

# Angostura expands global ambitions



Angostura’s solar-charged electric forklift loads the company’s aromatic bitters, orange bitters and five-year-old rum onto a container to be shipped to India. PHOTO BY ANGOSTURA

Angostura Holdings Ltd is accelerating its push onto the global stage, strengthening its international footprint while modernising operations and product offerings to secure sustainable growth for decades to come.

Speaking in a wide-ranging interview, chairman Gary Hunt told Guardian Media, “We are actively pursuing plans across several regions, and many of these initiatives will come to fruition this year,” signalling what he described as an exciting period ahead for the 202-year-old company.

A key pillar of Angostura’s global strategy is Africa, where the company sees significant untapped potential for its bitters, rums and other beverage products.

Hunt confirmed that Angostura is looking at Ghana, South Africa and Botswana, while also exploring entry into new markets in Ethiopia.

“We have the whole continent that we are looking at,” he said, adding, “We are actively pursuing plans in that region, and yes, they will come to fruition this year.”

He also pointed to the company’s unparalleled global success with Angostura Bitters as a blueprint for future expansion.

“We have a very good penetration of bitters in Manhattan and four borough areas and we have a project that we are considering now to bring to the board so that our rums could follow. In every single bar in Manhattan, without exception, you can find Angostura bitters,” Hunt said, noting, “That kind of penetration gives us confidence as we look at how our rums can follow the same path.”

While global expansion remains a headline priority, Hunt stressed that Angostura’s outward push is firmly supported by internal reform.

Over the past four months, the company has been closely examining its operations to improve efficiency, productivity and profitability.

“As a company, we continue to explore efficiency, we continue to explore productivity and thereby profits,” Hunt said. “We are looking closely at operations and optimising in all areas.”

These efforts, he said, would continue into 2026 as Angostura positions itself to withstand external pressures such as rising costs and changing regulatory

environments.

“We’ve had a challenge in the old packaging previous that it was not fully sustainable and that was a barrier for the products entering into the UK market, especially like the grocery chains and so on. So now we have been able to overcome that. So there’s a planned trip to the UK very soon where we’re going to be engaging stakeholders in that market to get the products on their shelves,” Hunt explained.

### Other plans for 2026

Hunt disclosed that the company is currently addressing certain administrative challenges.

“We have some competing products who are in the market contrary to the existing laws, which we are correcting. We are looking at other facilitation through trade. Like, for example, we’re pursuing a duty-free concession for India. Recently, they awarded Mauritius, which is with a similar dynamic, similar metrics to Trinidad and Tobago, duty-free for all their products into India, so we are pursuing that. That will be a big, big win because our products at the moment has a 130 per cent excise duty when it arrives into India.

So, our price points will be better.

It will also increase our profit margins, etc,” Hunt explained.

He further emphasised that when indigenous products from T&T are subjected to taxes while other products enter the market untaxed—due to perceived administrative loopholes—Angostura, as a responsible business, must address the issue and bring it to the attention of the authorities.

“This matter is currently engaging the attention of the relevant authorities, and we expect a response very soon. One thing I can say is that the government is very responsive and very facilitative to trade and investment and the economy,” Hunt added.

### Capturing the next generation with RTDs

Innovation in product development is another cornerstone of Angostura’s strategy, particularly as consumer preferences shift toward convenience and new formats. Hunt said the company is placing increased emphasis on the

ready-to-drink (RTD) segment, which has proven especially attractive to Gen Z and millennial consumers.

“The RTD segment is the appealing format for with the Gen Z and the millennials,” he said.

Angostura is preparing to launch several new RTD products, with one scheduled for release on the 20th of this month.

Hunt expressed confidence that these new offerings will resonate strongly with consumers.

“We think these products are going to be big hits,” he said, adding that invitations to the official launches will be issued soon.

### Modernising the brand while honouring heritage

As Angostura enters its 202nd year, the company is also undertaking a comprehensive review of its branding to ensure it remains relevant in a competitive global marketplace.

Hunt said the butterfly—long associated with Angostura—is being formalised as an iconic symbol across its product lines, particularly its rums and premium offerings.

“The company has, over time, you know, been using the butterfly, but we need to formalise our branding. We need to have a playbook that the entire company could work with, not just Trinidad and Tobago, but internationally.

And we are looking at the butterfly as our iconic symbol for the company, especially with our rums and other products,” Hunt explained.

The butterfly symbol is deeply rooted in Angostura’s history.

He noted that in the days of sugar plantations, farmers relied on nature rather than science to determine the best time to harvest sugar cane as when butterflies appeared in the fields, it signalled that sugar levels were at their peak.

“Nature was telling them it was time to harvest for the highest yield,” Hunt said. “That is the story of the butterfly with Angostura.”

The butterfly has already been incorporated into the repackaging of Angostura's premium rums, which now feature fully sustainable packaging.

While the butterfly is currently used at the product level rather than as part of Angostura's corporate branding, Hunt said the company is reviewing its entire branding portfolio as part of its long-term modernisation strategy.

"We have lasted 201 years, and now we are in year number 202," he said. "We have to plan for the future. We have to ensure for the generations who will inherit our work that we've left a relevant and exciting platform that they could build on."

### Exports, profits and the Angostura 2.0x3 vision

Exports remain a critical driver of Angostura's revenue, accounting for approximately 55 per cent of its total income, with the local market contributing the remaining 45 per cent.

Hunt said the company intends to maintain and strengthen that export-led balance.

More ambitiously, he reiterated his "Angostura 2.0x3" vision, first announced at his inaugural annual general meeting as chairman.

"To decode that, it means double our revenue and triple our profits by the year 2028.

We are looking good. I think our shareholders would be excited with our financial results for 2025. Because as you know, we face headwinds with large excise duty increases and we have some other increases that we are facing at the moment in our supply and production and we are actively engaging those issues to get better prices, lower costs of production, increase our margins, etc," Hunt added.

### Carnival confidence

On the home front, Hunt expressed optimism about the Carnival season, noting that Angostura has held prices steady and deployed its sales teams to ensure strong market coverage.

"We expect a good season," he said. "We have the best products, the best price, and a new marketing team that will be coming in to work with us. So,

there's a level of dynamism that is being injected into the company that I think our shareholders, our stakeholders, our customers will be very excited about."

Hunt reaffirmed Angostura's role as a cultural ambassador for T&T noting, "Wherever Angostura products go, they take the pan, the culture, the Carnival, the food. It is soft diplomacy for the country, and it is an iconic company that I believe should remain in the patrimony of Trinidad and Tobago."

Angostura's largest shareholders are Rumpro Company Ltd, with 44.97 per cent of the company, and National Investment Fund Holding Company, which holds 29.92 per cent of Angostura.

Rumpro is owned by CL Financial, which is under the control of liquidators appointed by the previous minister of finance, Colm Imbert, in 2017.