



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
ST. AUGUSTINE CAMPUS, TRINIDAD & TOBAGO, WEST INDIES

OFFICE OF THE CAMPUS PRINCIPAL

Pro Vice-Chancellor Professor Brian Copeland

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Professorial Inaugural Lecture of Professor Patrick Hosein

Welcome Remarks

Professor Brian Copeland, Principal and Pro Vice-Chancellor

Salutations:

- Professor Indar Ramnarine, Dean, Faculty of Science and Technology and Deans of the St. Augustine Campus
- Professor Patrick Hosein, featured speaker and Professor of Computer Science
- Heads, Management, Staff and Students of the St. Augustine Campus
- Members of the Private and Public Sectors
- Friends and family of Professor Hosein
- Members of the Media and other specially invited guests

It is indeed an honour to welcome you all to the Professorial Inaugural Lecture of Professor Patrick Hosein on ‘Research, Innovation and Education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics – commonly known as STEM.

I am well known for constantly preaching about fostering innovation on this Campus, in this Country and in this Region. Taken any which way - from an economic, social, or ecological perspective - if we are to escape the cycle of dependence on the Metropole – we simply must nurture the Caribbean’s creative talents, design, and synthesis skills.

No one would ever doubt that the talent, the expertise, and the entrepreneurial spirit reside within our citizens. Examples abound of the first two on this Campus and, of the last, just think how we took ice and syrup, gave it a name – sno cone - and made it into a money-making activity at the very grassroots level. What we do appear to lack is that support in terms of funding and in terms of opportunity among our fellow citizens in the corporate and state sectors. Professor Hosein has termed it ‘local inertia’.

Here on the Campus, we have been consciously and consistently strengthening our support for research and innovation with particular focus on areas that impact critical regional developmental goals and result in concrete solutions and marketable products. In this regard, I am especially pleased at the theme chosen by Professor Patrick Hosein for his Professorial Inaugural Lecture since, having participated in the mechanism of idea concept to commercial reality, there is much that we, as much as his students of computer science, can learn from him.

The University of the West Indies is not simply a learning institution, its impact on the region has been much more than that. We are an institution which has been intent on fostering well-rounded individuals on and off our campuses and across the region. Indeed, we can safely say that no other regional tertiary institution has contributed to regional development through research as much as The UWI has. Our focus continues to be closely linked to CARICOM’s development priorities. They take into account region-wide areas of concern such as environmental issues, health and wellness, gender equity, and the critical importance of innovation. In turn, our Faculty and students provide a deeper examination of our environment and the creation of new knowledge.

Social issues and community outreach are a major part of what we do. These Professorial Lectures as well as the Distinguished Open Lectures – the most recent being last Monday by Maxine Williams, Global Director of Diversity at Facebook – allow us to inform and educate the general public, stakeholders, as well as our own university community about the research and innovation going on at this Campus. It is also a means of motivating our partners to support The UWI in our groundbreaking traditions of advancing knowledge and impacting lives.

The UWI's commitment to enhancing Caribbean development is immutable. For this reason, I am very much looking forward to hearing Professor Patrick Hosein whose research and innovation have had global impact, while his commitment to the people of Trinidad and Tobago and the wider region is also very much evident by his word and deed.

I thank you.