

**STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY THE PERMANENT SECRETARY (AG.) ON THE
OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION OF ONE HUNDRED (100) YEARS OF POLISH
INDEPENDENCE,
TWENTY (20) YEARS OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
AND
THE BOOK LAUNCH OF “POLISH LEGACIES IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO” BY MR. IAN
SENIOR**

- Mr. David Lewis, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, and Mrs. Reisha Ramnarine-Lewis;
- Mrs. Milena Łukasiewicz, Chargé d’Affaires a.i. of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Caracas;
- Mr. Ian Senior, Guest of Honour and author of “Polish Legacies in Trinidad and Tobago”;
- Excellencies, Heads of Diplomatic Missions and other Members of the Diplomatic Corps;
- Members of the Consular Corps;
- Members of the Polish Community in Trinidad and Tobago;
- Distinguished Guests;
- Members of the Media;

Good evening.

It is my pleasure to extend, on behalf of Dr. the Honourable Keith Christopher Rowley, Prime Minister, Senator the Honourable Dennis Moses, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, and the Government and People of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, best wishes to the Government and People of the Republic of Poland as we celebrate one hundred years of Polish independence.

On this occasion, we celebrate freedom, the promotion of which underpins Poland's diplomatic engagements around the world. It has been said that the phrase "For our freedom and yours" constitutes one of Poland's most important and defining unofficial national mottos. I daresay that this is a testament to Poland's unwavering commitment to the ideals necessary for the construction of a more just and equitable world. It is indeed a phrase that resonates with Trinidad and Tobago, not only because of our shared interests in creating such a world, but also because it exemplifies the values that bind us historically and culturally.

Ladies and Gentlemen, despite our differences in geography and history, Trinidad and Tobago and Poland have both benefitted from successful and ongoing collaboration in the areas of energy, trade and investment. Indeed, I am confident that we will continue to have fruitful discussions on ways in which we could further explore avenues for bilateral cooperation in these areas.

Our many commonalities present promising opportunities for the strengthening of ties through exchanges in trade and culture. We continue to welcome visiting delegates from

Poland to the annual Trade and Investment Conference, and we are pleased to note that the number of Polish visitors to Trinidad and Tobago has been steadily increasing over the years. The ease of access to these meaningful cross-border interactions have been aided by the Schengen Visa Waiver Agreement and in due course, will be further facilitated by the appointment of a Trinidad and Tobago Honorary Consul in Poland.

Regionally, Poland has proven to be a steadfast partner within the Organization of American States for the promotion of democracy and human rights, the rule of law, the reduction of poverty, and the improvement of health care systems. Poland also continues to engage in CELAC-EU Summits and with CARICOM on a range of development pillars.

In the global arena, Trinidad and Tobago and Poland have been staunch allies on the issue of climate change. Poland must be commended for its unwavering commitment to the landmark Paris Agreement on Climate Change and its willingness to assume the prodigious responsibilities associated with the Presidency of the Climate Convention for the third time. Trinidad and Tobago looks forward to further cooperation with Poland in the quest for solutions to a phenomenon that threatens the existence of small island developing states struggling to deal with the caprices of climate change.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we also commemorate twenty (20) years of diplomatic relations between the Trinidad and Tobago and Poland, I acknowledge the continued good work of our host, Mr. David Lewis, who, in his role as Honorary Consul, has pursued opportunities to create lasting

connections between both countries. I also wish to acknowledge the work of Mr. Ian Senior, whose seminal work, "Polish legacies in Trinidad and Tobago", testifies to the inextricable bonds between us, which have long preceded diplomatic formalities. Mr. Senior, please accept our congratulations on the launching of your book and our best wishes for your continued success.

Ladies and Gentlemen, please join with me, then, in raising a toast to the continued prosperity of the Government and People of the Republic of Poland on their centenary celebration of Independence, and to Mr. Senior on the launch of his book "Polish legacies in Trinidad and Tobago."

I thank you.