



The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

**INDUCTION CEREMONY, UWI - PROFESSOR ROSE-MARIE BELLE
ANTOINE**

(REMARKS)

Message By

Dr the Honourable Nyan Gadsby-Dolly

Minister of Education

Saturday 21st January, 2023

6:00pm

Founded in 1948, The University of the West Indies has, for the past 75 years, been the cornerstone of innovation and progress that continues to impact Trinidad and Tobago, the wider Caribbean, and regions globally. It was our first prime minister who insisted on establishing a UWI Campus in Trinidad & Tobago because he felt it was a way to develop the people of this country. Even now, at the heart of UWI's mission is a commitment to service by through its continuous thrust to ensure range of educational programme not only meets the developmental needs to Trinidad and Tobago and the region but provides opportunities that cultivate creativity and propel social change.

This University serves as a vibrant incubator for the exchange of ideas, helping to open new frontiers of thought and public discourse. Through public lectures and debates, interdisciplinary research initiatives, and international collaborations, you have given rise to an amalgamation of new ideas that are changing the face of the Caribbean and the world today.

It is against this backdrop that I am pleased to join with you in welcoming Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine, UWI's 9th Principal and Pro Vice-Chancellor of the St. Augustine Campus.

Nine (9) happens to be symbolic of blessings, inner strength, and wisdom. The 'Fruit of the Spirit' comprises nine graces; the 'gifts of the Spirit' are also nine in number. And while I am not particularly superstitious, it is assumed that because of their resilient nature "a cat has many lives" - a mythological ninefold existence, in fact. This proverbial saying serves as a powerful metaphor for resilience and survival despite difficult circumstances, something that I am sure Professor Belle Antoine can speak to, given her advocacy for social justice and gender justice and the many challenges this esteemed institution has faced over its seventy-five year existence.

As we continue our upward trajectory of strategic partnerships directly impacting the schools and communities across Trinidad and

Tobago, the Ministry of Education looks forward to more meaningful collaborations and fervent relationships with the UWI.

Professor Belle Antoine, your task is but a demanding undertaking for which I am confident that you are capable. It is about providing an example of leadership and inspiration to the students, staff, and community. Like all good leaders, a principal must lead by example. They must be firm yet kind, organized yet creative, and knowledgeable yet open to new ideas. It takes passion, dedication, creativity, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. But for those up to the challenge, this noble service can be immensely rewarding.

I thank you for the opportunity to be here today. On behalf of the executives of the Ministry of Education, I bestow best wishes to you and God bless.