

**WELCOME REMARKS BY
STEVE R. STOUTE, PRESIDENT
BARBADOS OLYMPIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
AT THE
PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES
ADVANCE SPORTS ADMINISTRATORS COURSE
AT THE MARRIOTT COURTYARD
ON TUESDAY, 21ST JUNE 2016**

Dr. Rudolph Alleyne, Academic Programme Coordinator Sports Science Program, Academy of Sports, UWI and Mrs. Alleyne. Mr. Jerry Blenman, Interim CEO, National Sports Council, Mr. Ralph Johnson, Vice President of the Barbados Olympic Association, Inc. and Mrs. Johnson, and other members of the BOA Executive Board, Mr. Stephen Rowe, Sports Development Officer, Ministry of Family, Culture, Sports and Youth, Mr. Damian Mascoll, Senior Marketing Executive, Flow, Mr. David Farmer, Director of the Barbados Olympic Academy, other members of staff, graduands, members of the media, colleagues in sport.

First let me welcome each and every one to tonight's graduation ceremony. A special welcome to Dr Alleyne and Mrs. Alleyne. Dr Alleyne we appreciate your taking time to be with us and we look forward to hearing your address. I extend greetings and hearty congratulations to the graduands. Indeed as the master of ceremonies indicated the Advance Sports Management course is an intensive, demanding, in-depth project that needs much dedication and commitment to complete. I therefore compliment all of you for staying on the arduous path to success.

Indeed is the BOA's strategy to enhance the sports leadership structure across our national Federations and I must praise the Olympic Academy for its work in this regard. This will be the third Advance Course conducted by the academy and there is only one other Olympic Academy in the English speaking Caribbean that has attempted this programme and to date they have only held one advance course.

At the last Pan American Sports Organization (PASO) Annual General Assembly last year it was demonstrated that the Barbados Olympic Academy is the by far the most active in the region and one of the most aggressive in the Americas. Thus I must applaud Academy Director David Farmer and the Academy Board for the good work.

But tonight belongs to the graduands. As I said at the opening of this course some weeks ago your successful completion should provide you with the attributes and knowledge base to contribute more successfully to your organization. I have echoed repeatedly during my tenure as President of this NOC, that many of our national federations are in crisis plagued with various deficiencies emanating from a lack of efficient administration, the need for problem-solving skills and also the necessity for conflict resolution insights. Without strong national federations, it is not only difficult to identify potential athletes but also hard to develop athletes and create a strong sporting nation.

So graduands you should now be well-equipped to play a key role within our country's sporting infrastructure and it is my hope that many of you, will be holding key positions within the national federations of this country if you do not already do so and work to build, well-governed, transparent structures. It is my wish that you will find some success in this regard.

Once again, I applaud your dedication and interest in Olympic sport. I reiterate my congratulations on completing this very comprehensive course and while the challenges are yet to come, we at the BOA stand ready to assist.

Once more I welcome you ladies and gentlemen we appreciate your support. I hope you have an enjoyable evening.

Thank you and God bless.