

AAPG Geosciences Technical Workshop November 6, 2017

Hon. Raphael G.C. Trotman

MP, Minister of Natural Resources

OPENING REMARKS

Ladies and gentlemen, it brings me great pleasure to address you as the Honorary Chair of the Geosciences Technical Workshop hosted here in Guyana by the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG). Guyana stands at the cusp of great transformation as we usher in this signal chapter in our history, one that has already begun to transform the shape and texture of our society. As Guyanese, we have a monumental task ahead of us preparing our institutional and legislative frameworks to efficiently manage this blossoming sector of Guyana. Indeed, we have a task even in preparing our very minds, for the daily influx of change that petroleum brings to a nation and its people.

On this note, I extend an extra special welcome to the members and representatives of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists. The AAPG is recognized as one of the world's largest professional geological societies and is considered the pinnacle of professionalism and integrity in the upstream petroleum sector. With 100 years of experience in the sector, the AAPG has led the way in promoting the advancement of geology as well as research and technology. It stands as a tangible example to us that a few good people of vision, integrity and perseverance can make a worldwide difference.

As I understand it, a group of about 90 geologists organised what is now known as the [American Association of Petroleum Geologists](#) on February 10, 1917 as an association "to which only reputable and recognized petroleum geologists were admitted". Its mission included promoting the science of petroleum geology from exploration to extraction. Since then, the AAPG has grown in spirit, skill and strength, gaining recognition over the years for its continued commitment to excellence, professionalism and integrity.

I am also quite pleased to note that the AAPG's website boasts two areas of focus that are a top priority for Guyana – environment and youth. We are committed to developing and managing our extractive sectors within the ambit of a 'green economy' strategy and our youth now, and for generations to come, will play a key role in ensuring that benefits are maximized for all Guyanese.

We therefore do not make light of this first ever gathering of AAPG members on Guyanese soil and upon this good and fertile soil, I make the first step in declaring that it shall not be the last of its kind. It is a signal honour for Guyana and we are grateful to have been chosen to host this auspicious gathering.

Guyana begun its journey towards becoming an oil producing nation in 2015. We have since been catapulted into the past – to further assess the geology that brought forth this significant find – and simultaneously moved at warp speed into the future in determining our course forward. The uncertainty of oil exploration efforts is not new to us. From the 18th century explorers observing pitch seeps to the abandoned offshore Abary discovery in the 1970's and, in the 1980's, the Karanambo discovery in the onshore Takutu Basin, Guyana has held her collective breath waiting for this potential resource to be realized.

Now those efforts have been rewarded through discoveries by ExxonMobil and its venture partners Hess and CNOCC Nexen in the Lisa, Payara, Snoek and Turbot 1 wells which have generated greatly renewed interest in Guyana. I have even heard not so muted comments that we have now been 'de-risked'.

Owing to the dynamic nature of the earth's surface and the continental crust that we reside on, many structural changes have occurred throughout the history of the earth allowing us to draw parallels with other offshore basins and observe the successes and failures as we continue on this journey. Just recently, a team attended a New Producers Group Conference in Suriname where the importance of learning from locations with similar geology and its role in successful exploration was greatly highlighted. When there is a thorough understanding of the Basin's geology and how it affects production, we can ensure optimal resource planning, efficient utilization and maximum recoverable resources.

Further, for a successful sector, one must not only consider geological success but economic and commercial success as well. Given that Guyana's reserves have been discovered in a period of low oil prices, it is even more pertinent to ensure thorough understanding of reservoir properties and be more diligent in learning. In making correlations with these basins, we can not only reduce risk but also ensure prudent investment and maximized revenues – especially given the size of investment needed in this industry.

Just as the super-continents once connected us, it is also imperative that we stay connected in the scientific community and among Governments so that we can fully harness the full potential of our geological basins. Forums such as this enable us to see the bigger, regional picture. We can hear "first hand" how interpretations were made, understand the technology and techniques used, and appreciate the lessons learnt. You will be hearing from the AAPG's leading researchers and delving into the cutting edge advancements in petroleum studies. All this contributes greatly to and is inseparable from efficient resource management.

ExxonMobil recently produced an excellent teaching video highlighting the Stabroek Block and the nature of exploration activities. The highly technical discussions that will take place here over the next few days will nonetheless feed into the larger conversation that the video enabled - a nexus must exist between the necessary technical engagements and straightforward petroleum conversations in moving Guyana and its people forward. I know the minds of our local geoscientists will be put to a new test and challenged to scope out new horizons.

Guyana is rising, from potential to prosperity! In light of this, I am honoured and humbled to have this conversation taking place in Guyana. These next few days, I believe, shall pave the way and serve as a catalyst for breakthroughs in collective and individual thoughts, yielding a vibrant and progressive petroleum industry. It shall also serve as an incubator for training young minds; since it comes at a time when training, development of human resources, capacity building and local content promotion are vital and opportunities for the transfer of knowledge are

many. For our part we are working assiduously to prepare for first oil and beyond, by creating the rules, building the institutions and keeping the citizenry engaged as together we fashion a petroleum based economy - enveloped within a green framework.

Once again, I thank you for the opportunity to serve as Honorary Chair of this prestigious event. I also want to encourage you to take the opportunity while here to experience all that Guyana has to offer. As partners and friends, let us continue to create spaces like this AAPG inaugural Geosciences Technical Workshop that stimulate us to think, act and push past physical and intellectual obstacles and boundaries. Let us join our hands, hearts and minds so we can realize a petroleum sector that imbues the spirit of what those 90 geologists who formed the AAPG envisioned in 1917, I refer to that spirit of commitment to excellence, professionalism and integrity.

God Bless you and thank you all.