



*High Commissioner of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Pretoria, South Africa*

MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY ROGER GOPAUL
HIGH COMMISSIONER OF THE REPUBLIC OF
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

I graciously receive your invitation to give my patronage to Education Africa International Marimba and Steelpan Festival for Schools thereby representing the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago at this auspicious event.

The steelpan has its genesis on the Caribbean island of Trinidad and Tobago. Seeking an avenue for expression, the descendants of African slaves reshaped scrap oil drums which, unknowing to them, also reshaped their destiny. When steel pans first emerged in the 1930's they were scorned, rejected and considered a public nuisance. Time and exposure eventually eroded this stigma and the steel pan is now the national instrument of the republic of Trinidad and Tobago and a source of great pride for its citizens. Steel pan and its innovators are now held in high regard by persons of all levels of society in Trinidad and Tobago and throughout the world.

It is with pleasure to note that the International Marimba and Steelpan Festival continues to attract a growing number of participants and performances from the region. This is indeed an indicator of the positive influence and impact that Education Africa has on the development of talent among the young people of Africa. The Trinidad and Tobago High Commission expresses its appreciation and esteem to the unsung heroes of the Festival.

The High Commission is proud to be affiliated with Education Africa and recommits its support to the International Marimba and Steelpan Festival.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roger Gopaul". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'R' and 'G'.

Roger Gopaul
High Commissioner