



Diplomacy and Diversification

A Tool for the Expansion of the Creative and Cultural Industries of Trinidad and Tobago

Mr. Gerard Greene
Conference of the Economy 2016
Thursday 13th October, 2016

Presentation Outline

- Overview of Regional Initiatives
- Topic Summary
- Diversification in Context
- Cultural Diplomacy
- Creative Industries Overview
 - Presentation of Sub-Sectors
- Country Overviews
- Strategy
- Conclusions

Who are we?

- Regional Initiatives Ltd. is a consulting firm committed to providing a personalized approach, with an intimate service experience, in the areas of:
 - Research
 - Policy Formulation
 - Communication Strategies
 - Internationalization Strategies

Summary

This paper presents its case for the promotion of diversification by focusing specifically the use of cultural diplomacy in target markets in Central America (Panama), Africa (South Africa) and Europe (Finland) with special focus on steel pan (performing, tuning and manufacturing) and design (fashion and jewelry).

Background Context for Diversification

- Impact of oil and gas prices on the economy
 - GDP Growth at March 2015: -5.2 %
 - Unemployment Rate: 3.8%
 - Government commitment to expand earning potential and seek more international opportunities.
 - Budget 2017: Increase in government borrowing domestically and internationally
- Not just an economic strategy, but a change in mentality

Cultural Diplomacy

“The promotion abroad of a state’s cultural achievements, a special emphasis often being given to language and the arts but also encompassing science and technology. Towards this end cultural attaches may be posted to the embassies, and dedicated organizations closely associated with the diplomatic services...”

- Palgrave Dictionary of Diplomacy

Three types of cultural diplomacy:

- State-sponsored
- Independent or quasi-independent institutions
- Diplomacy through academic institutions and persons

Why creative industries?

- Copyright sector contributes 4.8% to GDP (WIPO 2011)
- Important of festivals and creative industries to the common lives within Trinidad and Tobago – a reflection of us as a people
- 2006 NIHERST Report identified competitive advantage in six creative goods and services (Nurse et al.)
 - Pan instruments
 - Pan performances
 - Music Internet
 - Mas Costuming
 - Design
 - Fashion

Steel Pan Industries

- Composition of the industry: playing, production and export of goods and services (tuning, composition etc)
- Presented over 237 steel bands, excluding junior and school-based bands (Pantrinbago)
- Over 190 primary schools with 16 piece ensembles
- Pan one of few creative good exports in CARICOM with a trade surplus (Nurse 2011)
- Education Programs: YTEPP CVQ Levels &2, Bachelor of Fine Arts at the University of Trinidad and Tobago, UWI Pan Research Lab
- Festivals: Panorama, municipal events by Pantrinbago and other community-based groups (ie. Pan on the Ave, Laventille Steel Band Festival)

Fashion Industries*

- Booming periods of Fashion manufacturing in Trinidad and Tobago: 1930s and 1980s
- Currently, industry is said to have 210 registered companies, with a work force of 1,465 periods and income generation of TT \$266,30,000
- 2008 - Caribbean Academy for Fashion Design opened – first tertiary fashion school in the Caribbean
- Link between Carnival, design and fashion industry
 - Carnival has an estimated earning of US \$100 million annually (ACS 2014)
 - Mas construction and other indigenous skills kept alive by University of the West Indies Carnival Studies Programme

**This should not just include garments but jewelry design and construction*

Country Overviews

Panama

- Historical link from the Panama Canal development
- Parts of diaspora still speak English
- Strong presence of calypso, soca, reggae, Caribbean hip-hop and Haitian music sung in Kreole
- Black History Month (*El Mes de La Etnia Negra*) celebrated in May
 - Afro-Antillian Day May 30th
- Afro-Antillian Museum and reconstructed village “Mi Pueblito Afro-Antillano” two notable tourism landscape showcasing Caribbean heritage
- Panama Carnival, including J’ouvert, similar to Trinidad and Tobago version

Ghana

- Major oil and gas reserves, with strong economic backbone
 - 5.8% and 8.7% GDP growth in 2016 and 2017, respectively
 - Services increased share of GDP from 32.2% to 48.8% from 2005 – 2013 (main sectors: banking, ICT, tourism and transportation)
- Trinidad and Tobago-inspired Carnival began in Accra, Ghana annually on July 1st
 - La Brea Nightingales featured in 2016 edition
- President John Mahama expressed desire for Trinidad and Tobago-Ghana cooperation to include culture in future (Ghana Cultural Politics 2016)

Finland

- Action Plan (2012) – *Finland and the Caribbean Growing Closer*
- Action Plan (2013) – *Latin America and Caribbean Action Plan*
 - Newly formed Latin America Unit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland
- Steel Pan Lovers of Finland came 8th in World Steel Pan Festival in Trinidad
- Other shared culture include calypso from Harry Belafonte, pan production in Finland and Finnish translation of VS Naipauls' novels

Strategies

The Carnival Institute

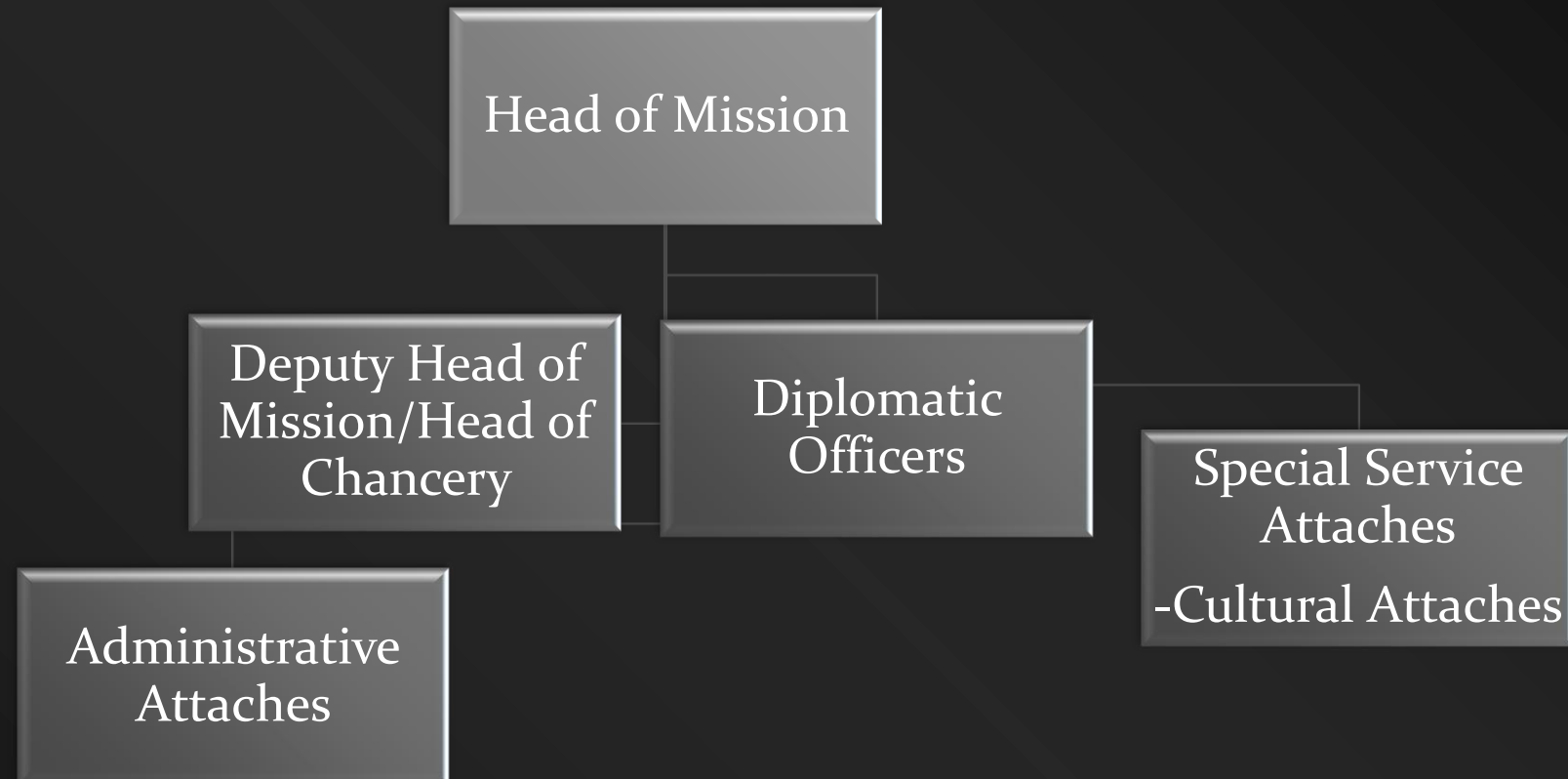
- Providing cultural co-operation through support for the home-country's festival development
- Courses should include:
 - Costume design
 - Carnival management
 - Band management
 - Steel Pan playing
- Staff from Trinidad and Tobago, on 3-6 year postings
- Funding – Public/Private Partnership

Pan in Schools: The Exchange Programme

- Trained professions from Trinidad and Tobago to teach in schools abroad
- This service should be in exchange for the fulfillment of a teaching need or specialization (not available locally) for the teaching service of Trinidad and Tobago
- Language training should be included

Cultural Attaches

Structure of Embassy



Cultural Attaches

- The typical functions of an Embassy includes cultural promotion as one of its many functions
- Cultural Attachés should be considered in Missions accredited to target countries. Their mandates should include performing or at least facilitating the work of a commercial agent, connecting cultural entities to business opportunities in these markets.
- Recommendation:
 - Foreign Service Reform
 - Stronger Language requirements and training for communication and doing business in language(s) of host country

Conclusions

- Trinidad and Tobago should embark on an active strategy for cultural diplomacy to expand business and trade opportunities for its cultural goods and services sectors and its stakeholders. There is representation in the steel pan and fashion industry but it is important that a strategy is created to provide a roadmap for government and its officials towards a specific end, in this case linking the country's diplomatic service as a platform for achieving success in the target markets.

Conclusions

- As the changing economic times have exposed traditional vulnerabilities, diversification is once again the focus of public policy. It is proposed that the time has come time to leverage soft power tools, such as cultural diplomacy to create more influence and business opportunity for those who carry the unique indigenous culture of Trinidad and Tobago



End

Contact information:

Gerard Greene

info@regionalinitiatives

www.regionalinitiatives.com