

1/15/15

Bon Tardi and Bon Bini, My name is Daphne Agius Cesareo-Lejuez, and I would like to welcome you this afternoon to our New Year's Business Event.

I have the pleasure and honor to be the 3rd woman president in the Aruba Chamber's longstanding history and I am grateful for this opportunity and to be able to share this with our board of eight fellow members .

Despite the challenges and uncertainties in public finance that we all observed in 2014, the local economy still managed to see areas of growth, primarily fueled by the initiatives and creativity of the private sector. The year 2015 promises to be no different with ongoing challenges as well as new opportunities.

One of the main objectives of the Aruba Chamber has always been to look after the interests of the Aruban business community and Aruba in general. And to quote IMF's managing director, Mrs. Christine Lagarde, in her Global Economy speech today, we too may benefit from her "3 Rosetta moments" analogy which included:

- Boosting growth and creating employment
- Achieving inclusive and better shared growth
- And making sure that this growth is both sustainable and balanced

These objectives are not achievable by one sector in isolation. Teamwork - achieved through a collaborative and inclusive approach - will also be a determining factor.

While some necessary and perhaps unpopular policy changes may require political courage and strong leadership combined with a genuine interest in the long-term wellbeing of Aruba's citizens, we at the Aruba Chamber are certain that through continued dialogue we can achieve results that encourage stability and prosperity for the local economy.

I will keep my speech brief, as one of the goals of this event is to provide an environment for business networking as well as to receive feedback from the business community.

Thank you for your presence and we hope to be in closer contact throughout the year.

Enjoy the evening.