caribbean countries that have successfully implemented the MTCC data collection form have placed themselves at the forefront of maritime climate action in the region. These countries, namely, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, Belize, The Bahamas, St Vincent & the Grenadines would have built institutional capacity to enhance the implementation MARPOL Annex VI. It is also noteworthy that 14 of the 16 MTCC Caribbean countries have created Energy Efficiency (EE) focal points within their maritime administrations, therefore fostering institutional advancement towards the creation of a reporting system for the Caribbean. The region should therefore be heartened by this demonstrated institutional commitment to addressing climate change.

MTCC Caribbean was very privileged to have been invited to the recently concluded High Level Symposium and Senior Maritime Administrators workshop concluded in Montego Bay Jamaica last month. This presence was a direct result of the recommendations and advocacy of our maritime administrations that actively participated at our various workshops. We wish to publicly recognize the Maritime Authority of

Jamaica in ensuring the MTCC Caribbean was given an opportunity to present at the meeting of officials to inform the High Level Symposium and the Senior Maritime Administrators workshop. The outcomes of this presence and presentation will be shared in my presentation later this morning.

For the Caribbean Community, the impacts of climate change are already being experienced and represent a significant threat to our way of life, wellbeing and long-term sustainability. Concerted and urgent action is required across all sectors if we are to ensure that we are leveraging all available opportunities and mechanisms to mitigate the harmful impacts of climate change. We therefore encourage all local, regional and international organizations with climate interests, to partner with us and forge the necessary alliances to reduce duplication of efforts and maximize the benefits of climate finance available to the region.

Over the next 2 days, with the input of all our esteemed colleagues in attendance, we look forward to progressing the regional agenda for maritime climate action. Your insights into your own countries are fundamental to developing and implementing realistic implementation strategies. Thank you for taking the time to share your experience with us.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Maritime Administrations of the four countries of the southern sub region for taking the time to be here with us today; the Technical Secretariat of MTCC Caribbean for their flawless execution of project related logistics and my UTT colleagues for their insightful research and unwavering dedication and commitment to this project.

In closing I would also like to share with you some feedback that MTCC Caribbean has received from its mid-term technical audit undertaken by IMO Consultant Ms. Nana Gibradze. She stated that:

*“MTCC Caribbean has established itself as a highly respected and reliable institution with an extensive network of national and regional partners.....The Caribbean team is one of the strongest of the five MTCCs and is comprised of highly qualified personnel with a diverse academic/research, managerial and industry background”*

We could not achieve this accolade without the unwavering support of our stakeholders. Over the last two years, we have built long lasting institutional partners, committed to decarbonisation of maritime operations. We look forward to fostering these relationships in the maritime community as we transition into the next phase of MTCC Caribbean in 2020 and beyond.

Colleagues, as Small island Developing States we must leverage our regional status to ensure that our concerns are actively and urgently addressed. We have the most to lose and therefore the most to do to promote resilience in our economies. Let’s get the job done as best as we can. Nature will, no doubt, take care of the rest.

Thank you.