

Emancipation Day 2019

On the occasion of Emancipation Day 2019, I greet all members of our Diaspora on behalf of the Consulate General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in New York.

In 1985, Trinidad and Tobago became the first country to commemorate Emancipation Day by declaring it a national holiday. This is therefore the 35th year of Trinidad and Tobago's commemoration of this highly important event.

Emancipation Day represents the end of one of man's greatest ever inhumanities to man. As we engage in our annual commemoration, we inevitably recall the lingering effects of the nefarious centuries-long practice of forcibly capturing and exporting millions of Africans to the Caribbean, where they suffered lifelong unimaginable pain and indignity. Though life under slavery was a total violation of their will, remarkably, they would go on to build communities and later a nation founded on wholesome values and standards.

There can be no gainsaying that many of the most difficult challenges that we face today as a nation had their beginnings in the horrors of our past. Yet, the many national achievements of which we are proud today and the continuing esteem of our sister nations and friends are testimony to our ability to overcome the worst atrocities while making great strides in our development. Many are the virtues miraculously birthed by God in us as citizens of Trinidad and Tobago through and at the same time, despite the tyranny and persecution of centuries gone by. Not the least of these is the ability to forgive past wrongs and press on toward achieving our individual and national goals.

Fellow members of the Diaspora, the Consulate is glad to note, from our daily interactions with so many of you, the extent to which your heart remains tied to your brothers and sisters in Trinidad and Tobago. Just like you, the staff at the Consulate General continues to will all our brothers and sisters in our country at home and abroad toward true emancipation. The Consulate takes the opportunity to reassert its commitment to collaborating with you toward the development of our beautiful land of Trinidad and Tobago, as we strive toward our full self-actualization as a People. We keep in mind that one of the greatest signs of our triumph over our past enslavement would be the unconditional love and respect of our fellow man. Happy Emancipation Day to all.

J. André Laveau

Consul General