

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY MS. KIVA CLARKE, DEPUTY
PERMANENT SECRETARY (AG.), MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AND
CARICOM AFFAIRS, ON THE
OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE 35th ANNIVERSARY OF
SLOVENIA STATEHOOD DAY
25 JUNE 2026**

Good evening...

As I bring you greetings on behalf of the Honourable Sean Sobers, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, it is my profound honour to join you this evening to celebrate the 35th anniversary of Slovenia's declaration of independence from Yugoslavia.

On this day, Slovenia chose to embark on an important milestone leading to a path of freedom, self-determination and sovereignty. At this moment, we reflect not only on the passage of time but also on the continuing strength, resilience and vision of the Slovenian people.

Slovenia has established itself as a regional and global leader and has demonstrated extraordinary progress in constructing a modern democratic state rooted in the rule of law, respect for human rights, and a commitment to sustainable development.

Since attaining independence in 1991, Slovenia has been an active international partner in global efforts towards peace and security. The country's journey stands as evidence as to what can be achieved through unity, determination, and principled leadership.

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is pleased to recognize Slovenia's active and valuable role within the international system. Its contributions to multilateralism, regional cooperation and global peace reflect a shared belief in the importance of dialogue, collaboration and mutual respect among nations.

Indeed, Trinidad and Tobago who will proudly take our seat on the United Nations Security Council on January 01, will look forward to working with our reciprocal support partner, Slovenia, who, having previously served up to 2025 on that august body, will be a valuable partner, in addressing matters related to the promotion of prosperity for our citizens and fostering cooperation and friendship for the well-being of the global community.

It would be remiss of me not to mention and recognize Slovenia's capital, Ljubjana (**loo-bee-aa-nuh**) which ranks among the best green capitals in Europe. Small in size but big in hospitality and quality of life, Trinidad and Tobago sees this area as rife with opportunities for collaboration.

For example, Slovenia which is often described as “The Sunny Side of the Alps”, is home to 2.13 million people who take pride in their agronomical successes. Indeed, a few years ago, officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, Trinidad and Tobago and their counterparts from Slovenia had a meeting of the minds, on ways in which our countries could collaborate in agriculture.

Recognising that Slovenia is proud of its green commitment and their soft spot for bees, including their beekeeping heritage, even though we are separated by vast seas and lands, Trinidad and Tobago stands ready to advance cooperation and technical collaboration in the field of apicultural services.

Additionally, there is significant potential for advancing capacity building and technical cooperation with respect to agricultural research, forestry management and planning and horticultural management. Given that Trinidad and Tobago is “open for business”, we would welcome avenues to foster improved bilateral trade and commercial opportunities.

Therefore, in order for us to do business, we have to get there, that’s why we continue to be appreciate that citizens of Trinidad and Tobago can travel freely to Slovenia under the Schengen visa-free, scheme and likewise, Slovenians can capitalise on visa-free travel to Trinidad and Tobago.

I believe that this visa-free travel coupled with enhanced air connectivity could be an avenue for fostering greater people-to-people contact and build on our cultural diplomacy links.

As Slovenia commemorates 35 years of independence, we look forward with optimism to its continued success and leadership on the global stage. May the bonds of friendship between our two nations grow stronger in the years ahead. I wish you all a Happy Statehood Day.

I thank you.