



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Public Administration and Artificial Intelligence

FEATURE ADDRESS

BY

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DEPUTY PERMANENT SECRETARY (AG.)

ON BEHALF OF

SENATOR THE HONOURABLE DOMINIC SMITH
MINISTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

AT THE

ARTHUR LOK JACK GLOBAL SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
AI IN ACTION SYMPOSIUM

THURSDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER, 2025

9.00 A.M.

Salutations

Ambassador of the Republic of Colombia to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, His Excellency William Sydney Bush Howard

Mr. Mariano Browne, Chief Executive Officer, UWI-ALJGSB (the University of the West Indies - Arthur Lok Jack Global School of Business)

Mr. Leon McQuade, Co-Founder, ThinkCloud (Virtual)

Mr. Roberto Bustos, Principal Cloud Solutions Architect, Google

Ms. Ingrid Riley, Founder, SiliconCaribe (Virtual)

Ms. Kandyss Trancoso, Chief Operating Officer, Heft IQ (InPerson)

Mr. Kyle Maloney, Founder, Tech Beach Retreat (In-Person)

Mr. Ian John, Chief Executive Officer, CyberEye

Mr. Lorenzo Hodges, CEO and Chief Innovation Officer, Plain White Table Inc

Faculty and staff of the UWI-ALJGSB

Specially invited guests

Members of the media

Local and regional participants

A pleasant good morning.

It is truly inspiring to be here with all of you at AI in Action - a dynamic gathering of innovators, visionaries, and leaders who are shaping the future of Artificial Intelligence. I bring heartfelt greetings from Senator the Honourable Dominic Smith, Minister of Public Administration and Artificial Intelligence. His absence today is regrettable, but his commitment to this cause is unwavering. The very existence of a dedicated Ministry for Artificial Intelligence in Trinidad and Tobago is a testament to our nation's belief in the transformative power of Artificial Intelligence.

I also want to acknowledge the visionary leadership of Mr. Mariano Browne and his team at the Arthur Lok Jack Global School of Business. Thank you for your relentless dedication in shaping the future of business and innovation in our region, and for making events like Artificial Intelligence in Action possible.

Ladies and gentlemen, Artificial Intelligence is no longer a distant concept, it is a global movement that is revolutionising how we live, work and connect. From bustling cities to rural communities, Artificial Intelligence is driving innovation and creating new possibilities. Trinidad and Tobago is proud to be part of this global trend, with a dedicated Ministry focused on unlocking Artificial Intelligence's full potential for national development.

In healthcare, Artificial Intelligence enables early disease detection and is useful in the creation of personalised treatment plans. For example, a 2024 report by the National University Hospital in Singapore highlighted that the Artificial Intelligence-powered system which it developed, by the name of FxMammo, enhanced accuracy in breast cancer diagnoses, reducing false positives by over 20% and false negatives by more than 38%.

In the field of agriculture, a significant initiative was launched under the World Economic Forum's Artificial Intelligence for Agriculture Innovation program. As part of this, the 'Saagu Baagu' pilot was developed in collaboration with the Government of Telangana, supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and implemented by Digital Green. This pilot focused on helping chilli farmers in India. Through the use of Artificial Intelligence, it successfully led to a 21% increase in crop yield.

In the realm of Public Administration, Estonia's Government is actively integrating Artificial Intelligence into its public services, with over 120 Artificial Intelligence applications already in use. This e-governance approach focuses on reducing bureaucracy and making services more predictive, personalised and proactive.

These occurrences continue to prove Artificial Intelligence's status as a global game-changer, and the question is no longer whether we should adopt it, but instead, how quickly we can harness its potential.

Here in Trinidad and Tobago, we are fortunate to be at the cusp of a technological renaissance. Our nation is rich in talent, creativity, and ambition. With Artificial Intelligence, we have the opportunity to diversify our economy, elevate our global competitiveness, and improve the lives of every citizen. The establishment of the Ministry of Public Administration and Artificial Intelligence underscores our commitment to embracing this future with purpose and vision.

Regardless of the industry, be it energy, finance or retail, Artificial Intelligence can help with development.

Whether it is the streamlining of operations by automating repetitive tasks and freeing up human talent for creative and strategic work; reducing costs through predictive analytics, smart logistics, and optimised supply chains; allowing for the minimising of waste by leveraging data to make smarter, more sustainable decisions; or enhancing customer experiences with personalised services and real-time support, Artificial Intelligence is here to aid, and not replace our human resources.

For our government, Artificial Intelligence is a partner in delivering better public services. From traffic management to healthcare, from education to disaster response, Artificial Intelligence can help us make faster, more accurate decisions and ensure that no citizen is left behind.

For our people, Artificial Intelligence is a pathway to new skills, new jobs, and new opportunities. According to the World Economic Forum Future of Jobs Report 2025, which covers projections up to 2030, Artificial Intelligence and related trends will ultimately create a net increase of 78 million jobs, with the new roles demanding skills such as analytical thinking, creative thinking, and technological literacy.

We recognise that with any technological advancement, there are always concerns. When it comes to Artificial Intelligence, many worry about job displacement, privacy and security, and the ethical implications. Each and every concern is valid and must be addressed head-on with due diligence.

Firstly, we must dispel the misconception that Artificial Intelligence is intended to replace humans. Rather, its true value lies in its ability to augment and enhance our capabilities.

In fact, the most successful Artificial Intelligence implementations are those that combine the power of machines with the ingenuity of people. For example, in Japan, companies like Toyota use Artificial Intelligence to assist workers in their factories and optimise production. Secondly, we must commit to responsible Artificial Intelligence usage, ensuring transparency, accountability, and fairness in every Artificial Intelligence system. This means protecting data privacy, protecting against cybersecurity threats, and working together - government, business, and civil society - to establish clear ethical guidelines

and robust regulatory frameworks. Thirdly, we must continue to invest in education, through initiatives like the Artificial Intelligence in Action Conference, as well as the necessary reskilling. The future belongs to those who can adapt, and so, we must be dedicated to equipping our workforce with the skills needed to thrive in an Artificial Intelligence-driven world. With these ideas in mind, it was prudent for Cabinet to approve an Inter-Ministerial Committee to deal with cyber security and artificial intelligence (Artificial Intelligence). This Committee will address cyber-security threats and Artificial Intelligence-enabled scams as Government has recognised the rapid increase in cyber-related incidents and Artificial Intelligence-enabled scams targeting public officials, organisations, and artistes. Therefore, action was taken.

Quite frankly, the success of Artificial Intelligence and the minimisation of risks depend a lot on leadership. This room is brimming with brilliant leaders, who are willing to embrace change, take calculated risks, and champion innovation. That is why these types of events are so critical. Yes, you are here to learn. But it is so much more than that. You are answering a call to lead.

The panel of experts assembled for this Conference represents the best in the field. They bring with them a wealth of knowledge, experience, and practical insights, so I urge you to listen, to engage, and to trust their guidance. The road to Artificial Intelligence adoption is not always straightforward, but with the right partners and the right strategies, it is a road that can lead to success.

So, how can we seize the opportunities that Artificial Intelligence present? Let's break them down:

From a business standpoint, entrepreneurs can start small, identifying specific areas where Artificial Intelligence can make an immediate impact, such as customer service or inventory management. Measure the results, learn from the experience, and then, scale up.

Educators can integrate Artificial Intelligence literacy into curriculum development, and students can commit to building at least one new Artificial Intelligence-related skill per year.

Finally, citizens can adopt an Artificial Intelligence tool, whether it's a chatbot or a productivity app. Be curious. Ask questions. Engage with the technology.

Remember, the future of Artificial Intelligence is not just for technologists; it is for all of us.

Ladies and gentlemen, the future is not something that simply unfolds - it is something we actively shape. With Artificial Intelligence, we hold the tools to build a future that is smarter, more inclusive, and more prosperous. Let us leave this symposium energized and

united, ready to collaborate across sectors and lead Trinidad and Tobago into a new era of intelligent innovation.

Let us leave here not just inspired, but empowered, turning ideas into action, and action into impact. Let us work together to position Trinidad and Tobago as a leader in the age of intelligent innovation, using Artificial Intelligence as a force for good.

Thank you for your efforts (and I hope today is productive and successful. Let's get to work. Thank you.)