Public Hearing Summary

Wednesday February 6, 2019

Inquiry Subject:
The examination of the audited financial statements of the Cocoa Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (CDCTTL) for the period 2014 to 2016.

Committee Members:
The following Committee Members were present for the meeting:

- Mr. Wade Mark - Chairman
- Dr. Tim Gopeesingh - Vice Chairman
- Mr. Fitzgerald Hinds - Member
- Mrs. Cherrie-Ann Crichlow-Cockburn - Member
- Mr. Foster Cummings - Member

Witnesses who appeared:

**Cocoa Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited**

- Mr. Winston Rudder - Chairman
- Ms. Jacqueline Rawlins - Director
- Mr. Leon Granger - Chief Executive Officer
- Ms. Mala Partap - Chief Operations Officer/Secretary

**Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries**

- Ms. Lydia Jacobs - Permanent Secretary
- Ms. Albada Beekham - Director, Research Division
- Mr. David Ram - Director (Ag.), Regional Administration North
- Ms. Theresa Rosemond - Technical Officer, Crops Research, Research Division
- Ms. Jaiwantee Samsoondar - Agricultural Officer I, Research Division
- Mr. Chris J. Ramkissoon - Planning Officer, Agricultural Planning Division
Ministry of Finance – Investments Division

- Ms. Jennifer Lutchman - Deputy Permanent Secretary
- Mr. Ryan Maharaj - Senior Business Analyst (Ag.)
- Ms. Salie Ramesar - Business Analyst

Key Topics Discussed:

1. The history of the CDCTTL;
2. The non-commercial nature of the CDCTTL’s activities;
3. The core functions of the CDCTTL;
4. The reduction in the metric tonnes of cocoa produced;
5. The CDCTTL’s non-adherence to the procedure for the submission of Audited Financial Statement for the year 2017;
6. The strategic role of cocoa in the development of the economy;
7. The difference between the mandate of the CDCTTL and its predecessor, the Cocoa and Coffee Industry Board (CCIB);
8. The reasons for the key positions of accountant, internal auditor, market research officers being vacant at the CDCTTL;
9. The absence of an internal audit and risk management function;
10. The status of the $13 million dollar inherited from the CCIB;
11. The annual volume of world cocoa production;
12. The distinction between fine or flavor cocoa and bulk cocoa in terms of quality and price;
13. Trinidad and Tobago’s status as a fine or flavor cocoa producer;
14. The status of the National Strategic Plan for the Cocoa Industry of Trinidad and Tobago (NCSP);
15. The status of the approval of the CDCTTL’s Strategic Plan;
16. The operationalization of the Draft Strategic Plan by the Company in contravention of the provisions of the State Enterprises Performance Monitoring Manual;
17. The effect of budget constraints on the Company’s work programme;
18. The potential for development of the domestic value added industry;
19. The challenge of increasing production while maintaining high quality of cocoa;
20. The role of the CDCTTL regarding exported cocoa beans;
21. The sharp decline in national cocoa production in comparison to the twentieth (20th) century;
22. The national cocoa production targets over the next ten (10) years;
23. The risk of fraud occurring as a result of the non-separation of duties perform by the Chief Operation Officer;
24. The regulation of the industry;
25. The reasons for the increase in rent paid for the Company’s current location;
26. The reasons for the increase in janitorial services expenditure for the period 2015 to 2016;
27. The number of registered cocoa farmers in Trinidad and Tobago;
28. The amount of land used for the cultivation of cocoa in Trinidad and Tobago;
29. The Farmer’s Field School Initiative;
30. The Compliance with European Union (EU) cocoa import regulations on cadmium content;
31. The Certification Mark and Certificates of Origin issued by the CDCTTL;
32. The challenges of institutional credibility / visibility;
33. The Company’s allocation on the expenditure item ‘donations and sponsorships’;
34. The resuscitation of the cocoa industry;
35. The reasons for requesting an increase in subvention although the company has retained unspent balances;
36. The circumstances and factors which prompted the decision of CDCTTL to relocate its Office to Mulchan Seuchan Road, Chaguanas which resulted in a significant increase in rent;
37. The training programme in cocoa husbandry for Community-Based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme (CEPEP) workers;
38. The aim and cost of the National Cocoa Awards competition;

View the Hearing:
The hearing can be viewed on our YouTube page via the following link:  
https://youtu.be/N3oUxlh3150

PA(E)C Secretariat
February 7, 2019