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**Presentation by Cordel Green  
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**Panel on  
“Tough Tech Talks – Enhancing Competition in  
Caribbean Markets”**

**Caribbean ICT Ministers’ Forum  
Port of Spain, Trinidad  
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**(These views are not necessarily those of  
the Broadcasting Commission)**

I begin by observing that the current environment is characterised by monopolistic competition. The mobile sector has a distinctly dominant, albeit vulnerable player in significant Caribbean markets and the cable sector also has a very dominant player in the major markets. There are a few upstart competitors which are small niche playing operators, mainly in the cable television and ISP segments. Closer attention must be given to Over-the-Top operations, as that space could be the most competitive or potentially competitive due to low entry barriers.

Against this background, I suggest that the key variables for enhanced competition remain:

- I. universal broadband penetration;
- II. expanded service options;
- III. more technology options and accommodation of new provider architectures;
- IV. concentration on the entire ICT ecosystem in order to achieve a competitive value chain;
- V. unlocking investment in customer premises equipment (but a single Caribbean market is required for viability and to serve as a platform for extra- regional expansion;
- VI. strengthening privacy and consumer protection (consumer protection has value to competition because private information is now a prized, tradable commodity);
- VII. protection of intellectual property whilst concomitantly promoting and incentivising intellectual property sharing and collaboration, as a public good; and
- VIII. development of human capital, paying attention to both curriculum and content. In particular, government agencies need substantial capacity to analyse, develop and implement entrepreneurship and competitiveness policy as distinct from competition policy-making. [One is about birth and efficiency of enterprise and the other about equity in the market].

However we define the measures, ICT enhanced competitiveness must be about economic growth and social development, in the areas of e-Business, e-Government, e-Education, and e-Community. At the granular stage, it must manifest as:

1. high levels of accessibility and security;
2. reduction of costs; and
3. reduction of the potential for regulatory arbitrage due to, for example, inefficient or inconsistent rate levels and inconsistent rate structures (e.g. roaming charges).

Having said that, it is important to consider that the sovereign territories which make up the Caribbean, are distinguishable. The real distinction lies in the entrepreneur's relative capacity to actively innovate and improve technology, and manage the production process. In that regard, Trinidad, for example, is different from Jamaica, in much the same way the USA's economy differs from Germany's, although there are obvious complementarities.

Policy must therefore be relevant for specific entrepreneurs in their particular socio-economic contexts. In other words, as we formulate competitiveness, policy we must be guided by the mantra that competitiveness is not just about what ICT entrepreneurs "do," but also a socio-economic phenomenon.

I therefore propose that in order to enhance ICT competitiveness there must be organic examination of cross-cutting policies, specifically telecoms, broadcasting, content, culture, trade, finance, education, e-commerce, and small business development. This form of policy coherence is easier said than done but consistent with the notion of joined-up governance.

In conclusion, regulatory policies must evolve at a pace which allows for considered and pragmatic responses to the effect of emerging and

**destructive technologies, customer preferences and capital market volatility. Regulators need the capacity to discern current and emerging trends, identify key variables, model and futurecast. Whilst doing so, regulators must eschew venturing too far beyond likely near term scenarios and definitely never engage in conclusive industry soothsaying.**

**Thank You**