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Arima.
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Your Excellency,

It is an immense honour to have your presence here in Trinidad and Tobago for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. It is my earnest wish that your time in our culturally kaleidoscopic nation will be boundlessly enjoyable.

As you roam the nation, you will be greeted by a wealth of stately trees whose branches spread into a wide umbrella, their leaves shivering in the crisp breeze. They may either stand erect, as a steeple in praise of the Almighty God, or twine around each other, gnarled and knotted like our Immortelle, symbolic of the ancient majesty and mystic, penetrating wisdom encoded within our society.

Hummingbirds hover over the crimson hibiscus flowers, glittering like precious jewels. Their iridescent feathers are reminiscent of the rainbow of ethnicities colouring Trinbagonian society. The sparkling wings of each one seem to beat out the line from our National Anthem- "Here every creed and race finds an equal place".

Indeed, our nation is a place of equality. Here, individuals of every religion and cultural background live together. Much like the glistening feathers of our treasured Hummingbird, it is our differences that bind us and make us as mesmerizing and beautiful as we are.

In the World today, many problems stem from the inability to understand, and therefore accept, cultural and social differences. If we were truly rid of prejudice and bigotry, war would be obsolete. We would consider all people and, by extension, all nations equal.

In Trinidad and Tobago, we demonstrate one of the Commonwealth's main principles- that people of vastly different heritages can join forces, learning from each other, existing as one.

We have shown, through the intense passion for our nation that burns in our hearts like the flaming scarlet ibis, that despite any and all dissimilarities we can form a family. United, we explode in innovation, creating marvels like the steel pan, calypso music and high-spirited limbo. This epitomizes our national motto, "Together we aspire; together we achieve"- a maxim entirely relevant and necessary nowadays.

The waves that roll unto the hot sand of our beaches gurgles the fifth line of our beloved Anthem- "Side by side we stand". Truly, in Trinidad and Tobago, we experience a sense of brotherhood. We support each other, motivate each other and *love* each other. In the hour of need, the citizens of this nation clasp hands and stand firm knowing that once we stand together and stand with God, we can endure all things.

Despite the sinister tendrils of iniquity that slither into our society, threatening to destroy us, the fierce love for our nation still fuses us so that nothing can tear us apart. This concept of unity is etched into the very fabric of our beings.

Our country sits proud. Proud of her history. Proud of her people. She tells us that whether we belong to China or Chile, Switzerland or Swaziland, we must learn to live as one, for we are all part of one World, Mother Earth. Because we are not only citizens of our countries, but of one collective body, when we hurt each other, we hurt ourselves.

Finding the answer for World Unity is not as difficult as we perceive. It entails only the ability to banish pride and the childish bravado that make us wield contempt and brandish hatred.

In Trinidad and Tobago, people of every imaginable cultural origin intermingle like the melodious notes of a ballad, sharing our land, sharing our lives. We have learnt to live, not as individual forces, but as one, indestructible entity that is made all the richer and more tuneful as a result of our multiracial existence. For can there ever be true harmony if all the notes sound the same?

The sun, in all her flaxen glory showers her resplendent light upon all citizens of the vast World. And the rain, like liquid diamond, falls upon each head, crystallizing to form an unbreakable ribbon of hope and love that makes us one.

Your Excellency, I hope that as you leave our shores, you will take this message of unity and equality to the World.

Thank you dearly for your time.

Yours truly,
Samantha A. V. Khan,
Student.