

Grenada Internet Exchange Point and DNS Root Server Ceremony

Remarks by

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At the

GRENADA INTERNET EXCHANGE POINT RE-LOCATION CEREMONY

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On behalf of the Secretary General of the Caribbean Telecommunications Union, Ms. Bernadette Lewis and Packet Clearing House, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Grenada on the relocation Grenada Internet Exchange point and the activation of a local instance of the DNS Root Server.

For the past five years the Caribbean Telecommunications Union together with Packet Clearing House, has been promoting the proliferation of Internet Exchange Points in the Caribbean.

Today, we can declare with confidence that Grenada is serious about ensuring that its citizens have the proper enabling environment to pursue its ICT-based national development goals. In the process, Grenada is also sending a clear signal to the region that technological success can be achieved where there is vision, leadership and collaboration.

Within the global Internet community, IXPs are proven to be essential to facilitating Internet-based economic growth. There is a saying that IXPs take 20% technical engineering and 80% social engineering. This means that building an IXP is a technically trivial exercise. However, as I am sure all those who were part of the process will attest, achieving the necessary focus and collaboration between the stakeholders requires new levels of cooperation and trust.

The official launch of the Grenada Internet Exchange Point today is a major achievement not only for the country, but for the Caribbean. The precedents and lessons learnt from the Grenada process are already being applied in other countries of the region. This should

underscore for us all, how significant this occasion is, and how important the Grenada Internet Exchange Point is to building the domestic Internet economy.

Exchange of local traffic is fundamental to developing the kind of domestic-based activity necessary to spark new levels of indigenous innovation, local content creation, and industry growth.

And this is exactly where the focus must now shift to – **Industry growth and economic development.**

The CTU and PCH have already provided hardware and technical training and the DNS Root Server copy as part of its contribution to the establishment of the Grenada Exchange. Now, I want to affirm our commitment to working with local stakeholders as well as other regional bodies such as CaribNOG (the Caribbean Network Operators Group) to strengthen the peering facilities, build technical competence and stimulate the development of local content.

The CTU and Packet clearing House are also committed to supporting you in educating stakeholders on how to capitalize on the opportunities an IXP presents; to promoting internet innovation and to encouraging youth in responsible and beneficial use of the Internet and its resources. This is what we do in other locations across the world. We will be happy to provide this ongoing support and training to the people of Grenada.

Opportunity beckons Grenada as it moves to take full advantage of the new IXP. Companies, schools and entrepreneurs can provide new local services based on video and audio streaming; VoIP; domestic data backup; new e-government services; distance learning; e-health; and other applications that depend on local traffic exchange.

The vision of being able to properly deploy local Internet-based applications and services is now a reality. In this regard, we can look at the IXP launch a small, but vital step, in the journey toward the development of the Grenada Internet Economy.

To the Government of Grenada; to Dr. Spencer Thomas, Chairman Grenada NTRC, Mr. Aldwyn Ferguson, Coordinator NTRC, the Commissioners and the hard-working team at the Grenada NTRC; to the local ISPs – LIME and Columbus Communications (Flow Grenada) – I again say congratulations!

Keep in mind, however, that the journey has only just begun. Now, I encourage you to apply even greater levels of leadership, collaboration and determination to keep the process, the progress and the promise moving onward.

Thank you.