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Opening Remarks

by

Dr. DeLisle Worrell

Governor, Central Bank of Barbados

40th Richard Stoute Teen Talent Competition

Hilton Barbados Resort

August 7, 2016

I am extremely grateful to Mr. Stoute, Richard, for affording me the opportunity to pay tribute to his extraordinary achievement, on this 40th anniversary of the Barbados Teen Talent Contest. In my lifetime, Barbados has been completely transformed, from a Third World country where most people had only one square meal a day, housing was poor and a majority of the population did not have a steady year-round income, to the situation we have today, where our typical lifestyle differs little from that of New Yorkers or Canadians. Many factors contributed to that transformation, but one of the most important has been the contribution of Richard Stoute and others like him who have devoted their energies to the Teen Talent Competition and similar institutions. These persons, ordinary Barbadians who had the courage and tenacity to pursue their dreams, are the real story of our country's considerable progress and our many noteworthy attainments.

We all salute Richard for the wonderful contribution that this competition has made, in terms of the native singing talent it has uncovered over the years. Those of us who are old enough, remember how scarce were the opportunities for young people to shine, back in the day. Today there are many more avenues, but Teen Talent remains the most inclusive and the most accessible. That in itself is extraordinary.

But the importance of Teen Talent is greater than the talent it exposes. The competition has created a new and unique institution, and a special community, composed of all the fans, supporters and well-wishers who attend the events of the competition. You come, you cheer, you laugh and have a good time. You do it because it is fun and you enjoy it. But in having good

fun at Teen Talent you are helping to build our community and our national spirit, make no mistake about it.

The things that make Barbados the envy of many nations are the unique features that you can find only in Barbados. They are what make us special; they help us to feel good about ourselves, they give vitality to the nation, and they help to attract visitors to our shores. The Richard Stoute Teen Talent Competition is one of those institutions. It is uniquely Barbadian. I have no doubt that there are teen talent shows all around the world, but there is only one Richard Stoute Teen Talent, and you will find it only in Barbados. Only here will you find this vibe, and this energy.

Let me therefore conclude by saying thanks to Richard for offering me the opportunity to pay tribute to his wonderful contribution to the building of our nation. All Barbadians are deeply in his debt, and especially those whose talents the competition has uncovered. Together we celebrate these past successes, and we look forward to another enjoyable season. I am delighted to launch the 40th Teen Talent Competition tonight. Best of luck to everyone.

DeLisle Worrell

August 7, 2016