



ADDRESS BY
**THE HONOURABLE MINISTER
DONVILLE INNIS, M.P.**
MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS,
COMMERCE AND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
TO MARK THE CELEBRATION OF
WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY DAY, 2017
ON APRIL 26TH, 2017

The Government of Barbados is pleased through its Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property Office to join the global community today, April 26 in the celebration of World Intellectual Property Day. The World Intellectual Property Organization Geneva, (WIPO) has designated “**Innovation – Improving Lives**” as the theme for this year.

In exploring this theme let us focus on how innovation makes our lives healthier, safer and more comfortable. Indeed, let us take the occasion to pay tribute to the inventors who have gone before us for their ground breaking work in critical fields such as health, communications, energy and transport. In addition, let us give recognition to our modern day inventors who by the application of their creative genius continue to turn problems into progress.

As we look back over the years we find that our world is made a better place because of the work of our creators. For whether it be the light bulb, the telephone, air travel, penicillin, space exploration, robotics, the internet and related digital technologies of the day, it is clearly the inventors, who, proceeding on the basis of creative genius, an enquiring spirit and a dogged discipline are a primary driving force behind the solutions which come to market to meet our everyday needs and to address many global challenges. Key among these are the need for clean drinking water for our populations in the face of the increasing incidence of water scarcity, the imperative to move towards cleaner energy systems in industry and transport with an emphasis on the need to adopt renewable energy systems, meeting the food supply needs of the world’s growing population through the development of crops with higher yields and which are more resistant to pests, improving the quality of life and the life expectancy of persons who are medically challenged through the development of new drugs and advanced technologies and procedures, the need to provide safe environments for our peoples, meeting the need for timely and safe financial transactions at the governmental, corporate and individual level using trusted, secure transaction technologies and keeping up with consumer demands for anywhere - anytime experiences in terms of accessing a myriad of everyday services.

I am convinced that even though the history of mankind to date has been marked with several key advancements that have revolutionised our world, that much extraordinary work may yet be ahead of us. For given that the old adage that necessity is the mother of invention still holds true today, successive generations will always be seeking new inventions to answer human needs as they emerge.

This World Intellectual Property Day, as we focus on the ways in which innovation continues to make our lives healthier, safer and more comfortable, we should recognize the important role that Intellectual Property plays in successfully facilitating the creative process from the conception of an idea through to the development and launch of a new or improved product in the market place. It is in this context that the Government of Barbados remains committed to encouraging and supporting innovation and creativity, by ensuring that Intellectual Property is strategically used to attract investment, thereby assisting creators in developing and commercialising their ideas, that our creators are able to secure acceptable rewards under a robust system which guarantees legal protection of intellectual property rights and which includes a practical and fair balancing of interests whereby new knowledge is freely available so that tomorrow's innovators can build on today's new technology.

I therefore urge Barbados' creators, inventors and entrepreneurs to be part of the solution to the problems which we face, not only here at home, but to look beyond these shores, recognising that Barbados, small though we be can make a meaningful contribution in bringing solutions to address global challenges as the creativeness of the human mind is not restrained by national boundaries. For innovation is an undeniable human force that knows no limit. And World Intellectual Property Day 2017 celebrates that force.

I therefore challenge you to make a commitment to play your part in making this our world healthier, safer and more comfortable - a better world for us all. Remember it starts with an idea and innovation takes us forward constantly pushing the boundaries of possibility.