

**STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED AT THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS'
KING'S DAY RECEPTION**

Theme: Shared Horizons

Wednesday 29 April 2026, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Good Evening....

It is a pleasure to join you this evening in celebration of King's Day, which this year, commemorates the fifty-ninth (59th) birthday of His Majesty King Willem-Alexander.

Tomorrow also marks the anniversary of His Majesty's accession to the throne in 2013. His reign is now recognised as an embodiment of a modern and engaged leadership style, distinguished by a steadfast commitment to addressing global challenges such as climate change, water management and sustainable development.

On behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, I extend my sincere and heartfelt best wishes to His Majesty, and to the people of the Kingdom of the Netherlands on this joyous occasion.

The theme of this evening's event, "*Shared Horizons*," speaks to the collective journey we undertake as nations, navigating both challenges and opportunities. Much like the horizons that guide pilots, it reflects a shared sense of direction, responsibility and ambition.

And as we talk about interconnection, do you know that in the 17th century, our second capital, Scarborough, was originally established as the town of Lampsinsburgh by the Dutch in 1654?

On that note, we are encouraged by the growing connectivity between our two countries, in particular through the direct air links facilitated by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines. His Majesty's well-known passion for aviation, including his service as a guest co-pilot on KLM flights, adds a personal dimension to this connection.

Excellency, our countries share a strong and enduring partnership, with diplomatic ties dating back to 1962. Coincidentally, last year, we shared a democratic tradition of free and fair elections.

As you know, yesterday was especially poignant for Trinidad and Tobago, as it marked the first anniversary of this Government's ascension to Office. Similarly, in an affirmation of a democratic tradition, the Government of the Netherlands will also celebrate its first year in office, later this year.

Clearly, our relationship is rooted in shared priorities and our partnership continues to evolve across a wide range of sectors. We have seen developments in technical fields such as water and waste management and food security.

The Netherlands remains one of Trinidad and Tobago's key trading partners in Europe, and we look forward to further engaging with the Dutch across

the wider Caribbean, through mechanisms such as the Partial Scope Trade Agreement with Curaçao; in renewable energy matters; climate resilience and sustainable agricultural practices.

Culturally, we celebrate the presence of the steelpan in Curaçao and Aruba which reinforces the people-to-people connections ... and our shared passion for sport, including football and interestingly cricket, continues to connect our societies in exciting and creative ways.

At the regional level, we value the Netherlands' continued engagement in supporting resilience-building efforts among small island developing states.

Like the tulips that herald spring in the Netherlands, our relationship continues to bloom.

Excellency, as we celebrate this special occasion and guided by the spirit of "*Shared Horizons*", we look forward to expanding our cooperation, deepening our engagement, and working together in pursuit of a more sustainable and interconnected future for our peoples.

I thank you, and Happy Kings Day! Fijne Koningsdag! (*Fay-nuh Konings-dag*)