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TOPIC: Write a letter to a visiting Commonwealth leader about what Trinidad and Tobago can teach the world.

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The Prime Minister,  
Head of Government,  
Republic of Singapore.

Honourable Mr. Lee Hsien Loong,

Sir, it is with utmost respect and admiration for you and your country that I have chosen to write to you about what my country, Trinidad and Tobago, can teach the world.

I have read about so many interesting achievements by your country and some of them are similar to those of Trinidad and Tobago including the fact that each nation is a Republic, we both have very high literacy rates and our countries are considered to be multiracial and multi-religious societies. Conversely, while Singapore does not have natural resources to rely on, Trinidad and Tobago has been blessed with oil and natural gas. We have been able to convert some of these raw materials into petrochemical products.

Our economy is based on the free market system and is also highly diversified and industrialized. This makes us stand out among neighbouring Caribbean countries as the majority of our revenue is earned from the energy sector. Additionally, our manufacturing and financial sectors, along with the energy sector, have enabled our citizens to enjoy a decent standard of living. Trinidad and Tobago are the southernmost islands of the Lesser Antilles, located approximately 11 km off the northeast coast of Venezuela. As one of the most prosperous Caribbean islands we know that this is not attained easily; it has been achieved through the dedication, hard work and skills of our nation's workforce managed by a corrupt free government.

With an ethnically diverse population around of 1.3 million, through values and high morals taught and passed down to us by our forefathers, we have learnt to come together and work to achieve success in whatever we do.

Trinidadians and Tobagonians are very welcoming and hospitable people. Carnival is a national festival that is celebrated over a two-day period. The festivities include beautiful costumes and a lot of dancing, calypso and steel band music and food. On those days everyone joins together and celebrates freely before the Lenten season when there is prayer and fasting in preparation for Easter.

The harmony that exists among our people has placed us on the world stage on several occasions including winning Miss Universe titles in 1977 and 1998 and Miss World in 1986. Most recently, our footballers made it to the World Cup in Germany and our cricketers placed second in the Twenty20 World Cup held in India. This was due to unity and team spirit as well as the citizens coming together to throw all their support for these ambassadors of our country.

As I reflect on the many accomplishments of Trinidad and Tobago, I realize we can teach the world that with cooperation, determination, discipline and love, anything is achievable by a nation.

Thank you.

Yours respectfully,  
Zachary Luke Subran-Ganesh