

**Remarks to be delivered by Mr. Randal Karim, Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs at the celebration of
Cinco de Mayo on May 01, 2026, at the Embassy of the United Mexican
States in St. Clair**

Good Evening...

It is indeed my honour on behalf of The Honourable Sean Sobers, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs to be here with you this evening to celebrate *Cinco de Mayo*. In recognising this significant date on the Mexican calendar, I also note that the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the United Mexican States are also celebrating the 60th anniversary of the establishment of Diplomatic Relations which was observed on Tuesday, April 28.

As His Excellency indicated, Trinidad and Tobago and Mexico formalised diplomatic relations in 1966, shortly after a newly independent Trinidad and Tobago was embraced into the united family of nations. A family to which Mexico has served as an exemplary partner in terms of development, and has extended invaluable support to small states like ours.

Under the current astute and visionary stewardship of female leaders, the people of Trinidad and Tobago and Mexico continue to enjoy shared experiences in areas of mutual interests through the alliances and partnerships. The seamless

blend of culture, artistic expression and sport, like today's event, will also continue to invigorate trade relations between our nations.

Your Excellency, we are aware that while *Cinco de Mayo* is widely misconceived as Mexico's Independence Day, **we know** it is a powerful testament to the courage and determination of the Mexican people in defending their country as it commemorates the historic 1862 victory of the Mexican army over the French in the Franco-Mexican War which it is not.

It is therefore remarkable that the commemoration and misconception of that day in history, has evolved into the beautiful celebration of Mexican culture and heritage worldwide. On that note, I look forward to this evening's "*post-Carnival lime*", which seems to be filled with an array of rich offerings of food, music and sport, arranged by the hard-working members of staff at the Embassy.

Friends, as Ambassador mentioned once you talk "Carnival" and "liming", Trinidad and Tobago would inevitably come to mind. Synonymously, when you hear "tequila", the drink that is part of our celebration this evening, one instinctively associates with Mexico and vice versa. Rightfully so, as I understand that since the modern term for this wonderful "spirit" was derived

from the state of Jalisco, the name “Tequila” can only be used for such drinks if they are produced in Mexico. Maybe, by our 65th or 70th anniversary of relations, one of our local distillers/breweries will develop a drink here in Trinidad and Tobago, with one of your famous brands, like Jimador.

Similarly, in football, Mexico is a powerhouse and while they may be busy preparing to host the largest event in sport- the 2026 FIFA World Cup, Trinidad and Tobago is grateful for Mexico’s efforts to see the resurgence of traditional wrestling in Trinidad and Tobago. I understand, we have to personally thank **you** Ambassador Morales Meléndez and your team at the Mission. Perhaps one day I will have the courage to enter the ring and relive the excitement persons like Thunderbolt Williams, Gran Markus Jr., La Parka and “Uncle” Victor Jovica, evoked when they brought the sport to Caribbean households.

Ladies and Gentlemen, diplomacy isn’t just treaties and policy—there is also what is referred to as ‘soft diplomacy’ which is about human connection and shared experiences. And therefore, Cinco de Mayo isn’t just a historical commemoration; it’s a living example of how culture becomes a diplomatic tool. Through celebration, countries such as Mexico project identity, strengthen alliances, and create space for dialogue and friendship.

In closing, we look forward to the celebration of another 60 years of Diplomatic Relations between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the United Mexican States and to many more years of partnership between both countries, as well as, in commemoration of *Cinco de Mayo* 2026.

¡Felicidades!