

Joint Select Committee on Foreign Affairs THIRD REPORT

"INQUIRY INTO DEEPENING EXISTING TIES AND FACILITATING NEW LINKAGES BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA"

FIFTH SESSION (2024/2025), TWELFTH PARLIAMENT



# THIRD REPORT OF THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS ON AN INQUIRY INTO DEEPENING EXISTING TIES AND FACILITATING NEW LINKAGES BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Μŀ	EMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE	3
ΑB	BREVIATIONS	7
1.	THE COMMITTEE	g
	Establishment	9
	Committee Mandate	9
	Powers	9
	Membership of the Committee	9
	Meetings	10
2.	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	12
	Findings	12
	Recommendations	13
3.	INTRODUCTION	15
	BACKGROUND	15
	FOREIGN RELATIONS	16
<b>4.</b>	EVIDENCE, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	20
	OBJECTIVE 1: MEASURES IMPLEMENTED TO STRENGTHEN ECONOMIC, TRADE A DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND GUYANA	
	Findings	30
	Recommendations	
	Findings	39
	Recommendations	40
	Findings	45
	Recommendations	45
	OBJECTIVE 2: POTENTIAL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND GUYANA BOTH BILATERALLY AND WIT	HIN
	THE CARICOM CONTEXT	
	Findings	
	Recommendations	48
	OBJECTIVE 3: WAYS TO LEVERAGE THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL PROXIMITY BETWEEN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND GUYANA	<b>/</b> Ω
	Findings	
	Recommendations	
ΛÞ	PENDICES	52



APPENDIX I	54
MINUTES OF MEETINGS	54
APPENDIX II	64
VERBATIM NOTES	64
APPENDIX III	99
DETAILS ON TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GUYANA	99
APPENDIX IV	. 101
FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR THE DEEPENING OF BILATERAL CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA	
APPENDIX V	. 109
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO/GUYANA FRESH AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE AND FOREST PRODUCTS TRADE PROTOCOL, 2009	109
APPENDIX VI	
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON FOOD SECURITY	
APPENDIX VII	. 124
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON ENERGY SECTOR CO-OPERATION BETWEEN TREPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA	<b>A</b> 124
APPENDIX VIII	. 135
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA ON RENEWED AND ENHANCED CO-OPERATION	F
APPENDIX IX	. 142
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FRIENDLY CO- OPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CITY OF PORT OF SPAIN, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND THE CITY OF GEORGETOWN, CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA	. 142
APPENDIX X	. 148
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S TOP 10 EXPORTS TO GUYANA AND TOP EXPORTING COMPAI TO GUYANA FOR 2021 AND 2022	
APPENDIX XI	. 150
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S TOP 10 IMPORTS FROM GUYANA AND TOP 10 GOODS IMPORTING COMPANIES FOR 2020 AND 2021	150
APPENDIX XII	. 152
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN GUYANA AND THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN TRINIDAD AND TORAGO	152



APPENDIX XIII	154
DETAILS OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S AGRI-INVESTMENT FORUM AND EX	
19-21 2022	154
APPENDIX XIV	156
GUYANA/TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO FOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN	156



### **ABBREVIATIONS**

ACS Association of Caribbean States
AMCHAM American Chambers of Commerce

CAL Caribbean Airlines Limited

CARICOM Caribbean Community and Common Market

CCJ Caribbean Court of Justice

CELAC Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
COTED Council for Trade and Economic Development

COVID 19 Coronavirus Disease 2019

CPSO CARCIOM Private Sector Organisation Inc.

CreativeTT The Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited

CSME CARICOM Single Market Economy

CSO Central Statistical Office

exporTT The National Export Facilitation Organisation of Trinidad and Tobago

EXIMBANK The Export Import Bank of Trinidad and Tobago Limited

GRULAC Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

ICJ International Court of Justice ITC International Trade Centre

InvestTT InvesTT Limited

JCPC Judicial Committee of the Privy Council
MALF Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries
MEEI Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries
MFCA Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs

MOU Memorandum of Understanding MOWT Ministry of Works and Transport

MSCO Ministry of Sport and Community Development

MP Member of Parliament

MRA Mutual Recognition Agreement

MTCA Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

MTF Ministerial Taskforce

MTI Ministry of Trade and Industry NESC National Energy Skills Center

NGC National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago

NTB Non-Tariff Barriers

OAS Organisation of American States

OACPS Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States

RTC Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas
RTP Regional Transformation Programme
SGDs Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS Small Island Developing States
SPS Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

TTMA Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association

TTL Tourism Trinidad Limited UG The University of Guyana

UK United Kingdom
UN United Nations



US United States of America

UTT The University of Trinidad and Tobago
UWI The University of the West Indies
WOAH World Organisation for Animal Health

WTO World Trade Organisation



## 1. THE COMMITTEE

### Establishment

1.1. The Joint Select Committee on Foreign Affairs was established by resolutions of the House of Representatives and the Senate on Monday November 09, 2020 and Tuesday November 17, 2020 respectively.

#### Committee Mandate

- 1.2. The Joint Select Committee on Foreign Affairs was established by Standing Orders 105 and 95 of the House of Representatives and Senate respectively and is mandated to consider and report on:
  - (a) "all matters relating to the foreign policy of the Government (including missions abroad) and examining the implications and likely effect on Trinidad and Tobago;
  - (b) International treaties and agreements entered into by the Government on behalf of the State and advising the Parliament of their likely impact on Trinidad and Tobago; and
  - (c) other matters relating to Foreign Affairs as may be referred to it by the House."

#### **Powers**

- 1.3. Standing Orders 111 and 101 of the House of Representatives and Senate respectively, empower the Committee to:
  - (a) send for persons, papers and records;
  - (b) sit notwithstanding any adjournment of the House;
  - (c) adjourn from place to place;
  - (d) report from time to time;
  - (e) appoint specialist advisers either to supply information which is not otherwise readily available, or to elucidate matters of complexity within the Committee's order of reference;
  - (f) communicate with any other Committee on matters of common interest; and
  - (g) meet concurrently with any other Committee for the purpose of deliberating, taking evidence or considering draft reports.

### Membership of the Committee

1.4. By motions approved in the House of Representatives and Senate on Monday November 09, 2020 and Tuesday November 17, 2020, respectively and in the Senate on January 12, 2021 the following persons were appointed to serve on the Committee:

Ms. Paula Gopee-Scoon - Chairman
Dr. Maria Dillon-Remy - Vice Chairman
Mr. Brian Manning, MP - Member

Mrs. Shamfa Cudjoe- Lewis, MP

Mrs. Rodney Charles, MP

Mrs. Lisa Morris-Julian, MP

Ms. Donna Cox

Mr. Anil Roberts

Member

Member

Member

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Replaced Mr. Terrence Deyalsingh, MP w.e.f. 12.04.2024; Mrs. Lisa Morris-Julian passed away on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024 after the completion of the report.



### Meetings

- 1.5. At its second meeting, the Committee agreed to meet on the third Wednesday of each month at 1:30 p.m. The Committee has held sixteen (16) meetings to date.
- 1.6. Your Committee requested written submissions and subsequently invited stakeholders to public hearings to assist the Committee in its inquiry.
- 1.7. Your Committee requested written submissions from the following stakeholders:
  - Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs;
  - Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries;
  - Ministry of Trade and Industry;
  - Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts; and
  - Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries.
- 1.8. The responses are appended to this Report.
- 1.9. On April 19, 2023, the Committee met with the following representatives from the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries:

### Officials from the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs

Ms. Reita Toussaint	Permanent Secretary
Ms. Ayesha Wharton	Director, CARICOM and Caribbean Affairs Division
Ms. Sunita Harrikissoon	Director, Treaties, International Agreements and Legal Services
Mrs. Saschele Griffith	Foreign Service Officer

### Officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries

Mr. Ric Javed Ali	Deputy Permanent Secretary
Mr. Kishore Ragbir	Technical Officer Ag. Research – (Crops)
Mr. Nigel Grimes	Project Co-ordinator/Technical Advisor

1.10. On May 17, 2023, the Committee held its second public hearing with the following representatives from the Ministries of Trade and Industry; Tourism, Culture and the Arts; and Energy and Energy Industries:

### Officials from the Ministry of Trade and Industry

Mr. Randall Karim	Deputy Permanent Secretary
Mr. Kriyaa Balramsingh	Senior Trade Specialist
Ms. Vindra Singh	Trade Analyst
Ms. Ruqayyah Scott	Associate Professional



### Officials from the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries

Mrs. Penelope Bradshaw-Niles	Permanent Secretary
Ms. Karinsa Tulsie	Deputy Permanent Secretary
Mr. Timmy Baksh	Director, Energy, Research and Planning Division

### Officials from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

Mrs. Simone Thorne-Mora Quinones	Permanent Secretary
Mr. Tej Ramlogan	Director, Culture
Mr. Keon Francis	Cultural Officer III (Ag)
Mr. Brian Gift	Tourism Advisor II

- 1.11. Your Committee requested additional information from the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries by letters dated May 23, 2023.
- 1.12. The responses were received from the stakeholders on the following dates:

≜ Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs - June 06 and 07, 2023; and

Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries - June 06, 2023

1.13. The Minutes of the Meetings in connection with the above hearings are attached as **Appendix I** and the Verbatim Notes as **Appendix II**.

### Secretariat Support

Ms. Sharla Elcock Secretary

Ms. Sherlana Ramdeen Assistant Secretary

Ms. Katharina Gokool Senior Parliamentary Research Specialist

Mrs. Kimberly Lewis Parliamentary Research Specialist
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# 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. At the Committee's second meeting held on Wednesday May 19, 2021, your Committee agreed to commence an inquiry into 'Deepening Existing Ties and Facilitating New Linkages between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.' The title of the inquiry was taken from the remarks of then Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, Senator the Honourable Dennis Moses at the opening of the High Commission for the Co-operative Republic of Guyana to Trinidad and Tobago on February 8, 2017.
- 2.2. The inquiry had the following objectives:
  - To consider measures implemented to strengthen economic, trade and diplomatic relations between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana;
  - To explore the potential for sustainable development partnerships between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana both bilaterally and within the CARICOM context; and
  - ★ To consider ways to leverage the social and cultural proximity between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana.

### **Findings**

- 1. The relationship between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana is strong and continues to progress with the firm demonstrable commitment of both countries to expand relations.
- 2. There are significant bilateral agreements between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana to foster co-operation, but greater focus should be placed on quickening the pace of implementation.
- 3. Trinidad and Tobago enjoys a healthy trade relationship with Guyana in both energy and non-energy exports.
- 4. It is difficult to obtain detailed information on export activity and trade balances in some service sectors and subsectors because available services data is neither readily available nor disaggregated.
- 5. The revision of the Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Fresh Agricultural Trade Produce and Forest Products Trade Protocol of 2009 to allow for imports from Guyana and to simplify the procedural arrangements for imports of agricultural products from Guyana needs to be fast-tracked.
- 6. The Joint Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Technical Taskforce on the promotion of bilateral agricultural trade and development is a recognised initiative for pursuing increased trade with Guyana and resolving any trade issues which may arise.
- 7. There have been delays in the registration process of five (5) pharmaceutical products which may have been interpreted as a denial of market access into Trinidad and Tobago.
- 8. There have been difficulties experienced by Guyana in trading live horses with Trinidad and Tobago.
- 9. The transshipment of honey is an issue that has been raised by Guyana and should be resolved as soon as possible.



- 10. The MOU on Energy Sector Co-operation assists in aligning the efforts of both countries towards a more secure, resilient and sustainable energy future and has been successful mainly in the areas of education and training.
- 11. There is collaboration amongst the MEEI, state enterprises and the private sector to forge relationships on an industry level with Guyana.
- 12. The granting of mineral licences by the MTI is an inter-ministerial process, dependent on the local supply and demand for the minerals, as advised by the MOWT upon inquiries from the MEEI.
- 13. Collaboration on initiatives for sustainable development in the areas of culture and tourism should be initiated.
- 14. There has not been a dedicated agreement or MOU with respect to culture and linkages between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana since the 1999 Framework Agreement for the deepening of bilateral co-operation between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.
- 15. There has been little progress in developing tourism and cultural linkages between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana.
- 16. The MTCA can collaborate with Guyana on the development of heritage sites and national parks.

### Recommendations

- 2.3. Based on the evidence received the Committee recommends that the:
  - 1) MFCA monitor the progress and implementation of Agreements signed with Guyana and report to the Committee on their status.
  - 2) MTI collaborate with the MFCA to obtain information from Skills Certificates granted to assist with the establishment of a database and to disaggregate data on services traded with Guyana and by extension all regional trading partners.
  - 3) MTI continue to support the TTMA in identifying and penetrating the Guyanese markets, particularly through the Ministry's now established Commercial Attaché.
  - 4) MTI liaise with Ministry of Health to reduce delays in the registration process for pharmaceutical products.
  - 5) MALF pursue the revisions to the Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Fresh Agricultural Trade Produce and Forest Products Trade Protocol (2009).
  - 6) MALF and the MTI pursue the establishment of an agreement on equine trade.
  - 7) MALF pursue the necessary legislative amendments to resolve the issue on the transshipment of honey.
  - 8) MEEI continue to engage in initiatives to promote collaboration in the areas of education, training and energy co-operation.
  - 9) MEEI consider pursuing collaborations in the area of renewable energy with Guyana.
  - 10) MEEI continue to engage in initiatives directed at strengthening technical assistance reciprocation between the two countries in the energy sector.
  - 11) MTCA pursue initiatives for sustainable development in areas of culture and tourism.



12) MTCA develop a concrete plan for engagement with Guyana, under the MOU on Renewed and Enhanced Co-operation.



## 3. INTRODUCTION

### **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Separated by a mere 695 kilometres, the Co-operative Republic of Guyana ("Guyana") and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago ("Trinidad and Tobago") have forged close ties due to similar culture, history, population composition, language, religion and geographical proximity.
- 3.2 Though Guyana is greater in size, measuring approximately two hundred and fifteen thousand square kilometres (215,000 km²), its population is estimated at seven hundred and eighty-two thousand,



seven hundred (782,700).<sup>2</sup> According to the Central Statistical Office, as of June 30, 2022, Trinidad and Tobago's population was an estimated one million, three hundred and sixty-five thousand, eight hundred and five (1,365,805).<sup>3</sup> The country covers an area of five thousand, one hundred and twenty eight square kilometres (5,128 km²) and consists of two (2) main islands, Trinidad and Tobago, and twenty-one (21) smaller islands.<sup>4</sup>

- 3.3 Like Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana also became a British colony in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, with British rule fully cemented in 1815. Guyana gained its independence from Britain in 1966, four (4) years after Trinidad and Tobago. However, within the Commonwealth Caribbean, Guyana "became the first country in the region to convert to republicanism" as it became a Republic in 1970, six (6) years ahead of Trinidad and Tobago.<sup>5</sup>
- 3.4 Trinidad and Tobago followed the Westminster system, patterning its Legislature after the British Parliament and Executive after the British Cabinet. Moreover, Trinidad and Tobago has retained the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council ("JCPC") as its final Court of Appeal.<sup>6</sup> Guyana followed a different path as "in 1980 [Guyana] abandoned the traditional Cabinet system in favour of an executive presidency, though it has more recently reverted to a semi-presidential system of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> 'Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation Cooperative Republic of Guyana', <a href="https://www.minfor.gov.gy/">https://www.minfor.gov.gy/</a> Accessed 14 Nov. 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Central Statistical Office, "Population Statistics" < <a href="https://cso.gov.tt/subjects/population-and-vital-statistics/population/">https://cso.gov.tt/subjects/population-and-vital-statistics/population/</a>> Accessed 13 Nov. 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, "Trinidad and Tobago" < <a href="https://foreign.gov.tt/about/trinidad-tobago/">https://foreign.gov.tt/about/trinidad-tobago/</a>> Accessed 13 Nov. 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> O'Brien, Derek, "The Constitutional Systems of the Commonwealth Caribbean" Hart Publishing, Oregon, 2014. pg. 41.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Lutchman, Harold A, "The Co-Operative Republic of Guyana" Caribbean Studies, vol. 10, no. 3, 1970, pp. 97–115. JSTOR, <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/25612326">http://www.jstor.org/stable/25612326</a> Accessed 14 Nov. 2023.



- government". In 2005, upon the establishment of the Caribbean Court of Justice ("CCJ"), Guyana, along with Barbados, acceded to the CCJ's appellate jurisdiction and made the CCJ its final Court of Appeal, replacing the JCPC.
- 3.5 The demography of Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago is similar because of their shared experiences with British colonisation, slavery and indentureship. In Guyana, persons of East Indian descent comprise the largest segment of the population, followed by persons of African descent. However, at least 10% of the Guyanese population comprise indigenous inhabitants who mostly reside in the interior of the country. Trinidad and Tobago is also a multi-ethnic society with persons of East Indian descent comprising 35.4% of the population, persons of African descent 34.2%, persons of mixed heritage comprising 22.8%, and other ethnic groups comprising 7.2%. 10

### FOREIGN RELATIONS

### Bilateral Relations - Background

- 3.6 On May 26, 1966, the day of Guyana's independence, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana formally established diplomatic relations. 11 On February 8, 2017, the Government of Guyana opened its first diplomatic mission in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. The High Commission for the Cooperative Republic of Guyana replaced Guyana's Honorary Consulate in the twin island State. 12 However, the Mission has since been downsized to the Consulate General of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, with Ms. Vonetta Victor serving as the Consul General (Ag). 13
- 3.7 The High Commission for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago was re-opened in Georgetown, Guyana, on September 28, 2019. It is responsible for managing relations between the Government of the Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of Guyana. In addition to its normal representational duties, the High Commission monitors trade, as well as political and economic developments in Guyana, and functions in an advisory capacity to Trinidad and Tobago entities (from both the public and private sectors) wishing to operate in Guyana.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> O'Brien, Derek. "The Constitutional Systems of the Commonwealth Caribbean." Hart Publishing, Oregon, 2014. pg. 101

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Department of Public Information, Guyana. "History of the CCJ." May 9, 2019. <a href="https://dpi.gov.gy/ministry-of-public-works-marad-notice-to-mariners-no-137-2023-offshore-guyana/">https://dpi.gov.gy/ministry-of-public-works-marad-notice-to-mariners-no-137-2023-offshore-guyana/</a> Accessed 15 Nov. 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Matera, Michael, et al. "An Assessment of the State of the Guyanese Diaspora." The Guyanese Diaspora, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), 2020, pp. 3–16. JSTOR, <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep26538.4.">http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep26538.4.</a> Accessed 11 Nov. 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development "Trinidad and Tobago 2011 Population and Housing Census and Demographic Report." 2012 pg. 15.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation Cooperative Republic of Guyana <a href="https://www.minfor.gov.gy/consulates/countries-guyana-relations">https://www.minfor.gov.gy/consulates/countries-guyana-relations</a> Accessed 15 Nov. 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs. Consulate General of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana < <a href="https://foreign.gov.tt/missions-consuls/foreign-representatives-accredited-tt/foreign-missions/high-commission-cooperative-republic-guyana/">https://foreign.gov.tt/missions-cooperative-republic Guyana < <a href="https://foreign.gov.tt/missions-cooperative-republic-guyana/">https://foreign.gov.tt/missions-cooperative-republic-guyana/</a> Accessed 11 Nov. 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, 'High Commission in Georgetown, Guyana", <a href="https://foreign.gov.tt/missions-consuls/tt-missions-abroad/diplomatic-missions/high-commission-georgetown-guyana/">https://foreign.gov.tt/missions-consuls/tt-missions-abroad/diplomatic-missions/high-commission-georgetown-guyana/</a> Accessed 11 Nov. 2023.





3.8 On July 19, 2022, His Excellency Conrad Enill, the High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, presented his Letters of Credence to His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of Guyana.<sup>15</sup>

3.9 The diplomatic relationship between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana has been strengthened over time through the engagement of both countries in regional

organisations. Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana are among the founding Member States of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) and have a stake in ensuring that CARICOM and the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) thrive. On July 4, 1973, the Treaty of Chaguaramas, which established CARICOM, was signed by Prime Ministers Errol Barrow of Barbados, Forbes Burnham of Guyana, Eric Williams of Trinidad and Tobago, and Michael Manley of Jamaica.



FIGURE 1 SIGNATORIES TO THE TREATY OF CHAGUARAMAS

3.10 Both countries have consistently been at the forefront of the Caribbean region's diplomatic efforts to advance the interests of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the international arena. Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana collaborate at various multilateral fora to advocate for small

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs. Media Release "Trinidad and Tobago's High Commissioner Conrad Enill presents credentials to the President of Guyana", 2022.

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://foreign.gov.tt/documents/1089/High">https://foreign.gov.tt/documents/1089/High</a> Commissioner Enill presents Credentials in Guyana.pdf> Accessed 11 Nov. 2024.



States in the face of special vulnerabilities. The main areas of collaboration include climate change, the environment, security, sustainable development and trade.<sup>16</sup>

- 3.11 Moreover, both countries continue to work closely as members of regional and hemispheric organisations such as the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), and the Organisation of American States (OAS) as well as international organisations, such as the United Nations (UN) and as members of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC). One of the earliest examples of their cooperation in regional fora is the decision to establish diplomatic relations with Cuba in 1972, despite the United States of America's (US) diplomatic blockade.<sup>17</sup>
- 3.12 Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana played a significant role in laying the foundation for what would eventually become the Organisation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (OACPS). The Georgetown Agreement, which forms the fundamental charter of the OACPS, was signed in Georgetown, Guyana, in 1975 when the first Lomé Convention came into force. Subsequently both countries were actively involved in the negotiation of special and differential treatment for decolonised countries as part of trade negotiations with Europe, leading to the Cotonou Agreement of 2000. Both countries also actively participated in the Non-Aligned Movement during the Cold War, advocating for a new international economic order.

### **ECONOMIC RELATIONS**

3.13 Trade between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana has been steadily increasing. In 2019, Trinidad and Tobago was Guyana's fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) largest export partner, with Guyanese exports to Trinidad and Tobago valued at US\$80 million, accounting for 5.09% of Guyana's total exports in that year. Trinidad and Tobago was also Guyana's third (3<sup>rd</sup>) largest import partner, with imports valued at US\$983 million accounting for 24.43% of Guyana's total exports in 2019. The only other CARICOM country to feature amongst Guyana's top 5 import or export partners in 2019 was Suriname, which was Guyana's fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) largest import partner. If the should be noted that during the period 2016 to 2018, Trinidad and Tobago had been Guyana's number one source of imports, valued at US\$473 million (29.09% share), US\$484 million (27.49% share) and US\$824 million (34.32% share) respectively.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup>Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs. Statement delivered by Senator the Honourable Dennis Moses, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs at the Official Opening of the High Commission for the Cooperative Republic of Guyana on 8th February, 2017 < <a href="https://foreign.gov.tt/resources/news/statement-delivered-senator-honourable-dennis-moses-minister-foreign-and-caricom-affairs-official-opening-high-commission-cooperative-republic-guyana-8th-february-2017/">https://foreign.gov.tt/resources/news/statement-delivered-senator-honourable-dennis-moses-minister-foreign-and-caricom-affairs-official-opening-high-commission-cooperative-republic-guyana-8th-february-2017/">https://foreign.gov.tt/resources/news/statement-delivered-senator-honourable-dennis-moses-minister-foreign-and-caricom-affairs-official-opening-high-commission-cooperative-republic-guyana-8th-february-2017/</a> Accessed 15 Nov. 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, "8TH CARICOM-Cuba Summit"

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://foreign.gov.tt/resources/news/8th-caricom-cuba-summit/">https://foreign.gov.tt/resources/news/8th-caricom-cuba-summit/</a> Accessed 16 Jan. 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> The Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States. "About us." <a href="https://www.oacps.org/about-us/">https://www.oacps.org/about-us/</a> Accessed 16 Jan 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup>World Integrated Trading System, 'Guyana Trade Summary' 2019.. Available:

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/GUY/Year/2019/SummaryText">https://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/GUY/Year/2019/SummaryText</a> Accessed 16 Jan 2023.



3.14 Guyana was the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) largest export partner to Trinidad and Tobago in 2017 (US\$309 million, 3.53% share) and fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) largest exporter in 2018 (US\$ 414 million, 3.93% share). The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) reported to the Committee that for the period 2018-2022, Guyana was Trinidad and Tobago's second (2<sup>nd</sup>) largest export partner. Trinidad and Tobago's exports to Guyana increased by 60.5% between 2018 and 2022 from TT\$2.8 billion to TT\$4.5 billion.

### **CULTURAL RELATIONS**

- 3.15 Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, with their close history and colonial experiences, share similar cultures with regard to music, food and religious festivals.
- 3.16 Calypso music, which is mostly identified with Trinidad and Tobago, was also quite popular in Guyana. One Guyanese commentator noted that calypsonians from Trinidad and Tobago used to travel to Guyana to perform and "test their carnival compositions in Georgetown for style, content and general quality".<sup>21</sup> The commentator also noted that there was informal collaboration between Guyanese calypsonians and their counterparts in Trinidad and Tobago.
- 3.17 The collaboration also extended to Chutney Soca. Trinidad and Tobago is the place where this genre of music originated but it has spread to Guyana and Suriname. Notably, the Chutney Soca Monarch competition would frequently feature contestants from Guyana. In 2021, there were four (4) contestants from Guyana in the finals.<sup>22</sup>
- 3.18 In light of the foregoing, the Committee undertook this inquiry.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Ibid, Trinidad and Tobago Trade Summary. < <a href="https://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/TTO/Year/2015/SummaryText">https://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/TTO/Year/2015/SummaryText</a> Accessed 16 Jan. 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> A.A. Fenty. "Guyana Calypso: cool or critical?" Stabroek News July 24, 2013, <a href="https://www.stabroeknews.com/2013/07/24/guyana-review/guyana-calypso-cool-or-critical/">https://www.stabroeknews.com/2013/07/24/guyana-review/guyana-calypso-cool-or-critical/</a> Accessed 16 Jan. 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Guyana Chronicle. "Four Guyanese in tomorrow night's grand finals of Chutney Soca Monarch" February 12, 2021 < <a href="https://guyanachronicle.com/2021/02/12/four-guyanese-in-tomorrow-nights-grand-finals-of-chutney-soca-monarch/">https://guyanachronicle.com/2021/02/12/four-guyanese-in-tomorrow-nights-grand-finals-of-chutney-soca-monarch/</a> Accessed 17. Jan 2023.



# 4. EVIDENCE, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. The following is a synopsis of the issues, which arose from the evidence submitted to your Committee.

# OBJECTIVE 1: MEASURES IMPLEMENTED TO STRENGTHEN ECONOMIC, TRADE AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND GUYANA

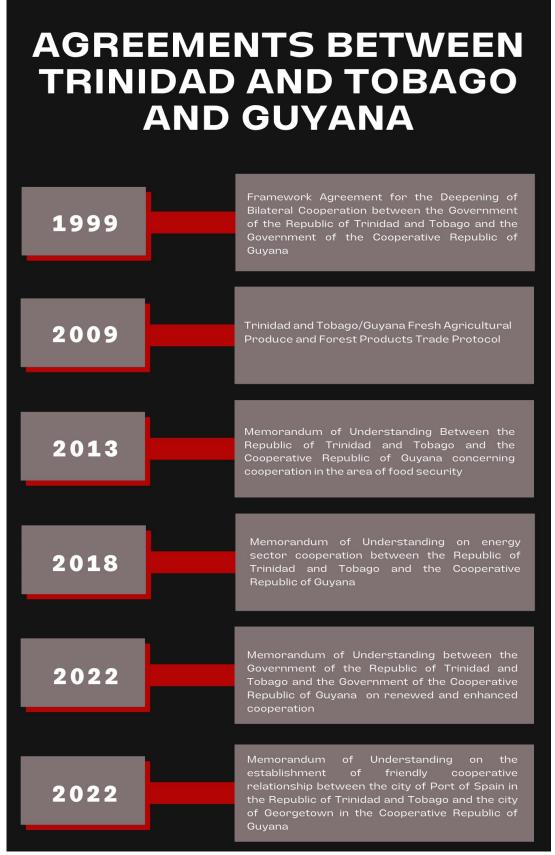
### Bilateral relations between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana

### Overview

- 4.2. Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana have traditionally enjoyed a good relationship. Details of the bilateral relations between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana have been provided by the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs (MFCA) and is attached as **Appendix III**.
- 4.3. In December 2015, Cabinet approved policy initiatives to be implemented by the MFCA. These included, *inter alia*, increased outreach to Guyana specifically with regard to oil, natural gas and energy services, as well as support for the efforts of the local private sector and state enterprises in marketing their products and services overseas.
- 4.4. According to the MFCA, the overarching foreign policy priorities of Trinidad and Tobago with Guyana may be identified as follows:
  - Agriculture and Food Security;
  - Security;
  - nergy;
  - infrastructure;
  - Trade and Investment;
  - ≜ Sports; and
  - Tourism.









### Bilateral Agreements between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana

4.5. The Committee was informed by the MFCA that over the years, a number of agreements had been signed between the two countries, a clear sign of the commitment to increase bilateral engagement. The Agreements currently in force between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of Guyana are presented below.

Framework Agreement for the Deepening of Bilateral Co-operation between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana

4.6. The Framework Agreement was signed between the two (2) parties in August 1999 in Port of Spain, Trinidad for a ten (10)year period. It was last renewed for the period January 8, 2018 to January 7, 2028.<sup>23</sup> It seeks to further technical, commercial, economic and cultural co-operation between the parties. A copy of the Framework Agreement is attached as **Appendix IV**.

Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Fresh Agricultural Trade Produce and Forest Products Trade Protocol of 2009

4.7. The Trade Protocol was signed on December 7, 2009 and provides conditions for the importation of Fresh Agricultural Produce and Forest Products from Guyana including produce quality and post-harvest treatment, packaging and inspection. A copy of the Trade Protocol is attached as **Appendix V**.

Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana concerning co-operation in the area of Food Security

- 4.8. The MOU on Food Security was signed in 2013 and seeks to improve food security in a sustainable manner and to reduce the food import bill of both countries. The MOU identifies several sectors for development, including small ruminant production; dairy, beef and poultry production; certified seeds (rice) production; corn and soy bean for animal feed; garlic; onion; legumes; coconuts; citrus; and aquaculture. The core areas of co-operation within the scope of this MOU are:
  - a. harmonisation and standardisation of policies, strategies and programmes;
  - b. improvement of food security;
  - c. capacity development;
  - d. market development;
  - e. information exchange and knowledge transfer; and
  - f. reduction of the food import bill.
- 4.9. A copy of the MOU is attached as **Appendix VI**.

Memorandum of Understanding on Energy Sector Co-operation between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana

4.10. The MOU on Energy Sector Co-operation came into force on September 19, 2018, and will be automatically renewed for further periods of five (5) years. It aims to develop and promote joint projects throughout the hydrocarbon value chain. A copy of same is attached as **Appendix VII**.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup>Department of Public Information "Guyana, Trinidad renew Framework Agreement for deepening bilateral co-operation" <a href="https://dpi.gov.gy/guyana-trinidad-renew-framework-agreement-for-deepening-bilateral-co-operation/">https://dpi.gov.gy/guyana-trinidad-renew-framework-agreement-for-deepening-bilateral-co-operation/</a> Accessed 01 Feb 2023.



Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana on Renewed and Enhanced Co-operation.

- 4.11. The MOU on Renewed and Enhanced Co-operation came into effect in December 2022. It seeks to strengthen co-operation in the areas of agriculture and food security, security, energy, infrastructure and trade for the sustainable development of both countries, and the advancement of the CSME. The countries have thus far prioritised addressing non-tariff barriers (NTB's) and other impediments to the trade of goods and services between them.
- 4.12. This MOU came into effect on December 10, 2022 and will be automatically renewed for further periods of five (5) years each. It provides for collaboration and co-operation in areas such as trade and investment, agriculture and food security, security, energy, infrastructure, and any other areas that the parties may determine, for the mutual benefit of both countries. A copy of the MOU is attached as **Appendix VIII**.
- 4.13. Technocrats of both countries have been charged with advancing the MOU within productive timeframes through the establishment of a High-Level Bilateral Commission with representatives from both countries. In February, 2023, Cabinet agreed that Trinidad and Tobago's representation on the High-level Bilateral Commission would be comprised of representatives from the following Ministries/organisations:
  - Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs;
  - Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries;
  - Ministry of Trade and Industry;
  - Ministry of Sport and Community Development;
  - Ministry of Works and Transport;
  - Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts;
  - ★ Tourism Trinidad Limited (TTL);
  - Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries;
  - Mational Energy Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago (National Energy); and
  - Tobago House of Assembly.
- 4.14. The functions of the Commission include:
  - Formulation of specific proposals for co-operation and collaboration between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana in identified areas;
  - Supervision and execution of the instant MOU;
  - Examination and approval of specific projects to be undertaken by the Parties; and
  - Review of the progress of co-operation activities between the two countries and formulation of recommendations to the Parties on activities and projects that may be undertaken.
- 4.15. It is expected that the MOU on Renewed and Enhanced Co-operation will give rise to increased bilateral engagement and collaboration because of the political will displayed by the Heads of Government of both countries.



Memorandum of Understanding on the Establishment of Friendly Co-operative Relationship between the City of Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago and the City of Georgetown, Co-operative Republic of Guyana

- 4.16. This MOU was signed on November 04, 2022, and provides an opportunity for the cities in both countries to develop friendly relations and promote mutual reciprocation through educational, social, economic, cultural and tourism-based initiatives. There are seven (7) areas of mutual concern and interest highlighted in the MOU:
  - i. The provision of technical advice and assistance in shipping and the port development in the City of Port of Spain;
  - ii. To create and encourage cultural exchanges in the mutual promotion of cultures including music, arts and craft;
  - iii. To create educational opportunities, facilitate and promote exchanges between students from both cities;
  - iv. To create and expand mutually beneficial economic opportunities for the two (2) cities;
  - v. To collaborate and share data, knowledge and best practices for improved local governance operations;
  - vi. To promote tourism opportunities by building on the recognition of each other's city; and
  - vii. To encourage and promote commercial activities between the City of Port of Spain and the City of Georgetown.
- 4.17. This MOU is under the purview of the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government. Specifically, the responsibility for follow-up and implementation of this MOU lies with the Office of the Mayor of Port of Spain. Accordingly, the Office of the Mayor of Port of Spain has informed that the Georgetown Municipality contacted the Port of Spain City Corporation to schedule a meeting to coordinate a work plan in order to bring the directives of the MOU to fruition. The Council of the Port of Spain City Corporation is to set a date to meet with the Guyana Municipality to explore said initiatives. A copy of the MOU is attached as **Appendix IX**.

### Bilateral Agreements Currently Being Negotiated

- 4.18. The MFCA indicated that the following Agreements are currently being negotiated between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of Guyana:
  - Revision of the Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Fresh Agricultural Produce and Forest Producers Trade Protocol of 2009.
  - Draft Agreement between the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago Regulating Equine (Horses) Trade.



### Challenges Encountered in the Conduct of Bilateral Relations with Guyana

- 4.19. According to the MFCA, Trinidad and Tobago shares longstanding and cordial ties with Guyana that have been solidified through the efforts to address the challenges to the relationship.
- 4.20. The implementation of bilateral agreements has been slowed by internal electoral cycles, resulting in changes in administration and by extension, foreign policy. One of the key strategies to mitigate against this challenge is ensuring that the issues remain alive in bilateral discussions. The MFCA also gauges when priorities have shifted.
- 4.21. Additionally, both countries have had to address disparaging comments and statements made by individuals to the media or in public spaces that are neither related to nor reflective of the position of either Government. In such instances, both countries are usually quick to engage in dialogue at a Ministerial level, reaffirming their commitment to the bilateral relationship and publicly refuting such sentiments.
- 4.22. Another challenge experienced at the bilateral level is in the context of the CSME. In most instances, it concerns the perception of challenges experienced by Guyanese nationals seeking entry into Trinidad and Tobago. For the past five (5) years, the MFCA has not received any formal complaints through the CARICOM Complaints Procedure from Guyanese skilled nationals seeking entry into Trinidad and Tobago under the Free Movement Regime. Additionally, the MFCA has not received any formal complaints from skilled nationals of Trinidad and Tobago entering Guyana under the CSME.
- 4.23. The MFCA is aware of an editorial published in the Kaieteur News, (Guyanese Newspaper) "Unfair Treatment Regarding Skills Certificates Among CSME Member States", 24 which outlined the complaint of a Guyanese national already in possession of a Guyanese Skills Certificate having to reapply for a Trinidad and Tobago Skills Certificate within six (6) months of entry into the country. Under the CSME, a Skills Certificate issued in one Member State can be used in another Member State subject to verification. To bring its immigration laws into alignment with the CSME, Trinidad and Tobago passed the *Immigration (Caribbean Community Skilled Nationals) (Amendment) Act, 2022*, 25 which was proclaimed on February 28, 2023. As a result, Trinidad and Tobago no longer requires skilled nationals of other CARICOM Member States to reapply for a Trinidad and Tobago Skills Certificate on entry into the country. At the time the article was published, Trinidad and Tobago had already amended its legislation. Prior to the amendment, all holders of Skills Certificates entering Trinidad and Tobago, not only nationals of Guyana, were affected.
- 4.24. In relation to Trinidad and Tobago nationals using the Free Movement Regime to access employment opportunities in Guyana, the MFCA has observed an increase in the applications for CSME Skills Certificates for nationals recruited to work in Guyana since the growth in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Kaieteur News, "Unfair treatment regarding Skills Certificates among CSME member states" April 04, 2023 <a href="https://www.kaieteurnewsonline.com/2023/04/04/unfair-treatment-regarding-skills-certificates-among-csme-member-states/">https://www.kaieteurnewsonline.com/2023/04/04/unfair-treatment-regarding-skills-certificates-among-csme-member-states/</a> Accessed 14 Feb. 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Imigration (Caribbean Community Skilled Nationals) (Amendment) Act, 2022. Skilled Nationals) Act, Chap. 18:03 <a href="https://www.ttparliament.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/a2022-09.pdf">https://www.ttparliament.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/a2022-09.pdf</a>.



petrochemical industry in Guyana and its effect on the construction and services sectors. During the pandemic, approximately 50% of applications were from Trinidad and Tobago nationals to work in Guyana.

### Closure of the High Commission for Guyana to Port of Spain

4.25. The Committee noted that the High Commission for Guyana to Port of Spain was formally established in 2017, however, after three (3) years it was closed and replaced by a Consulate General on December 31, 2020. See details at **Appendix III**. The MFCA explained that the closure is not indicative of a weakening relationship between the two (2) countries, especially as relations between the countries have grown.

### Staffing at the High Commission for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in Georgetown

- 4.26. MTI informed the Committee that a new Trade and Investment Promotion Agency was being established through the amalgamation of The National Export Facilitation Organisation of Trinidad and Tobago (exporTT), InvesTT Limited (InvesTT), and The Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited (CreativeTT). The Government also approved the establishment of commercial offices in a series of markets, including Miami, Jamaica, South Africa, China and Guyana.
- 4.27. In August 2022, in keeping with the mandate of the Trinidad and Tobago Trade Policy (TTTP) 2019 2023, Cabinet approved the appointment of a Commercial Attaché at the High Commission for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the Co-operative Republic of Guyana. The appointment of Commercial Attachés is the result of a policy which seeks to discover and advance markets; exploit potential for trade and industry; as well as identify challenges in target markets.
- 4.28. Ms. Melissa Arnaud-Taylor is theCommercial Attaché for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the Co-operative Republic of Guyana. The main responsibility of Ms. Arnaud-Taylor isdevelop overseas markets and boost exports to key strategic trading partners. According to the High Commission for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Georgetown, Guyana, "The assignment of a Commercial Attaché to Guyana will enhance the trading relationships between Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago in key strategic trading areas. This appointment is an integral part of the continued commitment by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to improve non-energy trade and exports and to provide a platform to accelerate growth of the local manufacturing sector". 27



AND TOBAGO TO GUYANA

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Loop news, "Trade Ministry appoints commercial officers, attachés" July 18 2023 < <a href="https://tt.loopnews.com/content/trade-ministry-appoints-commercial-officers-attaches">https://tt.loopnews.com/content/trade-ministry-appoints-commercial-officers-attaches</a> Accessed 4 Sept. 2023.

<sup>27</sup> High Commission for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Georgetown, Guyana, "Trinidad and Tobago improves its service with the arrival of new Commercial Attaché at High Commission, Georgetown" <a href="https://www.facebook.com/TTHCGeorgetown/posts/pfbid0MMBJ72iNUmyQcD2LLPuSge4Di7x48VCovNVRTw5qGi5Do5YwBR3pQHDsz">https://www.facebook.com/TTHCGeorgetown/posts/pfbid0MMBJ72iNUmyQcD2LLPuSge4Di7x48VCovNVRTw5qGi5Do5YwBR3pQHDsz</a>
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### Relations between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana Regionally and Multilaterally

- 4.29. The foreign policies of both Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana are guided by significant respect for the sovereignty of all states, and commitment to the principles of democracy and rule of law.
- 4.30. As founding members of CARICOM, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago share a common vision for the development and prosperity of the region through deeper integration. Guyana serves as the lead Head for Agriculture, Agricultural Diversification and Food Security in the CARICOM Quasi-Cabinet while Trinidad and Tobago has responsibility for Energy and Security.

### Collaboration with the CARICOM Private Sector Organisation (CPSO)

4.31. The CARICOM Private Sector Organisation (CPSO) continues to play a very active role, working with the Special Ministerial Taskforce (MTF) on Food Production and Food Security towards the realisation of the goals and objectives of Vision 25 by 2025. <sup>28</sup> The MTF working with the CPSO, has identified nineteen (19) potential investment opportunities which, in effect, have an import replacement potential of between US\$850M and US\$1.2B per annum. These nineteen (19) potential agri-food investment opportunities have been identified on the basis of the application of nine (9) objective criteria including access to appropriate technology and technological 'know-how', the ability to meet private sector demand for quality, convenience, and food and nutrition security.

### Multilateral successes of Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana

- 4.32. The most recent accomplishments for Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana in the multilateral fora include:
  - (i) Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago to the UN, His Excellency Dennis Francis was elected by acclamation to the Presidency of the 78<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA). Guyana held this position in 1993 for the 48<sup>th</sup> session of the UNGA; and
  - (ii) Guyana was elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for a two (2)year term, from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2025. This is the third time that Guyana has secured a seat on the Security Council which is an accomplishment that distinguishes it within CARICOM.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> The Conference of Heads of Government, at its Thirty-Second Inter-Sessional Meeting held on 24-25 February 2021, approved the establishment of a Special Ministerial Taskforce (MTF) to guide the transformation of the Regional Agri-Food Systems towards full commercialization.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Dr. Nand C. Bardouille, Small States, Big Impact: CARICOM's High-level Diplomatic Successes, Geopolitical Monitor, August 9, 2023, <a href="https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/small-states-big-impact-behind-caricoms-high-level-diplomatic-successes/">https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/small-states-big-impact-behind-caricoms-high-level-diplomatic-successes/</a> Accessed 21August , 2023.



### **GUYANA/VENEZUELA BORDER DISPUTE**

On Sunday December 03, 2023, Venezuelans approved a referendum on whether the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (Venezuela) should claim sovereignty over Essequibo, an oil-and mineral-rich area which constitutes more than two-thirds of the territory of Guyana (Guyana). This longstanding controversy dates back to the Arbitral Award of 1899 which demarcated the border between Venezuela and Guyana.



MAP SHOWING DISPUTED ESSEQUIBO REGION

In 1962, the Government of Venezuela began clamouring for the nullification of the Arbitral Award. In 1966, prior to Guyana gaining independence, 'the Geneva Agreement' was signed to resolve the controversy over the border between Venezuela and Guyana. Under the Geneva Agreement, Guyana and Venezuela conferred upon the United Nations Secretary-General the power and responsibility to choose a means of peaceful settlement. The UN Secretary-General submitted the matter to the International Court of Justice (ICJ). On October 30, 2023, Guyana filed a Request for the indication of provisional measures. The ICJ instructed that no action should be taken by either country that will disturb the status quo in relation to the current management and administration of the disputed territories.



### Trinidad and Tobago's position in relation to CARICOM

Trinidad and Tobago and the other CARICOM states have adopted a common position in relation to the Guyana-Venezuela dispute over the Essequibo region. CARICOM leaders have averred that "CARICOM firmly supports Guyana in pursuance of the resolution of its border controversy with Venezuela through the process of the ICJ". Further, the Trinidad and Tobago Newsday reported that Prime Minister Keith Rowley stated that "we believe that our region is a zone of peace, and we are all better off living in a zone of peace, respecting international law and respecting the rights of our neighbours. We are better off and stronger together".

On Thursday December 14, 2023, discussions were held between His Excellency Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of Guyana and His Excellency, Nicolas Maduro, President of Venezuela, in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, to resolve the escalating tension. The two leaders were hosted by Dr. the Honourable Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Pro-Tempore President of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). Also present were the Honourable Roosevelt Skerrit, Prime Minister of Dominica; the Honourable Mia Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados; the Honourable Philip Davis, Prime Minister of The Bahamas; the Honourable Dickon Mitchell, Prime Minister of Grenada; the Honourable Philip J Pierre, Prime Minister of St Lucia; the Honourable Terrence Drew, Prime Minister of St Kitts and Nevis; and Dr. The Honourable Keith Rowley, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. CELAC and CARICOM facilitated the discussions.

The intervention of CARICOM proved successful as the discussions culminated in the "Joint declaration of Argyle for dialogue and peace between Guyana and Venezuela" in which both parties agreed not to escalate the issue further; nor issue threats or use force against each other; and to resolve any controversies in accordance with international law.



Presidents of Guyana and Venezuela shake hands after agreeing to the Joint Declaration of Argyle



### **Findings**

- 1) The relationship between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana is strong and continues to progress with the firm demonstrable commitment of both countries to expand relations.
- 2) There are significant bilateral agreements between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana to foster cooperation but greater focus should be placed on quickening the pace of implementation.

### Recommendations

1) The Committee therefore recommends that the MFCA monitor the progress and implementation of Agreements signed with Guyana and report to the Committee on their status.



### **Economic and Trade Relations**

### Trade Relations between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana

4.33. Trinidad and Tobago enjoys a healthy trade relationship with Guyana. Over the period 2018-2022, Trinidad and Tobago maintained a favourable trade balance with Guyana. Table 1 refers.

Table 1: Trade Balance with Guyana for 2018 – 2022 (TT\$ million)

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022*
Exports	2,803	2,766	3,345	3,901	4,500
Imports	210	194	202	224	251
Trade Balance	2,593	2,572	3,143	3,677	4,249

Source: Central Statistical Office (CSO), \*Single Electronic Window Data

4.34. Non-energy exports accounted for approximately TT\$1.2 billion of the total exports of TT\$4.5 billion in 2022, which represents approximately twenty-five percent (25%) of total exports. The MTI noted that non-energy exports had increased from TT\$700 billion in 2018. The remaining TT\$3.3 billion accounted for exports within the energy sector in 2022.

### Export of Goods to Guyana

- 4.35. Guyana has been consistently ranked amongst Trinidad and Tobago's top export destinations. Data from the Central Statistical Office indicates that Guyana is Trinidad and Tobago's largest export destination within CARICOM, and during the period 2018-2022, Guyana was Trinidad and Tobago's second largest export destination.
- 4.36. Trinidad and Tobago's top ten (10) exports to Guyana for 2021 and 2022 comprised products from both the energy and non-energy sectors including liquefied natural gas, pre-cooked foods, non-alcoholic beverages, unsweetened biscuits, mineral water and cigarettes. The top 10 exports represented 70.54% of the exported value for 2021 and 78.31% of the exported value for 2022. Details of Trinidad and Tobago's top 10 exports to Guyana and top exporting company to Guyana for 2021 and 2022 respectively are at **Appendix X**.

### Goods Imported from Guyana

4.37. Guyana was amongst Trinidad and Tobago's top thirty (30) sources of imports for the period 2018-2022. On average, Trinidad and Tobago's imports from Guyana for the period 2018-2022 accounted for 0.6% of its total imports. Trinidad and Tobago's top ten (10) imports from Guyana for both 2021 and 2022 comprised mainly items from the non-energy sector including parboiled rice, uncooked pasta, fermented beverages and raw cane sugar. Details of the top ten 10 imports from Guyana and top 10 Goods Importing Companies for 2020 and 2021 respectively are at **Appendix XI**.



### Trade in Services with Guyana

- 4.38. The Committee was informed by the MTI that data on Trinidad and Tobago's trade in services is limited and the available data is not disaggregated. This makes it difficult to obtain detailed information on export activity and trade balances in some services sectors and sub-sectors.
- 4.39. The MTI indicated that according to the 2022 World Trade Organisation (WTO) Trade Policy Review for the country, Guyana's growing deficit in services trade since 2018 is mainly traced to the development of the petroleum sector and increased purchases of foreign services to support its growth. Guyana is a net importer of services. Data for Guyana's services trade with the world indicates that for 2019, the country exported US\$238 million in services and imported US\$1.41 billion in services. Guyana's demand for services is expected to increase as the country develops its energy sector.

### Efforts being taken to Maximise Export Potential to Guyana

- 4.40. The MTI has employed a trade and business intelligence strategy, supported by exporTT and EXIMBANK, to identify and penetrate new markets for Trinidad and Tobago products. The MTI averred that as Guyana's economy continues to grow, there may be greater demand for regional goods, including goods from Trinidad and Tobago. Therefore, initiatives which allow exporters to pursue opportunities in Guyana would be encouraged.
- 4.41. exporTT is tasked with assisting exporters to capitalise on export market opportunities. Those activities are also coordinated very closely with the TTMA recognition that trade is not the primary activity of governments but of businesses and corporations. The TTMA has held three (3) trade missions to Guyana, thus far. The first was held virtually in 2021 during the



TTMA TRADE MISSION TO GUYANA

COVID-19 pandemic. The second was held in March 2022, on the invitation of the President of Guyana, and comprised twenty-one (21) local manufacturers.<sup>30</sup> The third and largest trade mission to Guyana was held in October 2023, comprising over forty-five (45) persons representing thirty-five (35) companies.

4.42. The MTI launched a number of market access tools on its trade portal, ttbizlink.gov.tt, to allow the business community to be able to easily identify target markets, including in Guyana, and to specify

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Ministry of Trade and Industry, "Ministry of Trade and Industry congratulates the TTMA on Trade Mission to Guyana – October 03 to 07, 2023", <a href="https://tradeind.gov.tt/mti-congratulates-ttma-trade-mission-to-guyana/">https://tradeind.gov.tt/mti-congratulates-ttma-trade-mission-to-guyana/</a> Accessed 11 Nov. 2023.



niche areas and products. For example, the MTI pays approximately \$2 million a year to make the ITC Market Access Tools freely available to members of the business community on its portal.

# The Impact of the MOU between the American Chambers of Commerce (AMCHAM) of Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana on Bilateral Relations between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana

- 4.43. The MOU between the American Chamber of Commerce in Guyana and the American Chamber of Commerce in Trinidad and Tobago was signed in Georgetown, Guyana on August 6, 2021 by the President of AMCHAM T&T, Mrs. Toni Sirju-Ramnarine and President of AMCHAM Guyana, Mr. Zulfikar Ally. Appendix XII refers. The purpose of this MOU was to explore opportunities for cooperation to the mutual benefit of the parties to the Agreement.
- 4.44. The MTI recognised that the MOU seeks to establish mutual co-operation between the two (2) private sector organisations and promote trade and investment. Even though the MTI is not a Party to the MOU, the agreement is welcomed as it would provide members of AMCHAM T&T, and by extension the private sector, with a partner and advocate to assist companies to navigate the Guyanese market.

### Co-operation in the Area of Agriculture

- 4.45. The Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries (MALF) informed the Committee that, in the Caribbean region, food security continues to be a major challenge. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated socio-economic fallout brought to the fore issues regarding access to healthy nutritious food, and disruptions to productivity and global chain supplies. The Caribbean faces a myriad of challenges in improving the competitiveness and sustainability of the agricultural sector. Collectively, the food import bill continues to rise as investment in agriculture and food production has been on the decline due to high trade costs, the impact of climate change, and barriers to inter-regional trade. In recognition of these challenges, the MALF has sought to collaborate and strengthen co-operation with Guyana, particularly through the MOU on Renewed and Enhanced Co-operation.
- 4.46. There has been significant progress in agricultural co-operation under the MOU on Renewed and Enhanced Co-operation. The MOU was signed on May 22, 2022, on the margins of the first Agri-Investment Forum and Expo, hosted by the Government of Guyana under the theme "Investing in Vision 25 by 2025." Trinidad and Tobago hosted the second Agri-Investment Forum and Expo from August 19–21, 2022, which was attended by His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana. Details on the Second Agri-Investment Forum and Expo are at **Appendix XIII**.
- 4.47. Following the signing of the MOU, the MALF, in July 2022, as part of Trinidad and Tobago's delegation to Guyana sought to action areas related to food security. Out of the engagement, a Guyana/Trinidad and Tobago Food Development Plan was subsequently drafted. **Appendix XIV** refers. The Guyana/Trinidad and Tobago Food Development Plan was drafted, identifying (8) areas of co-operation, namely:



- Rice;
- Aquaculture;
- Human Resources:
- Agro-Processing and Food Distribution Network;
- Livestock Production;
- Shade-house and Coconut;
- ≜ Technical Taskforce; and
- Corn and Soya.
- 4.48. The MALF is actively pursuing those priority areas with current focus on coconuts and rice through the Joint Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Technical Taskforce on the promotion of bilateral agricultural trade and development.
- 4.49. The Government of Guyana gifted Trinidad and Tobago 5000 seedlings in February 2023, as Trinidad and Tobago seeks to modernise and revitalise its local coconut industry. The MALF has commenced cultivating these coconut plants, with plans to distribute them to coconut farmers across Trinidad and Tobago.
- 4.50. In addition, the MALF is exploring collaboration with Guyana in rice production to address the decline in local output. MALF engaged Guyana with respect to technical support and the provision of rice seeds. In 2023, the MALF proposed to increase local rice production by 1,500 acres. A programme to re-engage former rice farmers in rice production has also been launched. The MALF stated that it will receive approximately ninety-one (91) tonnes of rice seeds from Guyana for the rice season. The MALF is also looking at the production of aromatic rice varieties in addition to traditional rice varieties such as Basmati and Jasmine.
- 4.51. There were also discussions in relation to the production of corn and soya. Guyana is seeking to increase production in corn and soya, which are two (2) key commodities for livestock and animal feed. Trinidad and Tobago, which imports large quantities of corn and soya, is exploring ways to facilitate local investment to access same from Guyana through partnerships with Guyanese counterparts, investors, producers.
- 4.52. With respect to rearing livestock and aquaculture, MALF's technical experts are currently seeking to develop projects to increase local production of aquaculture species and livestock. Shrimp farming will also be explored given the experience and expertise in shrimp production that exists in Guyana.

# Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Fresh Agricultural Trade Produce and Forest Products Trade Protocol of 2009

4.53. At a technical meeting between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana in 2021, it was highlighted that the Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Fresh Agricultural Trade Produce and Forest Products Trade Protocol of 2009 was in need of revision. The Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Technical Taskforce on the Promotion of Bilateral Agricultural Trade and Development was appointed to review the Trade Protocol.



Trinidad and Tobago-Guyana Technical Taskforce on Promotion of Bilateral Agricultural Trade and Development

- 4.54. The Trinidad and Tobago-Guyana Technical Taskforce on the Promotion of Bilateral Agricultural Trade and Development is tasked with implementation of the 8-Point Food Development Plan. The Taskforce is mandated to facilitate the exchange of technical support, capacity building, commerce and cross-border investment as well as to review and revise the Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Fresh Agricultural Trade Produce and Forest Product Trade Protocol signed in 2009.
- 4.55. The representatives of Trinidad and Tobago on the Taskforce include the Minister in the MALF and technical persons such as the Chief Technical Officer of the MALF. Representatives from the MTI are also on the Technical Taskforce Committee. The Technical Taskforce has been established as a Technical Working Group. The respective Ministers with responsibility for Agriculture from both countries head the Technical Working Group. Improved lines of communication between the Ministries with responsibility for Agriculture in both countries, have resulted in the mutually beneficial resolution of a number of agricultural trade related matters.
- 4.56. The Taskforce had two (2) meetings, on January 23, 2023, and February 13, 2023. It was agreed at the first meeting that the:
  - taskforce meetings will be convened every quarter and that the proposed technical subcommittees would meet 2-3 times within the quarter, to allow for effective follow-up and reporting to the Taskforce;
  - delegation of roles and timelines for the preparation of a Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) will be addressed collectively by representatives from both countries, with a draft MRA circulated for the consideration of the Taskforce for trade in Products of Plant and Animal Origin. The MRA will provide a framework for the countries to recognise the results of each other's testing, inspection, certification and accreditation processes and procedures which would facilitate market access for the products; and
  - the current Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Fresh Agricultural Trade Produce and Forest Products Trade Protocol (2009) would be reviewed and revised.
- 4.57. Currently, twenty-two (22) primary agricultural commodities have been approved for importation from Guyana including vegetables, fruits and lumber products.
- 4.58. The second meeting of the Task Force, held on February 13, 2023, discussed the draft MRA for the Trade in Products of Plant and Animal Origin, which was prepared by technical officers from both countries.

# The Regional Food Production and Productivity Towards a Sustainable Import Replacement Programme: 25% by 2025 Reduction in the Regional Food Bill

4.59. The "Twenty-five by 2025 Initiative" aimed at reducing extra-regional agri-food imports by 25% by 2025, is an initiative of the CPSO. The initiative is a bid to address the region's food import bill which CARICOM observes is quickly moving towards US\$5 billion—an amount that is substantial



- given the size of the region's economies.<sup>31</sup> The MALF indicated that the CARICOM Secretariat has assessed Trinidad and Tobago's success rate in achieving Vision 25 by 2025 as 73% while Guyana's success rate stands at 56%.
- 4.60. One of the measures employed by MALF to reduce the food import bill was to identify commodities for local production to reduce imports. Table 2 lists the commodities identified to decrease Trinidad and Tobago's import bill.

Table 2 Trinidad and Tobago 25 by 25 Targets

Commodity	Target (Tonnes)		
Poultry (Chicken)	83,000		
Goat	45		
Sheep	55		
Cassava	1780/per yr		
Sweet potato	1868.2/per yr		
Yam	180.23/per yr		
Dasheen	422.12/ per yr		
Lettuce	306.50 per yr		
Cauliflower	165.61 per yr		
Tomato	3843,4 per yr		
Pineapple	2272.4 per yr		
Pawpaw	513.73 per yr		
Watermelon	5143 per yr		

- 4.61. Additionally, the MALF aims to increase the production of seasonal vegetables. The Committee was informed that the application of technology in the production process will allow for production of seasonal commodities to take place all year long in the quantity and quality required.
- 4.62. According to the MALF, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana can engage in mutually beneficial areas of co-operation in order to meet their respective targets. These may include:
  - (1) Technology and knowledge transfer in the area of climate smart agriculture and climate resilient approaches to building resilience to extreme weather events; and
  - (2) Trinidad and Tobago has significant experience in agro-processing and value-added activities, which Guyana can benefit from as they seek to increase volumes of locally produced commodities and extend its shelf life and utilisation. This will also facilitate regional trade

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Trinidad and Tobago Guardian, "Caricom's 25 by 2025 explained", < <a href="https://www.guardian.co.tt/business/caricoms-25-by-2025-explained-6.2.1537248.d96359fc7b">https://www.guardian.co.tt/business/caricoms-25-by-2025-explained-6.2.1537248.d96359fc7b</a>



opportunities through exports of the value-added and processed products to other CARICOM Member States and extra-regionally.

# Issues that have Affected Imports from Guyana

- 4.63. International trade between Trinidad and Tobago and any trading partner is governed by a number of regional and multilateral trade agreements, as well as the laws of Trinidad and Tobago. Formal trade relations between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana are also governed by the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (RTC). Under the RTC, imports from Guyana that have been determined to be of Guyanese origin under the CARICOM Rules of Origin, are granted duty free treatment. Any prohibitions or restrictions to the imports of products from Guyana, or any country, will be a function of Trinidad and Tobago's domestic legislation, which applies to all of Trinidad and Tobago's trading partners equally. There are no NTB's which prevent imports from Guyana to Trinidad and Tobago. However, there are, from time to time, issues that arise which affect trade. The MTI does not view these issues as NTB's, but as the inability of an exporter to meet the required sanitary and phytosanitary standards that are required by the laws of Trinidad and Tobago.
- 4.64. The MTI indicated that it is aware of the following issues that have affected imports from Guyana:
  - (1) Though Guyana is on the approved list of countries for the importation of poultry meat into Trinidad and Tobago pursuant to the *Sixth Schedule of the Animals (Diseases and Importation) Act, Chapter 67:02*, <sup>32</sup> and is therefore free to export poultry meat into Trinidad and Tobago, there was an outbreak of Duck Virus Hepatitis (DVH) in 2019. Trinidad and Tobago issued an advisory that a notifiable disease was present in Guyana and that documentary evidence indicating that Guyana is free from the DVH was necessary for trade. Such advisories are issued to protect plant, animal and human health in accordance with domestic legislation and are usually temporary in nature (only maintained until the threat has been satisfactorily addressed). Guyana engaged the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) to verify their disease-free status in order to notify their trade partners. Both the MTI and MFCA indicated that Trinidad and Tobago have yet to receive publication of the WOAH assessment on Guyana to date.
  - (2) In accordance with the *Plant Protection Act, Chapter 63:56*, <sup>33</sup> a permit, accompanied by a Phytosanitary Certificate, is required to import fruits, vegetables and other agricultural produce into Trinidad and Tobago, regardless of the source country. The 2009 Protocol to facilitate the export of agricultural and forest products to Trinidad and Tobago treated with produce quality, packaging and storage requirements, and inspection procedures. Discussions on updating the Protocol have been ongoing since 2019. During a meeting held in February 2023, Guyana undertook to propose amendments to revise the Protocol for the consideration of Trinidad and Tobago. It is envisaged that the revised

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Animal (Diseases and Importation) Act, Ch 67:02 < <a href="https://tradeind.gov.tt/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Animals-Diseases-and-Importation-Act-67.02.pdf">https://tradeind.gov.tt/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Animals-Diseases-and-Importation-Act-67.02.pdf</a>

<sup>33</sup> Plant Protection Act Ch 63:56 < https://agriculture.gov.tt/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/PLANT-PROTECTION-ACT-63.56.pdf>



Protocol would simplify the procedural arrangements for the import of Agricultural products from Guyana. Currently, Guyana can export a range of agricultural products to Trinidad and Tobago including pumpkins, cassava, eddoes, plantains, crushed cumin seeds, and ground dried peppers.

- (3) Guyana has enquired about the delays in the registration process of certain pharmaceutical products. The issue of registrations is being addressed by the Ministry of Health as imports of pharmaceutical products into Trinidad and Tobago are governed by the *Food and Drugs Act Regulations, Chapter 30:01.* <sup>34</sup> This Act outlines the procedure for the registration of all drugs. The procedure includes an evaluation of the application, a review of the application by the Drug Advisory Committee, and the approval of the Honourable Minister of Health, based on the recommendation of the Drug Advisory Committee.
- 4.65. In trade relations between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, no countervailing measures have been taken by either country.

# **Equine Trade**

- 4.66. The MTI informed the Committee that the formalisation of an Agreement with Guyana to regulate equine trade can increase the trade in live horses between both countries with the development of streamlined processes and clear and transparent arrangements.
- 4.67. The MTI also informed the Committee that at a bilateral meeting in January 2021, Guyana indicated that it experienced difficulties in trading live horses with Trinidad and Tobago. This arose from the need to ensure that the horses were safe and free from disease. The competent Veterinary authorities in both countries have agreed to establish an agreement to regulate "Horses and Equine Trade" to facilitate trade and reduce transaction time. A draft of this Agreement was forwarded to Trinidad and Tobago in 2019 for feedback. It was reported that the stakeholders and the Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) have no objections to the Agreement for regulating equine trade between Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago.

# Implications to Transhipping Honey

- 4.68. In relation to the trans-shipment of honey through Trinidad and Tobago's ports, the MTI informed the Committee that the formalisation of arrangements would allow for Guyana to tranship its honey exports through Trinidad and Tobago when exporting to the Caribbean and North American markets. The MTI also indicated that due to established shipping routes, Guyana must tranship its honey through Trinidad and Tobago.
- 4.69. Currently, Trinidad and Tobago prohibits the importation of honey and honey products and restricts the transshipment of honey through its territory under the provisions of the *Beekeeping and Bee Products Act Chapter 67:53, Beekeeping, and Bee Products Regulations* (Regulations).<sup>35</sup> The MTI underscored that the Act dates back to 1935.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Food and Drugs Act, Ch 30:01 <a href="https://agla.gov.tt/downloads/laws/30.01.pdf">https://agla.gov.tt/downloads/laws/30.01.pdf</a>

<sup>35</sup> Beekeeping and Bee Products Act, Ch 67: 53, <a href="https://agla.gov.tt/downloads/laws/67.53.pdf">https://agla.gov.tt/downloads/laws/67.53.pdf</a>



- 4.70. Regulations 22 (1) and (2) state:
  - "22 (1) No honey arriving in Trinidad and Tobago by sea or by air shall be transhipped except as provided in this Regulation.
  - (2) Honey originating elsewhere than in any of the territories in the Windward and Leeward Islands shall not be transhipped in Trinidad and Tobago. Honey originating in any of the above-mentioned territories may be transhipped in the harbour of Port-of-Spain under the authority of a permit issued by the Inspector and subject to the following provisions of this regulation."
- 4.71. Guyana, along with other CARICOM countries, have requested access to Trinidad and Tobago's market for honey. The matter is currently before the COTED which urged Trinidad and Tobago to proceed with an amendment of its domestic legislation to observe regional commitments under the RTC.
- 4.72. Significant progress has been made as a result of a joint collaboration between the MTI and the MALF. The MTI indicated that it is aware that the MALF has taken action to amend the legislation to facilitate the trade in honey, inclusive of the transshipment in honey from Guyana and has committed to bring the Cabinet a legislative brief for Regulations to treat with this issue. In this regard, the MALF developed draft legislation in collaboration with the Ministry of Attorney General and Legal Affairs.
- 4.73. The legislative brief to amend the Regulations to allow for the importation of honey into Trinidad and Tobago from CARICOM countries and to allow transshipment of honey through Trinidad and Tobago was approved by Cabinet Minute No. 624 of April 20, 2023. A policy was developed and distributed to stakeholders in May 2023. A national consultation on trade in honey was held where the MTI apprised stakeholders including the Beekeepers' Association of Trinidad and Tobago of the need for the amendment of the Regulations.
- 4.74. On November 28, 2023, and December 13, 2023, the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries laid the *Beekeeping and Bee Products (Amendment) Regulations, 2023*<sup>36</sup> in the Senate and the House of Representatives respectively. The Regulations, however, are subject to the affirmative resolution of Parliament.

# **Findings**

- 3) Trinidad and Tobago enjoys a healthy trade relationship with Guyana in both energy and non-energy exports.
- 4) It is difficult to obtain detailed information on export activity and trade balances in some service sectors and subsectors because available services data is neither readily available nor disaggregated.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> The Beekeeping and Bee Products Act, Ch 67: 53

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="http://190.213.84.147:8081/PapersLaidViewer/TempFiles/The%20Beekeeping%20and%20Bee%20Products%20(Amend ment)%20Regulations%202023.pdf">http://190.213.84.147:8081/PapersLaidViewer/TempFiles/The%20Beekeeping%20and%20Bee%20Products%20(Amend ment)%20Regulations%202023.pdf</a>



- 5) The revision of the 2009 Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Fresh Agricultural Trade Produce and Forest Products Trade Protocol, to allow for imports from Guyana and to simplify the procedural arrangements for importing agricultural products from Guyana needs to be fast-tracked.
- 6) The Joint Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Technical Taskforce on the promotion of bilateral agricultural trade and development is a recognised initiative for pursuing increased trade with Guyana and resolving any trade issues which may arise.
- 7) There have been delays in the registration process of five (5) pharmaceutical products which may have been interpreted as a denial of market access into Trinidad and Tobago.
- 8) There have been difficulties experienced by Guyana in trading live horses with Trinidad and Tobago.
- 9) The transshipment of honey is an issue that has been raised by Guyana and should be resolved as soon as possible.

### Recommendations

The Committee therefore recommends that:

- 2) The MTI collaborate with the MFCA to obtain information from Skills Certificates granted to assist with the establishment of a database and to disaggregate data on services traded with Guyana and by extension all regional trading partners.
- 3) The MTI continue to support the TTMA in identifying and penetrating the Guyanese markets, particularly through the Ministry's now established Commercial Attaché.
- 4) The MTI liaise with Ministry of Health to reduce delays in the registration process for pharmaceutical products.
- 5) The MALF pursue the revisions to the Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Fresh Agricultural Trade Produce and Forest Products Trade Protocol (2009).
- 6) The MALF and the MTI pursue the establishment of an agreement on equine trade.
- 7) The MALF pursue the necessary legislative amendments to resolve the issue on the transshipment of honey.



# **Energy Sector Co-operation**

# **MOU** on Energy Sector Co-operation

4.75. The MOU on Energy Sector Co-operation between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana was signed on September 19, 2018. The MOU is intended to pave the way for greater collaboration between both countries and provides a clear framework for enhanced energy development. It presents the opportunity for sharing of expertise, exchange of information and the promotion of capacity building and joint projects throughout the hydrocarbon value chain.



- 4.76. The MOU also has the potential to increase trade between countries, in products such as natural gas liquids, urea and methanol, and ultimately trading in oil and gas. It provides a framework for greater co-operation in the development of energy infrastructure. Furthermore, it can stimulate investment in the development of the downstream industry within Guyana. Ultimately, the MOU assists in aligning the efforts of both countries towards a more secure, resilient and sustainable energy future.
- 4.77. The Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries (MEEI) serves as the Government's leading representative with respect to co-operation and collaboration in the energy sector. The MEEI and state enterprises such as the National Energy Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (National Energy), as well as the private sector through the Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago, continue to forge relationships on industry level between Trinidad and Tobago and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

# The Performance of the MOU on Energy Sector Co-operation

- 4.78. The MEEI indicated that there has been progress under the MOU in the following areas:
  - Education and Training Collaborations; and
  - ≜ Energy Co-operation.

# **Energy Co-operation Initiatives**

- 4.79. National Energy has established an office in Guyana, and works closely with members of the energy industry in Guyana. The Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago also works closely with the members of the industry in Guyana with respect to the petroleum sector. Additionally, a number of local contractors and businesses partner with persons in the industry in Guyana.
- 4.80. Annually, a large energy conference is held in Guyana. In 2023, both the Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Minister of Energy and Energy Industries, along with a



- contingent, including National Energy and other state enterprises, had a pavilion within the conference which was opened to other smaller companies or contractors.
- 4.81. His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana attended the Trinidad and Tobago Energy Conference which was held at the Hyatt Regency, Port of Spain from January 23 to 25, 2023. Dr. the Honourable Keith Rowley, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago also led Trinidad and Tobago's delegation to the Second International Energy Conference and Expo which took place in Georgetown, Guyana over the period February 14 to 17, 2023.

# Trinidad and Tobago's Representatives on the Joint Working Group established under the MOU on Energy Sector Co-operation

- 4.82. The MEEI put forward the following persons as its representatives to serve on the Joint Working Group:
  - Permanent Secretary of the MEEI;
  - Director of Energy, Research and Planning; and
  - head of the MEEI's Legal Unit.

# Challenges with fulfilling the MOU on Energy Sector Co-operation

- 4.83. The Joint Working Group is yet to convene a meeting to perform its functions under the MOU. The MEEI still awaits confirmation of all the members of the Joint Working Group.
- 4.84. Though Trinidad and Tobago's oil production is declining, the country still possesses the expertise and infrastructure, to facilitate co-operation with Guyana. Trinidad and Tobago also served as a base for training because of its location and approximately 100 years in the industry.
- 4.85. Within the industry, Trinidad and Tobago also has contractors involved in diving and construction, particularly welding and pipeline inspections. These skills can also be shared with Guyana in developing their energy sector.

# Technical Assistance provided to Guyana in relation to Energy

- 4.86. In 2019, UWI, UTT, and UG embarked on a project to train Guyanese students for the country's emerging oil and gas industry. Two (2) programmes were created:
  - i. An Associate of Science Degree in Petroleum Engineering offered by UG in collaboration with UTT; and
  - ii. A Master of Science Degree in Petroleum Engineering offered by the UWI in collaboration with UG.
- 4.87. Over twenty (20) students enrolled in the first cohort of the Associate of Science Degree in Petroleum Engineering offered by UG in collaboration with UTT, which started in 2019. These students graduated in 2021 and automatically transitioned to the Bachelor of Applied Science in Petroleum Engineering (also run jointly by UTT and UG). They are expected to graduate from the



Programme in 2023. Furthermore, there are currently twenty-seven (27) students in the second cohort of the Associate of Science Degree in Petroleum Engineering.

- 4.88. In relation to the Master of Sciences Programme, five (5) students from the first cohort of the Programme graduated in 2021. As part of this Programme, UWI also signed a MOU with National Energy in March 2020 to work with the National Gas Company (NGC) Group of Companies to offer the students an internship opportunity within the Group. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the students were unable to participate in the internship in-person in Trinidad. Alternatively, the students participated in the following two programmes, virtually:
  - i. Internship with the NGC Group of Companies this programme provided students with the opportunity to work on a project of designing a pipeline to transfer natural gas from offshore to onshore Guyana for use in power generation.
  - ii. Internship with the MEEI this programme focused on various aspects of the Ministry's technical and regulatory functions including the Competitive Bidding Round Process, Data Management, Contract Management, Acreage Management, the Natural Gas Industry and Legal. At the end of the internship, the students were able to receive a comprehensive overview of the energy sector from the MEEI's perspective and understand how Trinidad and Tobago's regulatory mechanisms and processes could potentially be applied in the oversight of Guyana's industry.
- 4.89. The MEEI indicated that the internships were successful and resulted in a high-level of interaction and engagement from the students. Both the UWI and UTT are continuing to pursue opportunities for collaboration to train and develop future leaders in the energy sector in Guyana.
- 4.90. The Universities are currently jointly exploring offering short courses to Guyanese students in relevant topics in the energy field, as well as a Master of Science Programme in Carbon and Gas Management.
- 4.91. The NESC Technical Institute has also been contributing to the training of Guyanese nationals. NESC was contracted by the Ministry of Education, Guyana, to provide training in building its capacity to meet the increasing demand for competent technicians in the specialisations required by the energy sector. In August 2022, NESC Technical Institute announced the graduation of its first cohort in Guyana of ten (10) graduates, all instructors at Guyana's Linden Technical Institute, who successfully completed the NESC Heavy Equipment Diploma.
- 4.92. Additionally, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, through its State Enterprises in the energy sector has pursued many collaborative efforts with Guyanese counterparts over the last few years, providing support and guidance based on Trinidad and Tobago's extensive experience and knowledge as it relates to the oil and gas industry.

# Export Licences to engage in quarrying to meet commitments to the Guyanese market

4.93. It was noted that export licences were not being granted to legal persons to fulfil the demand for quarry material in the Guyanese market. The MTI indicated that its role in the process of granting export licences for quarry material is limited. The MTI grants export licences when an application is



- made. However, all applications are referred to the MEEI for a recommendation given its responsibility for minerals, as well as the traditional energy sources.
- 4.94. Under the MEEI, a Minerals Advisory Committee, comprising all the agencies with responsibility for the granting of mineral licences considers requests for export or import of aggregate. The Committee was informed by the MEEI that the granting of export licences is based on the demands of the local market. The MEEI usually seeks advice from the Ministry of Works and Transport (MOWT) to determine whether the capacity and material available are able to satisfy local demand. The MEEI has been advised by the MOWT that at this time, it is not advisable to export quarry material because currently demand is greater than supply in the local market due to the number of existing construction projects. The MEEI also indicated that there is need to be mindful that not all quarries have the same material and materials are sourced at various locations.

# Renewable Energy

- 4.95. In keeping with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other international commitments, both Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana are working towards reducing their carbon footprint and have set targets for achieving energy production from renewable energy sources. Renewable energy is energy derived from natural sources such as wind and solar energy that are replenished at a higher rate than they are consumed.
- 4.96. Trinidad and Tobago has a target of thirty percent (30%) of electricity from renewable sources by 2030. As such, the country has placed its focus on solar photovoltaic and wind (offshore and onshore) energy electricity generation. Similarly, Guyana has a target of achieving seventy-four percent (74%) clean and renewable energy by 2040, and is also implementing an ambitious transformation for domestic electricity generation as outlined in the country's Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030.
- 4.97. The Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago Dr. Keith Rowley at the opening of the Guyana Energy Conference and Supply Chain Expo 2024, called for collaborative efforts to ensure energy security in the Caribbean region by effectively utilising resources whether hydrocarbon or renewable resources. In July 2023, a MOU between Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago was executed in various key areas such as, renewable energy initiatives and public-private partnerships. Trinidad and Tobago has also actioned its MOU with the Government of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana through the formation of the High-Level Bilateral Commission between Trinidad and Guyana.

# The Implications to Trinidad and Tobago extending its Continental Shelf to the Guyana-Suriname Basin

4.98. On May 12, 2009, Trinidad and Tobago's submission to extend its Continental Shelf beyond 200 nautical miles was submitted to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (Commission), in accordance with Article 76, paragraph 8, of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Trinidad and Tobago's submission is slated at number 49 on the



- queue of submissions for consideration before the Commission. It is hoped that Trinidad and Tobago's submission would be heard in the near future by the Commission.
- 4.99. The MFCA informed the Committee that the Co-operative Republic of Guyana has not registered any objections at the UN on the Submission of Trinidad and Tobago to extend its Continental Shelf beyond 200M to date, and, similarly, Trinidad and Tobago has not registered any objections at the UN with respect to the Co-operative Republic of Guyana's Submission to extend its Continental Shelf beyond 200M to date.

# **Findings**

- 10. The MOU on Energy Sector Co-operation assists in aligning the efforts of both countries towards a more secure, resilient and sustainable energy future and has been successful mainly in the areas of education and training.
- 11. There is collaboration amongst the MEEI, state enterprises and the private sector to forge relationships on an industry level with Guyana.
- 12. The granting of mineral licences by the MTI is an inter-ministerial process, dependent on the local supply and demand for the minerals, as advised by the MOWT upon inquiries from the MEEI.

## Recommendations

The Committee therefore recommends that the MEEI:

- 8) Continue to engage in initiatives to promote collaboration in the areas of education and training and energy co-operation.
- 9) Consider pursuing collaborations in the area of renewable energy with Guyana.
- 10) Continue to engage in initiatives directed at strengthening technical assistance reciprocation between the two countries in the energy sector.



# OBJECTIVE 2: POTENTIAL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND GUYANA BOTH BILATERALLY AND WITHIN THE CARICOM CONTEXT

# Avenues Identified for Partnerships on Initiatives for Sustainable Development

# The Areas of Focus to Achieve Sustainable Development for Both Countries

4.100. With regard to sustainable development, the MTCA indicated that a number of areas are being pursued under the bilateral co-operation between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, such as trade, energy, agriculture, cultural co-operation and tourism. The focus on cultural diplomacy is one that both countries share. Trinidad and Tobago is actively pursuing engagement with regard to tourism and cultural co-operation between both countries.

# Culture and Tourism Initiatives for Sustainable Development

# Possible Areas of Collaboration on Initiatives for Sustainable Development in Areas of Culture and Tourism

- 4.101. In relation to possible areas of collaboration on initiatives for sustainable development the following are some planning and development initiatives for the cultural sector:
  - Exchange visits of officials and experts in culture and heritage to facilitate the transference of planning and development skills, technology and knowledge in relation to the development of the culture and heritage sectors including, but not limited to:
    - Training in steel pan technology;
    - Institutional strengthening;
    - Teaching of masquerade dance;
    - Setup of a National Registry for Artists and Cultural Workers;
    - National Steel Symphony Orchestra of Trinidad and Tobago (NSSO) for promotion of steelpan through demonstration and performance;
    - Training and assistance with steelpan maintenance through the Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (YTEPP) or MIC Institute of Technology (MIC);
    - Training in heritage preservation (tangible heritage); and
    - Knowledge exchange in Carnival Arts, and Management (costume and float making, masquerade dance, adjudication etc.)

## 4.102. In relation to tourism:

- ≜ Planning and Development for the tourism sector:
  - Research and exchange of data and information on tourism planning and development for the tourism sector.



- Exchange visits of officials and experts in tourism to facilitate the transference of planning and development skills, technology and knowledge in relation to the development of the tourism sector.

# Product Development:

- Transfer of knowledge/information on product development as it pertains to tourism sites and attractions e.g. in the areas of business tourism, ecotourism (in particular management and development of national parks), community-based tourism, adventure tourism, agro- tourism, sport tourism, culinary tourism, culture and heritage tourism events and festivals.
- Research and data exchange on best practices relating to statistical information on their respective tourism segments and their data collection and analysis and monitoring and evaluation systems;
- Research and development of nature related tourism products such as, ecotourism, adventure tourism, agro-tourism, and other niche segments such as sport tourism, culinary tourism, culture and heritage tourism events and festivals; and
- Sharing of knowledge and good practices as it relates to ecotourism (in particular management and development of national parks), community-based tourism, adventure tourism, agro-tourism, sport tourism, culinary tourism, culture and heritage tourism events and festivals.

# **Development Co-operation**

- 4.103. Given their common identity as SIDS, both Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana advocate for the implementation of policies that are mindful of the unique challenges facing SIDS. In this regard, both countries generally align efforts in support of CARICOM priorities, which in the last decade have included issues related, but not limited to:
  - food security;
  - climate change and climate finance;
  - energy security;
  - blacklisting and de-risking;
  - security;
  - disaster relief and management; and
  - financing for development and small states representation in multilateral organisations.
- 4.104. Collaboration in this regard, serves to achieve the CARICOM aim of advancing a unified position on matters affecting Member States.

# Development Co-operation under the CSME

4.105. In relation to the CSME, Guyanese nationals occupy a major share of CARICOM nationals entering Trinidad and Tobago under the regimes for the Free Movement of Skilled Nationals and the Right



of Establishment. This has provided a source of labour in large part, to sectors where there has been a shortfall in nationals seeking employment.

# Development Under Article 3.1 (a) and (b) regarding the Leasing of Lands in Guyana by Private Investors of Trinidad and Tobago for Agricultural Production

4.106. In 2013, with the signing of the MOU in the Area of Food Security, consideration was given to cooperation between the private and public sectors and collaboration with scientific and technical research bodies. The partnership also envisaged the facilitating of leased lands in Guyana by private investors in Trinidad and Tobago aimed at targeted agricultural production and agro-processing. Appendix VI refers. Discussions regarding the leasing of lands are ongoing.

# The Status of the Cross-Border Initiative with Guyana to Increase Exports to CARICOM

4.107. The cross-border initiative to boost exports relates to the CARICOM food security agenda.

# **Findings**

13. Collaboration on initiatives for sustainable development in areas of culture and tourism should be initiated.

### Recommendations

The Committee therefore recommends that the MTCA:

11) Pursue initiatives for sustainable development in areas of culture and tourism.



# OBJECTIVE 3: WAYS TO LEVERAGE THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL PROXIMITY BETWEEN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND GUYANA

# **Cultural Co-operation**

# Role of MTCA in facilitating Cultural Co-operation with Guyana

- 4.108. The MTCA is responsible for transforming Trinidad and Tobago into a premier tourist destination as well as the development of its many cultural artistic forms. This is done through *inter alia* policy and strategic interventions, research, monitoring and evaluation trends, partnering with industries, stakeholders, and raising awareness, to improve the country's economic and social progress.
- 4.109. The MTCA is aware that tourism and culture contribute significantly to domestic economic activity and as such is taking advantage of the opportunities for synergies among culture, arts and tourism. Trinidad and Tobago has always shared a mutual tourism-driven relationship with Guyana and views it as a readily available source market.
- 4.110. The MTCA's implementing agency, TTL, is currently crafting strategies to create beneficial linkages between both countries. Trinidad and Tobago's national carrier, Caribbean Airlines Limited, currently operates roughly seventeen (17) flights from Trinidad to Guyana and sixteen (16) flights from Guyana to Trinidad weekly. The MTCA's latest numbers for 2022, have shown that arrivals from Guyana are returning to pre-pandemic figures. Of the arrivals from Guyana, visits to friends and relatives account for 27.5%, followed by business conventions, 16%, and leisure/beach vacations, 14.5%.

# Formal Cultural Agreements

4.111. The MTCA informed the Committee that there is currently a Framework Agreement for the deepening of bilateral co-operation between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, as signed on August 19, 1999. The First Highlevel Bilateral Commission (HLBC) meeting was convened in Guyana on January 26, 2000.

# Culture and the Arts Co-operation between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana

- 4.112. The Committee was informed by the MTCA that there has not been a dedicated agreement or MOU with respect to culture and linkages between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana save the 1999 Framework Agreement for the deepening of bilateral co-operation between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. Additionally, prior to the culture division joining the MTCA in 2020, there was not a focus on monetising culture. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic restricted in-person exchanges and did not allow for focus on opportunities for bilateral collaboration in tourism and culture between the two countries.
- 4.113. The MTCA indicated that the Caribbean Festival of Arts (CARIFESTA) has been the only listed area of convergence between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana over the past ten (10) years. The



CARIFESTA model and framework has provided opportunities for discussion over the years. Particularly, the last two CARIFESTA events held in Barbados in 2017/2018 and Trinidad in 2019 provided many opportunities for artists and cultural workers to collaborate. The High-Level Bilateral Commission therefore provides the opportunity to capitalise on those discussions that have already taken place informally. Notwithstanding, natural exchange occurs between Chutney Soca and Soca artistes of the two countries. The MTCA has discussed exchanges in culture and tourism at the technocrat level and will develop a formal proposal.

4.114. The MTCA seeks opportunities to assist in developing the cultural sector. Cultural agreements present an ideal opportunity to do so. Besides the cultural aspect of performances, there are also exchanges of experts in various fields, such as literature and visual arts. Going forward, the MTCA is seeking to focus on maximising the potential for developing both the exchange of performances and experts in Trinidad and Tobago to be able to assist in developing Guyana as a training partner.

# Opportunities for Cultural and Tourism Co-operation

- 4.115. One main aim of culture is human development. The MTCA is seeking to explore the heritage aspect of culture, where both countries can share, build and learn from each other. Festivals are a possible area where Trinidad and Tobago can assist Guyana.
- 4.116. In looking at the heritage aspect, the setting up of networks with artistes, musicians and other persons within the sector can also be examined. MTCA's focus is on both heritage festivals, such as Eid and Divali, and arts festivals such as literary and music festivals.
- 4.117. These initiatives will also assist in the development of Trinidad and Tobago's cultural products. Following the exploration of the heritage aspect of culture, the MTCA will consider how to develop robust trade for the full range cultural goods and services.

# **Sports and Tourism**

- 4.118. The areas of sports and tourism arose out of bilateral discussions held between the two countries on the margins of the Second Agri-Investment Forum and Expo held in Trinidad and Tobago. With respect to collaboration in sport, Guyana is carded to host the Hero Caribbean Premier League (CPL) finals for the next three (3) years which commenced in 2022. His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, has stated that Guyana is building a product that will be spectator focused and integrated with their regional partners for a global market.
- 4.119. On March 03, 2023, the Government of Guyana launched the construction of the Berbice Stadium and multipurpose centre at Palmyra in Region Six (East Berbice-Corentyne). The facility which has a seating capacity of approximately 10,000 spectators is expected to provide a significant impetus to sports development in the region and will serve as a venue for a range of activities, including cricket, concerts, and other major events.



# The Status of Discussions on a Collaborative Platform to Promote Eco-Tourism in the Caribbean

4.120. The MTCA notes that Guyana has been identified as one of the top ten (10) sustainable tourism destinations and is ranked number one as the best eco-tourism destination in the Caribbean. The MTCA is aware that Guyana is very rich in its eco-tourism, heritage and development of national parks. In this regard, one of the areas the MTCA is seeking to examine is product development with regard to the sharing of information and the transfer of knowledge as it pertains to the development of heritage sites and national parks. Through the work of the High-Level Bilateral Commission, it is envisaged that there will be an opportunity to further discussions in this regard with the relevant stakeholders in Guyana. The aim will be not only to learn about eco-tourism, but to also assist in the development eco-tourism in Trinidad and Tobago.

# **Social Co-operation Initiatives**

# Security

4.121. On March 10, 2022, His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana announced that Guyana was working on developing a police academy that will not only serve the country but the region by extension. It should also be highlighted, that Trinidad and Tobago hosted a Symposium on Crime and Violence in the Region from April 17 to 18, 2023.

# The Policies Implemented to Harness the Potential of the Convergence between Trinidad and Tobago and Mitigate Against the Effects of the Areas of Divergence

- 4.122. According to the MFCA, one of the primary ways of harnessing the potential of the convergence between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, is through agreements such as the MOU on Renewed and Enhanced Co-operation, which provides a framework for dialogue and the development of tangible projects that capitalise on the inherent strengths and capacity of each state for the mutual benefit of both countries.
- 4.123. To mitigate against the effects of areas of divergence, Trinidad and Tobago maintains an openness to dialogue, a commitment to friendly relations, and a deep respect for the sovereignty of states. This position strongly applies to Guyana as a bilateral partner and a sister state in CARICOM, and augurs well in the resolution of any potential disagreements that may arise.

# **Findings**

- 14. There has not been a dedicated agreement or MOU with respect to culture and linkages between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana since the 1999 Framework Agreement for the deepening of bilateral co-operation between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.
- 15. There has been little progress in developing tourism and cultural linkages between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana.
- 16. The MTCA can collaborate with Guyana on the development of heritage sites and national parks.



# Recommendations

The Committee recommends that:

# 12) The MTCA develop a concrete plan for engagement with Guyana, under the MOU on Renewed and Enhanced Co-operation.

5.1 Your Committee therefore respectfully submits this Report for the consideration of the Parliament.

Ms. Paula Gopee-Scoon, MP Chairman

Dr. Maria Dillon-Remy Vice-Chairman

Mr. Brian Manning, MP Member Mrs. Shamfa Cudjoe-Lewis, MP

Member

Mr. Rodney Charles, MP Member Ms. Donna Cox Member

Mr. Anil Roberts Member

Dated: January 13, 2025



# **APPENDICES**



# APPENDIX I MINUTES OF MEETINGS



# MINUTES OF THE TENTH MEETING OF THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HELD ON WEDNESDAY APRIL 19, 2023 at 1:30 P.M. (in camera) AND THEREAFTER at 2:00 P.M. (IN PUBLIC)

### This meeting was facilitated virtually via ZOOM Video Conference

# **Committee Members**

Dr. Maria Dillon-Remy - Vice Chairman

Mr. Terrence Deyalsingh, MP - Member
Mr. Anil Roberts - Member
Mr. Brian Manning, MP - Member
Ms. Shamfa Cudjoe, MP - Member

# **Secretariat**

Ms. Sharla Elcock - Secretary

Ms. Renee Batson - Assistant Secretary

Ms. Katharina Gokool - Graduate Research Assistant
Ms. Terriann Baker - Graduate Research Assistant
Mr. Justin Jarrette - Graduate Research Assistant
Graduate Research Assistant

# Absent/Excused

Ms. Paula Gopee-Scoon - Chairman (Excused)
Mr. Rodney Charles, MP - Member (Excused)
Ms. Donna Cox - Member (Excused)

1st Public Hearing re: An Inquiry into Deepening Existing Ties with the Co-operative Republic of Guyana with officials from the: Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, and Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries.

6.1 The following officials joined the virtual meeting room:

# Officials from the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs

Ms. Reita Toussaint Permanent Secretary

Ms. Ayesha Wharton Director, CARICOM and Caribbean Affairs

Ms. Sunita Harrikissoon Director, Legal Services

Mrs. Saschele Griffith Foreign Service Officer



# Officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries

Mr. Ric Javed Ali Deputy Permanent Secretary

Mr. Kishore Ragbir Technical Officer Ag. Research – (Crops)

Mr. Nigel Grimes Project Coordinator/Technical Advisor

- 6.2 The Chairman welcomed the witnesses present and gave opening remarks. The Members of the Committee, and subsequently the witnesses, introduced themselves.
- 6.3 The following representatives gave brief opening statements:
  - Ms. Reita Toussaint Permanent Secretary
  - Mr. Ric Javed Ali Deputy Permanent Secretary
- 6.4 Questioning commenced as agreed by the Committee. The **Appendix** hereto attached contains a summary of questions and concerns raised during the hearing.
- 6.5 The representatives gave closing remarks. The Chairman also gave closing remarks and thanked the witnesses for their attendance as well as Committee Members and the Secretariat for their participation.

suspension/resumption: 3:17 p.m.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

8.2 Adjournment taken at 3:20 p.m.

I certify that these Minutes are true and correct.

Chairman

Secretary

April 19, 2023



**APPENDIX** 

# **Key Issues Discussed:**

The following are general issues discussed during the hearing:

# **Bilateral Relations**

- 1. The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana have intensified their relationship through bilateral co-operation and regional collaboration via CARICOM. Over the years, there have been several agreements between the two countries in areas such as food security, energy, and culture, including:
  - i. MOU concerning co-operation in the area of Food Security;
  - ii. Framework Agreement for the Deepening of Bilateral Co-operation between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana;
  - iii. MOU on Energy Sector Co-operation;
  - iv. MOU between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Cooperative Republic of Guyana on Renewed and Enhanced Co-operation; and
  - v. MOU on the Establishment of Friendly Co-operative Relations between the City of Port of Spain, in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the City of Georgetown, in the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.
- 2. Staffing at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in Guyana is currently being addressed. A Commercial Attaché for the High Commission has been appointed but is yet to assume duty. The Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs (MOFCA) is in the process of hiring locally recruited staff to provide support to the High Commission.
- 3. The MOFCA records reveal that nationals from both countries have been applying for Certificates of Recognition of Skills Qualification (CSME Skills Certificates) and are being granted same.

# **Engagement in Regional and Multilateral Fora**

- 4. Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago, as members of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), have worked together with other member states in relation to the broad areas for co-operation which are Transportation, Tourism, Trade and External relations, and Disaster Risk Reduction.
- 5. Under the ACS, training has been provided for technical officers of member states in the field of disaster risk management.

# **Food Security**



- 6. Food security remains a significant challenge in the Caribbean region, exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19 and its associated socio-economic fallout. There is a rising food import bill coupled with declining investment in agriculture and food production. The Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries (MALF) has sought to collaborate with the Co-operative Republic of Guyana to address the challenges in improving the competitiveness and sustainability of the agricultural sector.
- 7. The developments in area of food security are outlined below.
  - i. <u>The Guyana/Trinidad and Tobago Food Development Plan</u>
     The Guyana/Trinidad and Tobago Food Development Plan comprises 8 priority areas which are:
    - (a) Aquaculture,
    - (b) Rice,
    - (c) Human Resources,
    - (d) Agro-processing and food distribution network,
    - (e) Livestock Production,
    - (f) Shade-House and Coconut Project,
    - (g) Technical Taskforce, and
    - (h) Corn and Soya.

In February 2003, Trinidad and Tobago received 5,000 coconut seedlings from the Government of Guyana to revitalise and modernise the local coconut industry. Further, Trinidad and Tobago is in the process of acquiring approximately 91 tonnes of rice seed for this rice season commencing in June 2023.

# ii. The Joint Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Technical Taskforce

The Joint Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Technical Taskforce on the promotion of bilateral agricultural trade and development was established to facilitate the exchange of technical support and cross-border investment as well as to review and revise the Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana fresh agricultural trade produce and forest products trade protocol signed in 2009. The Taskforce has met on 2 occasions in January and February 2023, and is supported by a technical subcommittee comprising a Chief Technical Officer and other key technical officers from the Ministries with responsibility for Agriculture of both countries.

# **Other Initiatives**

8. Trinidad and Tobago is actively pursuing engagement with respect to tourism and cultural cooperation. With respect to tourism, possible areas of collaboration include planning and development for the tourism sector; research and exchange of data and information on tourism planning and development; and transfer of knowledge and information on product development as it pertains to tourism sites and attractions.



# MINUTES OF THE ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HELD ON WEDNESDAY MAY 17, 2023 at 1:30 P.M. (in camera) AND THEREAFTER at 2:00 P.M. (IN PUBLIC)

# This meeting was facilitated virtually via ZOOM Video Conference

# **Committee Members**

Ms. Paula Gopee-Scoon - Chairman
Dr. Maria Dillon-Remy - Vice-Chairman
Mr. Rodney Charles, MP - Member

Mr. Rodney Charles, MP - Member Ms. Shamfa Cudjoe, MP - Member

# Secretariat

Ms. Sharla Elcock - Secretary

Ms. Renee Batson - Assistant Secretary

Ms. Katharina Gokool - Graduate Research Assistant
Ms. Terriann Baker - Graduate Research Assistant
Mr. Justin Jarrette - Graduate Research Assistant
Graduate Research Assistant

# Absent/Excused

Ms. Donna Cox - Member (Excused)
Mr. Terrence Deyalsingh, MP - Member (Excused)
Mr. Anil Roberts - Member (Excused)
Mr. Brian Manning, MP - Member (Excused)

2nd Public Hearing re: An Inquiry into Deepening Existing Ties with the Co-operative Republic of Guyana with officials from the: Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts.

6.1 The following officials joined the virtual meeting room:

# Officials from the Ministry of Trade and Industry

Mr. Randall Karim Deputy Permanent Secretary Mr. Kriyaa Balramsingh Senior Trade Specialist

Ms. Vindra Singh Trade Analyst

Ms. Ruqayyah Scott Associate Professional



# Officials from the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries

Mrs. Penelope Bradshaw-Niles Permanent Secretary

Ms. Karinsa Tulsie Deputy Permanent Secretary

Mr. Timmy Baksh Director, Energy, Research and Planning

Division

# Officials from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

Mrs. Simone Thorne-Mora Quinones Permanent Secretary Mr. Tej Ramlogan Director, Culture

Mr. Keon Francis

Mr. Brian Gift

Cultural Officer III (Ag)

Tourism Advisor II

- 6.2 The Chairman welcomed the witnesses present and gave opening remarks. The Members of the Committee, and subsequently the witnesses, introduced themselves.
- 6.3 The following representatives gave brief opening statements:

Mrs. Penelope Bradshaw-Niles
 Mrs. Simone Thorne-Mora Quinones
 Permanent Secretary
 Permanent Secretary

Mr. Randall Karim Deputy Permanent Secretary

- 6.4 The **Appendix** hereto attached contains a summary of the issues raised during the hearing.
- 6.5 The representatives gave closing remarks. The Chairman also gave closing remarks and thanked the witnesses for their attendance as well as Committee Members for their participation and the Secretariat for their support.

suspension/resumption: 3:55 p.m.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

8.2 Adjournment taken at 4:00 p.m.

I certify that these Minutes are true and correct.

Chairman

Secretary

May 17, 2023





# **Key Issues Raised**

# **Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI)**

# Trade relationships

- 9. Guyana is a major trading partner for Trinidad and Tobago and is Trinidad and Tobago's largest export destination within CARICOM. Over the last five years, Guyana has ranked within the top 10 global destinations for Trinidad and Tobago's exports. Over the period, 2018 2022, exports to Guyana have increased by over 60% from TT\$2.8B in 2018 to TT\$4.5B in 2022.
- 10. The current trade balance with Guyana is TT\$4.2B in Trinidad and Tobago's favour. It is envisaged that non-energy exports will increase to TT\$1.5B by 2025.

### Trade issues

- 11. There are no non-tariff barriers that prevent the importation of goods from Guyana into Trinidad and Tobago, however, there are instances where the exporter failed to meet the phytosanitary and other standards required by the laws of Trinidad and Tobago. The MTI identified the following areas in which Guyana has had difficulty in exporting to Trinidad and Tobago:
  - *i.* Equine trade
    - Guyana indicated its inability to export live horses to Trinidad and Tobago in 2001. A draft agreement on equine trade was prepared by Guyana in 2019 and reviewed by the MALF.
  - ii. Transshipment of honey
    - Guyana continues to face significant challenges in trans-shipping honey through
      Trinidad and Tobago's ports due to regulation 22 of the Beekeeping and Bee
      Products Regulations, made under the Beekeeping and Bee Products Act,
      Chap. 67:53, which prohibits the importation of honey into Trinidad and Tobago.
    - Draft legislation was prepared and subsequently, a national stakeholder consultation held in May, 2023.
  - iii. Quarrying materials
    - There is currently some difficulty in obtaining export licences to export quarrying materials to Guyana. The MEEI, specifically its Minerals Advisory Committee, is responsible for granting of mineral licences. At present, the local demand for certain quarrying materials is high and this precludes the exportation of said materials to other destinations.

# **Export Opportunities**

12. The MTI is collaborating with the Export Import Bank of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (EXIMBANK), the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association (TTMA), and the National Export Facilitation Organisation of Trinidad and Tobago (ExporTT) to increase its trade with Guyana.



- 13. The TTMA coordinated a trade and investment mission to Guyana for 27 companies. A follow-up mission is planned for October 2023.
- 14. The new Trade and Investment Promotion Agency, is currently being restructured as an amalgamation of ExporTT, InvesTT Limited (InvesTT) and Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited (CreativeTT). As part of that amalgamation process, the Government has already approved the establishment of commercial offices in a series of markets, one of which includes Guyana.
- 15. A High-Level Bilateral Commission was recently established between the Governments of Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, to oversee, organise and engage new export opportunities within Guyana.

# **Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries (MEEI)**

# **Energy Diplomacy**

- 16. The MEEI is the Government's leading representative in advancing bilateral co-operation with the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.
- 17. Key focus areas are: -
  - Co-operation and collaboration in areas related to the energy sector based on energy and diplomacy strategy; and
  - The MOU on Energy Sector Co-operation.
- 18. While production has declined within Trinidad and Tobago's energy sector, Trinidad and Tobago still possesses a wealth of expertise, a skilled labour force, energy infrastructure and a ready market for energy products. Even though Guyana is a new competitor, there are ways in which both countries can benefit from greater collaboration.

# Memorandum of Understanding on Energy Sector Co-operation

- 19. An MOU on Energy Sector Co-operation was established in 2018 between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, however, its implementation was hindered by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 20. The MOU has been successful in the areas of education and training with partnerships between the University of Trinidad and Tobago, the University of the West Indies and the University of Guyana.
- 21. The National Energy Corporation has established an office in Guyana and works closely with the members of the Energy Industry in Guyana.
- 22. The Trinidad and Tobago Energy Chamber also works with stakeholders in Guyana with respect to the petroleum sector.

# Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

### **Tourism**

- 23. Guyana has been identified as one of the top 10 sustainable tourism destinations and it is ranked number one as the best eco-tourism destinations.
- 24. Tourism Trinidad Limited is currently creating strategies to create beneficial linkages between both Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana.



25. The statistics for the year 2022 reveal that arrivals from Guyana are returning to pre-pandemic figures. The breakdown in the reasons for travel to Trinidad and Tobago from Guyana is as follows:

i. visits to friends and relatives - 27.5%,
ii. business conventions - 16 %, and
iii. leisure - 14.5%.

# Culture and Linkages between Both Islands

- 26. There have not been any formalised arrangements as it pertains to linkages between Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago in the area of culture.
- 27. However, discussions have commenced on the 1999 framework agreement to the deepening of bilateral co-operation in the area of tourism.
- 28. While there is an exchange of performers/ performances, there is also an exchange of experts in the field of culture.



# APPENDIX II VERBATIM NOTES



# UNREVISED VERBATIM NOTES OF THE FIRST VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HELD (IN PUBLIC) ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2023, AT 2.00 P.M.

### **PRESENT**

Mrs. Maria Dillon-Remy Vice-Chairman

Mr. Terrence Deyalsingh
Mr. Brian Manning
Member
Ms. Shamfa Cudjoe
Mr. Anil Roberts
Ms. Sharla Elcock
Member

Ms. Renee Batson Assistant Secretary

Mr. Justin Jarrette Graduate Research Assistant

**ABSENT** 

Mrs. Paula Gopee-Scoon Chairman [Excused]

Mr. Rodney Charles Member
Ms. Donna Cox Member

# MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AND CARICOM AFFAIRS

Ms. Reita Toussaint Permanent Secretary

Ms. Ayesha Wharton Director, CARICOM and Caribbean Affairs

Ms. Sunita Harrikissoon Director, Legal Services
Mrs. Saschele Griffith Foreign Services Officer

# MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LAND AND FISHERIES

Mr. Ric Javed Ali Deputy Permanent Secretary

Mr. Kishore Ragbir

Mr. Nigel Grimes

Technical Officer Ag. Research – (Crops)

Project Coordinator/Technical Advisor

Madam Chairman: I welcome you to this public hearing, "An Inquiry into the Deepening and Existing Ties with the Co-operative Republic of Guyana", with the officials from the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries. This meeting is being broadcast on Parliament Channel 11, on Parliament Radio 105.5 FM, and the Parliament's YouTube Channel, ParlView. I would just remind all participants that all comments should be made through the Chair. I am advising everyone that you should mute your mikes and when you are recognized by the Chair then you turn it on and turn off your mike immediately when you are finish speaking.

I now welcome the officials of the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, their Permanent Secretary, Ms. Reita Toussaint; Director, CARICOM and Caribbean Affairs, Ms. Ayesha Wharton; Director, Legal Affairs, Ms. Sunita Harrikissoon and Foreign Service Officer, Mrs. Saschele Griffith. I also welcome the officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries today represented by Mr. Ric Javed Ali,



Deputy Permanent Secretary; Mr. Kishore Ragbir, Technical Officer, Research (Crops) and Mr. Nigel Grimes, Project Coordinator, also Technical Advisor.

My name is Dr. Maria Dillon-Remy and I am the Vice-Chair of the Committee sitting in for the Committee Chair, Mrs. Paula Gopee-Scoon who is unavoidably absent. And I would now ask the other members of the Committee to introduce themselves.

[Introductions made]

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you. The Committee is supported by staff of the Parliament: Ms. Sharla Elcock, Secretary; Renee Batson, Assistant Secretary and Justine Jarette, Graduate Research Assistant. Now I would just invite the members to introduce themselves starting with the members from the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs. Madam PS could you start.

[Introductions made]

Madam Chairman: Thank you so much. Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries.

[Introductions made]

**Madam Chairman:** Okay, thank you all very much. I will inform the public that this enquiry has three objectives. The first is to consider measures implemented to strengthen economic trade and diplomatic relations between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana. The second is to explore the potential for sustainable development partnerships between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana both bilaterally and within the CARICOM context. And the third, to consider ways to leverage the social and cultural proximity between Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana.

So now I will ask the Permanent Secretary from the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs to just give a brief opening remarks. Thank you.

Ms. Toussaint: Thank you. Madam Chair, members of the Joint Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, members of the viewing public, good afternoon. This enquiry into deepening existing ties and facilitating new linkages between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana is taking place at a time when the relations between the two countries have been intensified. Recently there has been growing interest in the public domain in the relationship which has been characterized by co-operation bilaterally and in the context of regional group such as the Caribbean community of which both countries are founding members. The links between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana are at the government business and the people's level and spheres and the exploration of expansion and deepening of ties continue with firm and demonstrable commitments on both sides in this regard. It is hope Madam Chair, members, that today's meeting would inform and satisfy curiosity and interest in this relationship. Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you so much PS Toussaint. Now, could we have brief opening remarks from the Deputy Permanent Secretary.

**Mr. Ali:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and good afternoon to your Committee members and all of my colleagues present virtually. It gives me great pleasure to be here today with you all on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries to engage in this enquiry into deepening the existing ties and facilitating new linkages between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana by this Joint Select Committee on Foreign Affairs.

In the Caribbean region, food security continues to be recognized as a major challenge and the impact of COVID-19 and its associated socio-economic fall out brought to the fore issues regarding accessibility to healthy, nutritious food and disruptions to productivity and global chain supplies. The Caribbean region faces a myriad of challenges toward improving the competitiveness and sustainability of the agricultural sector. Collectively, the food import bill continues to rise as investment in agriculture and food production has been on the decline due to high trade costs, the impacts of climate change and barriers to inter-regional trade. In recognition of those challenges, the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries has attempted to collaborate and foster enhanced co-operation with the Co-operative Republic of Guyana



and this is expected to serve as the vehicle for advancing co-operation in this regard.

In 2013, Madam Chair, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana concerning the co-operation in the area of food security and then more recently in 2022, May 2022, another Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the two Republics on renewed and enhanced co-operation. Following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on renewed and enhanced co-operation the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries in July, 2022, participated as part of the Trinidad and Tobago delegation to Guyana seeking to action areas of the MOU which related to food security. It is out of that engagement that a Guyana/Trinidad and Tobago food development plan was subsequently drafted and which identifies eight priority areas of co-operation and collaboration between both countries.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries is actively pursuing these priority areas with current focus on coconuts and rice through a jointly established Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana technical task force on the promotion of bilateral agricultural trade and development. This task force is comprised of technical officers from both countries and has met on two occasions in January and February of 2023 and it is mandated to facilitate the exchange of technical support, capacity building, commerce and cross-border investment, as well as to review and revise the Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana fresh agricultural trade produce and forest products trade protocol signed in 2009.

It is noted that improved lines of communication between the competent authorities at the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries in both countries has resulted in the mutually beneficial resolution of a number of agricultural trade-related matters. Currently 26 primary agricultural commodities have been approved for importation from Guyana. These include: vegetables, fruits and lumber products. It is therefore envisaged that continued collaboration in the areas of agricultural co-operation and development between officials of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries and counterparts in Guyana and through the work of the task force will create opportunities for the development of our agriculture sector and the deepening of ties with the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

Madam Chair, the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries team looks forward to participating in today's enquiry and commits to attempt to respond to any questions that your Committee may have and to make available any written submissions as may be required toward deepening the existing ties and facilitating new linkages between the two Republics. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Thank you both, PS and Deputy PS for your introductions. This will be a very interesting session, I am sure. You know, because as I listen and as a person who has grown up in the start of the CARICOM era and hearing about how many things we should be doing as CARICOM and also recognizing how much we have not done in spite of the fact that we have the desire, for whatever reason we—[Technical difficulties]—think that we would do as CARICOM, many of them have not yet been done for different reasons. To hear that you had, for instance, in the MOU in 2013 and then you had to put a revised MOU in 2022, I would wonder what were the reasons why they did not happen or the things that you agreed to happening between 2013 and 2022 did not happen in the way they should. But I am also very happy that we are in a situation where COVID has come, our economies rocking and we have so many areas that we could cooperate on. Probably it is the time that when things will, let us say, speed up probably. In this season and this time do you think that is what will happen Ministries of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs and Agriculture, Land and Fisheries? Do to you think we will be able to speed it up at this time? Yes, we will be able to?

**Ms. Toussaint:** Madam Chair, if I may start. Thank you once again. I believe that the relationship between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana has been, traditionally, to start with, a good one. We are two sovereign states in a community of nations within the Caribbean community all striving towards the same type of benefits for our respective countries and each other. Because as I have heard it said, one country prospers, the whole region will benefit from that good happening to one country.



Over the years I cannot explain why there may have been delays in implementation and setbacks, however, recently I think we have found public commitment by both Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana to advance the relationship, to intensify engagement and the most recent such commitment was the renewed and enhanced co-operation that was signed last year. And just to show that there has been advancement on this particular agreement, a bilateral commission has been established and we were charged with having a meeting within three months of the first quarter of this year.

Internally in Trinidad and Tobago we have had our discussions and we have been seeking to confirm a date for the bilateral commission to meet, hopefully in the first week of May with Guyana. So it is—there has been a lot of impetus towards getting things done quickly and I think because of the political will that has been displayed by the Heads of Government of both countries, the technocrats are charged with advancing what has been agreed within productive time frames.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you very much. Going back a little though in terms of Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, can you provide an overview of the relationship with the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, because at least I know that we have had times when things had been very good, times when things have slacked off a bit, what is the overview and what is happening right now? Who will answer?

**Ms. Toussaint:** I will start and my colleagues will perhaps add to what I have last, inserted. Thank you, Madam Chair. Generally the relationship between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana over the years has been a good one, right. At some point there may not have been as warm interaction as perhaps one would like. However over the years we have had a number of agreements and arrangements that we have concluded with each other, which was a clear sign of determination to continue and elevate engagement between both countries. If I may just perhaps list a couple of them, a few of them?

Madam Chairman: "Umm hmm."

Ms. Toussaint: The memorandum of understanding on food security which our colleague from the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries has mentioned; the framework agreement for deepening of bilateral co-operation between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana and this was a framework agreement; a memorandum of understanding on energy co-operation, this came into effect in September, 2018; memorandum of understanding between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana on renewed and enhanced co-operation which was mentioned earlier and the memorandum of understanding on the establishment of friendly Co-operative relationship between the Cities of Port of Spain and Georgetown.

I know that there has been at some point some highlighting of opinions that perhaps differ between the two countries at different levels. But what I want to emphasize is that at the levels of the decision-makers in the countries, the Heads of Government, there has been steady interest and active movement towards intensifying the relationship between the two countries. And I think where we are today, particularly with the most recent agreement it is showing a clear indication of commitment on both sides.

Madam Chairman: Moving forward. Thank you very much. And just one more question. Since the agreement, the Cabinet agreement in 2015 that talked about the improvement as a bilateral relations and—what were some—I know you gave the things that were signed, memorandum of understanding, et cetera, in the various areas—you think has work best during those years in terms of the co-operation, in terms of the projects that were, let us say, had most success during those years. Which of the areas you had most progress during those years? I know we are going for things like energy and renewed agriculture now, but just a little looking back, what has been most successful over the years?

**Ms. Toussaint:** Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. The areas, I think you have mentioned them in fact, in terms of agriculture, energy and not through, I think formal arrangements, but in the area of culture. Our people to people contacts have been led quite frankly by the desire to engage at that level. And the other area that we have been able to make some advancement is in the area of bilateral trade as well.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay, I would just like to ask one more question if you as far as foreign and CARICOM affairs is concerned. In your submission you did say that in August 2022 the Cabinet approved



inter alia appointment of a commercial attaché at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in Guyana. Following that approval, when did that relevant officer assumed their post in Guyana?

**Ms. Toussaint:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The person has not yet assumed. There was a recruitment process which ended perhaps at the end of last year into this year and very soon—I am sorry I cannot give you a date, but very soon the person will assume duty in Guyana.

Madam Chairman: All right, thank you. I hand over now to any other member, member—

Mr. Deyalsingh: Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. Through you, Madam Chair, with your permission to either the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, or the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries. On May 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, I believe, 2022, so just about a year ago the hon. Prime Minister Dr. Rowley and other CARICOM members, Prime Ministers would have gone to Guyana on an "Agri-Investment Forum and Expo". At that meeting I believe the Jagdeo Initiative of 2005, the framework or the repositioning of Caribbean agriculture was discussed. In light of the Russia/Ukraine war which is a year and a couple of months in existence and the fall out on food prices, wheat shortages and so on, if we can be told what has come out a year later of this agreement that Heads of CARICOM would have signed on to in Guyana on May19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Anyone, agriculture?

Madam Chairman: Agriculture.

Mr. Ali: Thank you very much, Madam Chair, and to the member for his question. I think just in my opening I may have just at least hinted at the response to this. Essentially, coming out of that meeting that the hon. Minister had referred to, there is an eight-priority area food development plan which came as a result out of that meeting. And those eightpriority areas has spanned areas such as, aquaculture, rice, human resource, agro-processing and food distribution, livestock product, shale house and coconuts and the technical task force and corn and soya, sorry—number eight, is corn and soya.

So I believe, Madam Chair, that these particular current areas of focus may fall directly in alignment with what the member is asking in terms of addressing the issue or the issues that have arose as a result of that international war in Ukraine and the fall out that is going to happen as a result of it. Minister I do not know whether or not you want us to expand, if you do want us to expand I would indicate so—

**Mr. Deyalsingh:** Yes. So, Madam Chair, through you to the Deputy, is that the Deputy PS speaking, yes? **Madam Chairman:** It is the Deputy PS.

**Mr. Deyalsingh:** Yeah. Great. So the eight priority areas under the MOU you called them out, could you give me and the members of the public, listening and viewing, some sense of any tangible benefits as yet. Has there been any produce coming across here and vice versa?

**Mr. Ali:** Yes—so, Madam Chair, thanks very much again for the follow-up question Minister and the short answer to your question is, yes. There are some tangible benefits not necessarily in terms of the example that you have given but I would ask my technical advisor here, Mr. Grimes to give you a couple of examples of some of the tangible benefits that have happened under, at least a couple of the project compliments. So Mr. Grimes.

**Mr. Grimes:** Thank you DPS. Madam Chair, through you we have started actual engagement with our Guyanese counterparts with respect to a number of activities and points of focus mentioned by DPS. So, for example, in the area of coconuts we have received 5,000 coconut seeds in the month of February which was part of one of the areas gifted to us, those coconuts were gifted to us by the Government of Guyana as we seek to revitalize and modernize our local coconut industry. We have received those coconuts and we have actually started to grow them out with the intention of sharing that throughout Trinidad and Tobago to our coconut farmers.

In addition to that, one of the areas that we have been looking at is the area of rice production. Even though Guyana is a large producer of rice and a rich exporter of rice we have significant acreages that we previously cultivated with rice production and over the years we have actually decreased and declined in our rice production and we took the opportunity to engage with respect to technical support and also in the



provision of rice seeds. So this year we proposed to actually increase our local rice production by 1,500 acreages and a programme has started where we have actually engaged the farmers who were once in the cultivation of rice to again focus on rice production. And we are in the process of receiving approximately 91 tonnes of rice seed for this particular rice season commencing in June.

We are also looking at in relation to the traditional rice varieties, we have been looking at also the aromatic rice varieties which include things like the Basmati and Jasmine Rice. Those are aromatic varieties. So that is in the area of rice production. And we have also had some discussion with respect to the area of corn and soya, where our Guyanese counterparts have indicated that they are now looking to increase the production of corn and soya, two key commodities with respect livestock and animal feed, import large quantities of that. And therefore we are looking to see how local investment can be facilitated to partner with Guyanese counterparts/investors/producers so that we can actually tap in, being able to access corn and soya from Guyana.

So those are just examples of where we have started already and are currently looking, our technical expert with respect to livestock and also the area of aquaculture are poised to have engagement with respect to determining projects of mutual benefit that we can work towards increasing our local production of aquaculture species and livestock production.

**Mr. Deyalsingh:** Thank you very much, Chair. If you would permit me a follow-up question, Madam Chair. Well, first of all congratulations on the work being done on coconuts and rice. Just a question on aquaculture. Would that include shrimp farming per chance?

**Mr. Grimes:** Yes. Through you, Madam Chair, to respond to the member, the aquaculture technical experts are determining the particular species that they would like to actually follow through with. Shrimp is one of the commodities that they are looking at because of the expertise and experience in terms of shrimp production across in Guyana. So that is one of the products that they will be looking at, a possibility.

2.30 p.m.

**Mr. Deyalsingh:** Madam Chair. I promise this is my last follow-up. I thank you for the indulgence, but as you said this is a very exciting topic. So you opened the door to all these questions. Last question. Is there any possibility for Trinidad and Tobago to provide technical assistance or other assistance to Guyana? So far I have been hearing about the flow from Guyana to Trinidad, whether it is technical assistance or tangible product. Is there any opportunity for migration of technical expertise from here in any field to Guyana?

**Mr. Ali:** Madam Chair, through you, to the member, just to clarify, is that technical assistance reciprocation you are referring to, specifically in respect of agriculture? Because in other aspects of trade and energy, et cetera, Trinidad and Tobago has the potential to be able to offer that technical reciprocation. But if you are specifically asking about agriculture, then that opportunity has not yet arisen. We have not afforded—

Mr. Deyalsingh: Okay.

**Mr. Ali:**—to put that on the table.

Mr. Deyalsingh: Yes. Through you, Madam Chair, it was in relation specifically to agriculture as we have Agriculture, Land and Fisheries here. So thank you. So I got the answer. Yeah? Thanks a lot and congratulations on the progress you have made thus far. Very good.

**Madam Chairman:** Any questions from any other member? Okay. The questions can be either to the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs or to the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries. Okay. The Minister—I think it was the Deputy PS, you talked about the task force that has been set up with determining the areas for co-operation and you said so far I think you have met twice, that task force, did I hear correctly?

**Mr. Ali:** Yes, Madam Chair, that is correct. The task force has met already for the months of January and February 2023 thus far.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. Could you give us an idea of who are the representatives of Trinidad and Tobago at that task force?



**Mr. Ali:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The representatives from Trinidad and Tobago on that task force is Minister Avinash Singh.

Madam Chairman: Any technical persons?

**Mr. Ali:** Yes. Our representative on the task force in the technical aspect is the Chief Technical Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, Dr. Simone Titus.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. And you said you have already got some successes in terms of progress within the Committee. You have like timelines for the areas that you are going to be working on? You have any like plan as yet for that, for how this task force is going to operate and what are the specific goals you are trying to reach?

**Mr. Ali:** Yes, Madam Chair. I will ask Mr. Grimes to give you a summary.

Mr. Grimes: Yes. Madam Chair, the technical task force really has been established as a technical working group and though the respective Ministers of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries from both countries head that particular grouping. The technical task force is supported by a technical subcommittee comprising a chief technical officer and other key technical officers within the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries from both countries. So, for example, we will have our Director of Research, we will also have the officer with respect to trade in fresh commodities of crops and also livestock. So these subcommittees' members would meet with their technical counterparts to look at particular areas where we can actually help improve trade relations between both countries.

So, we have as part of our team today, Mr. Kishore Ragbir and Kishore has, for example, been working with his counterparts in Guyana to update our protocol for trade in fresh commodities which was signed previously in 2009, and being in 2023, there is need for updating of the protocol. He has been meeting with his counterpart with respect to working together to update the protocol which will then be approved by the technical committee. So that is an example of the type of work that is being done by the technical task force with respect to facilitating trade in fresh produce and also livestock products.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. So on task force you have Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Food Production. Do you have any—sorry, Fisheries. Do you have any other Ministries involved on that task force, for instance trade, for instance I do not know who else? I am just asking: Is that the only Ministry? Yeah?

**Mr. Grimes:** No. We also have a representative from the Ministry of Trade and Industry being a key partner, a collaborator, with respect to the trade matters that we will be addressing through the task force.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. It was postulated that this task force would facilitate the exchange of technical support. You have any areas that you have considered at this point in time for exchange?

Mr. Ali: Madam Chair, I apologize. We did not get your entire question. Could you please repeat?

**Madam Chairman:** The task force—it was said that this task force would have been responsible for facilitating the exchange of technical support between, I suppose, the two countries. Now you did say so far as member Deyalsingh talked about, we talked about technical support going from Guyana—well things going from Guyana to Trinidad and Tobago. Have you identified any areas of technical support you would like to see exchanged between the two countries?

Mr. Ali: Madam Chair, I will ask Mr. Ragbir to take this question.

Mr. Ragbir: Yes. Thanks, Deputy PS. Madam Chair, the technical person that I am liaising with in Guyana, the NPPO contact point—because I am the NPPO contact point in Trinidad here. So the NPPO contact point in Guyana is Mr. Brian Sears who is the Chief Plant Protection Officer there. So Mr. Brian Sears and I will have a lot of communication back and forth, telephone calls, emails, and Zoom meetings as well that sometimes Mr. Grimes will be involved in. So we do have communication and there is exchange of information on a regular basis on trade matters, on international standards for movement of agricultural produce, import permit conditions, all these technical things which involves the back and forth movement of agricultural produce between the two countries. So Mr. Brian Sears and I, who are the relevant NPPO contract points, we do have a lot of communication back and forth and there is exchange of information.



**Madam Chairman:** Okay. I would like to ask one other question in terms of the functioning of this task force and even seeing things go forward. Now many times we start things and we start very well but we get bottlenecks along the way and I am talking generally, have you considered all the areas that you would require to be working together? Like you talked about trade being on this task force. I would imagine that things that will have to be—you are working at one level, you are cooperating at another level and you would need to have things agreed to by the different countries, have you all worked those things out in terms of how that task force is going to bring to bear the activities in either country so that you will get the responses as quickly as possible or the actions as quickly as possible?

I may not be making myself clear, but what I am saying is that you are working at a level, say technically, but then you would need like things to have approval at a certain level, and you are talking about things like food production that you want be doing as quickly as possible. You are talking about, for instance, bringing the plans to Trinidad and Tobago, making sure that those things happen and go smoothly so that when they come to Trinidad and Tobago it does not meet a block that something would not happen here. We are talking food production, we are talking making sure that we can get these things done as quickly as possible. I am just asking if you have the necessary levels of co-operation of the level of the task force in terms of moving forward.

**Mr. Ali:** Thank you again, Madam Chair, for the question. I mean in a nutshell answer to your question, I want to believe that the answer is yes. The task force and the structure of the task force, and the leadership of the task force in terms of the two Ministers, thus far they have facilitated in any attempts to resolve issues that have been brought to the fore of the task force. That being said, as the task force tackles individual problems or individual issues that arise on a case by case basis, thus far there has been incremental progress, and the obstacles or the stumbling blocks, as you may refer to it, we have successfully managed to overcome these in a reasonable time frame.

Now I hear you using the word "quickly" and I know that "quickly"—sometimes "quickly" may not be the best adjective to use. But, we are trying at the task force level and the technical level to be as efficient as possible because sometimes things have a process to take that takes a little longer than what would ideally be desired. Unfortunately, they have to go through those necessary steps and those necessary protocols in order to get there. I would like to give the example or I would like Mr. Grimes to actually give the example, if you will permit me, just to speak for a couple seconds again on the coconuts that we received as a gift from Guyana and the process that was involved between receipt of those coconuts and some of the procedures that had to take place before they were able to be put into the stage that it is in now.

Mr. Grimes: Yes. Madam Chair, again, because of the relationship that has been developed between the two technical officers as described by my associate, Mr. Ragbir, they were able to quickly identify coconuts actually is a commodity that for the first time that we are actually having coconuts moving cross-border in terms of seedlings or seeds for planting. And therefore, the technical requirements and the research needed to be done in order to facilitate movement in terms of pests and disease and what we need to treat it before it comes when it comes here, all these things were worked out within a very short space of time because the coconuts were actually—we agreed in December that we were going to actually make the movement of the coconuts before the end of February.

So a lot of activities had to take place between the two technical parties on either side to facilitate the coconuts arriving in good stead and being able to leave the ports with all the inspections required and go to our research facility and to be established in the nurseries. So there is a very practical and tangible example of what would have transpired based on this new and enhanced relationship and the technical co-operation that is taking place between both countries.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you for that answer and I think you hit the nail on the head. Because what I was talking about is making sure that all the pathways are cleared and all the processes for approval, et cetera, are done to make sure that we get as much as we can done with little wastage as possible. And Deputy PS



I heard you, at least I saw something being said 25 per cent of the food imports, the 25 by 2025 that you want to reduce the food imports. I was not too sure if it is Caricom or if it is still Trinidad and Tobago by 2025. It is in that context I was talking about quickly. So it was not that I was saying you should rush anything, but in the context of the 25 per cent decrease knowing that where we are at now in terms of our food imports. Any comments on that, on the 25 by 2025?

Mr. Grimes: Madam Chair, for those who are not aware, Caricom agreed—this initiative, it is an initiative where Caricom has agreed that we would try to reduce our food imports into the region by 25 per cent, and in order to do so a number of activities and steps need to be taken. Each country as an individual part of the sum will in turn and in fact try to see how best we can reduce our imports by a similar percentage of 25 per cent. And therefore, we would have identified certain commodities, and rice is one of them that we are looking at to increase our local production. Once we can sustainably increase our local production, then that will allow us the opportunity to reduce the imports with justification because we can in fact supply what we required. And same goes along with respect to vegetable production, things that we may be producing seasonally if we look at applying technology that will allow us to produce all year round, will allow us to produce in the volumes and quality that is required.

So we are looking to address those things from a local point of view with Co-operatively as a region with respect to example corn and soya which we spoke about previously. That is something that we import into the region into very large volumes, and if we can work together regionally by having cross-border investment opportunities in the countries that can grow large volumes base on their land, size and available acreages then we can actually as a region reduce our requirement to import these commodities into the region.

Madam Chairman: Okay. Thank you. Is any other member have any questions?

Mr. Manning: Yes. Madam Chair, through you—

Madam Chairman: Member Manning.

**Mr. Manning:**—Article III of the Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of friendly Cooperative relations between the City of Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, and the City of Georgetown, Co-operative Republic of Guyana outlines the functions and responsibilities of the parties under the MOU. What initiatives have been taken thus far under the seven areas of mutual concerns and interests highlighted in that MOU?

Madam Chairman: PS, Foreign and CARICOM Affairs.

**Ms. Toussaint:** Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, thank you for the question from the member. But in terms of the co-operation between the cities, unfortunately I do not have that information with me. I will have to obtain it from the relevant office. I am just adding that this was done at the level of the cities, by the Mayor of Port of Spain for example, and his counterpart from Georgetown. So I do not have that information but I can obtain it to respond to the member's question.

Mr. Manning: Okay. Would greatly appreciate that. Thank you. I have another question. Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana are founding members of the association of Caribbean state or ACS. Having joined the regional body along with the Caricom neighbours in 1994, the focal areas of the ACS include disaster risk production, sustainable tourism, trade and transport. To what extent have Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana been able to collaborate under the auspices of the ACS in any of these four issue areas?

**Ms. Toussaint:** Thank you. Madam Chair, through you, under the association of Caribbean states the cooperation comes as a general effort under the umbrella of the association. To say that Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana have been cooperating bilaterally under the ACS I think is not necessarily how the co-operation is undertaken under the ACS, but as a region approaching the challenges that have been singled out to be addressed. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Can I have a follow-up question to it? Member Manning you go ahead?

**Mr. Manning:** Yes. Sorry, yes one more. The submission highlighted an average success rate of 57 per cent for Caricom members state initiatives aimed at reaching their 25 by 2025 commitments. I know you



had mentioned that earlier, Madam Chair. What are Trinidad and Tobago's 25 by '25 targets; what are Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana respective success rates; what ways could the two countries collaborate to boost their success at reaching their respective targets?

Madam Chairman: Agriculture, Land and Fisheries.

**Mr. Ali:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you member for the question. Unfortunately, I do not have that data in front of me at the moment. So I will commit it to providing the Committee with a response in writing for that information that is requested.

Madam Chairman: Okay. Thank you. Member Manning are you through?

Mr. Manning: Yes. That is it for me, Madam Chair. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Okay. Back to the co-operation that member Manning was asking about, the Association of Caribbean States. I just wondered about the—what are the areas, the focal points that you all have agreed on in terms of working together on, jointly working together on? What areas have Trinidad and Tobago agreed with Guyana and the other ACS countries and Caricom countries in terms of jointly cooperating on?

**Ms. Toussaint:** Thank you, member. The broad areas for co-operation under the ACS are with respect to transportation, tourism, trade and external relations, those are the three mains areas.

**Madam Chairman:** Disaster I think was one of them also? Disaster risk reduction. **Ms. Toussaint:** That is right. Disaster reduction is one. Yes, Madam Chair, that is it.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. The question is: Could you tell us again—I mean things like disaster risk reduction that is a very important area. Has there been any progress along any of those areas and specifically as it relates to disaster risk reduction between Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago as a result of this ACS cooperation?

**Ms. Toussaint:** Madam Chair, bilaterally—

Madam Chairman: No. Ms. Toussaint:—no. Madam Chairman: Okay.

**Ms. Toussaint:** But generally under the Association of Caribbean States there have been initiatives—I am sorry I cannot name them specifically now, but there have been initiatives towards benefit for membership in the various areas, the Association seeking out partners for technical assistance for countries in that area and in others. But bilaterally under the ACS—if I may ask my colleague to add something please.

Madam Chairman: Yes.

**Mrs. Griffith:** Good afternoon Chair and members. In the context of the ACS there has also been provision of training for member states in disaster risk management. So a lot of what has happened in apart from setting targets for how the region will response to disasters and receive support from member states, there has also been training of technical officers in the respective disaster response agencies for how to manage disasters as well as in disaster prevention.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. Thank you so much for that answer. I will now go about to in terms of sustainable development between Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago. Caribbean Development Fund was established pursuant to Article 158 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas for the purpose of providing financial and technical assistance to disadvantaged countries, regions and sectors, to reduce the disparities arising from the participation of member states of Caricom, Caricom Single Market and the Economy (CSME). Has Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana collaborated on any development initiatives under of auspices of the CDF?

**Ms. Toussaint:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Not to my knowledge, Madam Chair. There has been no such collaborating under of the CDF between the two countries.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. And do you know why that has been? Was it that it was not necessary or it just did not happen?



**Ms. Toussaint:** Madam Chair, I honestly could not say what would be the reason for that, whether it set out to function that way. I am not certain why that would not have happened.

Madam Chairman: Okay. What do you see as the areas that going forward that Trinidad and Tobago—I know we are collaborating on many areas now. In terms of sustainable development, what are the areas you think that Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana specifically should be focusing on? Yes, I know we have talked about agriculture, and yes I know we will be talking about energy and stuff like that at another time, but what would you recommend that both countries ensure that they are making efforts in terms of making the areas that we are developing on sustainable? Yes, that is my question.

Ms. Toussaint: Thank you, Madam Chair. I will ask Director Wharton to take us this question please.

Ms. Wharton: Thank you Permanent Secretary, and good afternoon Madam Chair and good afternoon to all our members and viewing public. With regard to the sustainable development bilateral co-operation between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, we have a number of areas that we are pursuing for instance with trade, with energy as you have noted, and agriculture, and cultural co-operation and tourism. The focus on cultural diplomacy is one that both countries share and we are actively pursuing the engagement both in terms of tourism, the tourism product in Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, and cultural co-operation between both countries.

**Madam Chairman:** Could you just expand a bit on the cultural co-operation as to what has been happening in that area?

**Ms. Wharton:** Sure. So the number of areas that have been identified by our Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts for collaboration in the cultural sector, and this includes training in steel pan technology, institutional strengthening, teaching of masquerade dance, the setting up of a national registry for artists and cultural workers similar to what we have here in Trinidad and Tobago that is a repository for our artists and cultural workers and that serves enhance their ability to provide services both within Trinidad and Tobago and within the region.

## 3.00 p.m.

So there is a move to use this as an example for Guyana in particular. And the National Steel Symphony Orchestra of Trinidad and Tobago, promotion of steel bands through demonstration and performance.

In terms of tourism, possible areas of collaboration include planning and development for the tourism sector, research and exchange of data and information on tourism planning and development and the transfer of knowledge and information on product development as it pertains to tourism sites and attractions. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you so much and I think we can probably develop those discussions as we meet with the Ministry of Tourism because we will be meeting them, I think next month. Thank you very much for your answers.

And there was one other area with the collaboration between the CARICOM Private Sector Organization. In your submission, you indicated that the MTF on food production, that is from Guyana and food security working with the CPSO has identified 19 potential investment opportunities which in effect would have an import replacement potential of between US 850 million to 1.2 billion per annum with the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs. Right. But can the Ministry provide the value that is expected benefits to Trinidad and Tobago from this initiative? So we are asking about any further discussions on that. Paragraph one—page 24 in your submission. Trying to go back to it now.

**Ms. Toussaint:** Thank you, Madam Chair, for the question. In terms of an actual—I mean there is potential. You mentioned a particular sum but beyond that, I do not think we can be any more specific at this time unless there is more data that is available. If my colleague can add please, Madam Chair.

Mrs. Griffith: Good afternoon, everyone. Because the estimates have been provided at the level of the region because it is within the ambit of the Caricom food security agenda, most of the dollar value estimates are for region or for the sector or for particular commodities but not as to how much value would be accrued



per member states.

Madam Chairman: Okay. All right. Thank you very much. I have one more question. Any other Member is passing any questions? Okay, there is a question on the matter that concerns the agreements with the—so this is now for the Ministry of Agriculture. Article III of the MOU on food security provides for the programmes and activities envisioned under the MOU. The information communicated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries and the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs also addressed the 2013 MOU on food security. In the written submission to the Committee, there is an indication that you did not have much—there has not been notified of any development with respect to access by Trinidad and Tobago investors to agricultural lands in Guyana—

**Ms. Elcock:** Madam Chairman, I am so sorry but it seems that we have lost the Ministry of Agriculture for a moment, I am not seeing their feed up on the screen so I will try to contact them.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay, that is true. While we wait on them, can I just asked the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs one more question and that is in relation to the diplomatic relations between both countries? The High Commission for Guyana to Port of Spain was formally established in 2017 and the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in Georgetown was re-established two years later in 2019. Guyana's High Commission in Port of Spain was closed and succeeded by the Consulate General on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020 and you said that this did not represent a weakening in the bilateral relationship. However, the question is: Is the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in Georgetown fully staffed and resources in line with the growing importance of the already historically strong bilateral ties between the two countries? That is the first question.

**Ms. Toussaint:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The High Commission for Trinidad and Tobago in Georgetown that has the home-based staff required, that is the members of staff who are posted to Guyana to serve at the High Commission. We are in the process of recruiting what we refer to as locally recruited staff to support that work being done by the home-based staff and of course, we await the start-up, the assumption of the attaché who was mentioned—

Madam Chairman: Hopefully soon.

**Ms. Toussaint:** Hopefully soon, yes, that is right. And I think perhaps our note indicated that we do not view the change in status of the representation of Guyana in Port of Spain as a change or weakening in the relationship or a cooling of interest because you will recall that since then, it seems as if the relationship intensified.

Madam Chairman: Improved.

**Ms. Toussaint:** And not that one was the reason for the other but there has been that intensifying like to use that word because it is not just an improvement that people are pleasant to each other but things are happening as mentioned previously. The fact that Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago attended the energy conference this year in Guyana, attended the expo in May last year, the state visit by the President of Guyana in Trinidad and Tobago last August and also his attendance at the second installment of the Agri Investment Forum and Expo. These are tangibly I think bits of evidence of an intensifying of the relationship, Madam Chair.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. And one final question before I get to Ministry of Agriculture. You had mentioned that—or at least I am not too sure. You did submit something in your appendices. The Article IV of the framework agreement for the deepening of bilateral co-operation between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, as well as the MOU between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Co-operative of the Republic of Guyana on renewed and enhanced co-operation speaks to the establishment of a high level bilateral commission. Has that commission already been established?

**Ms. Toussaint:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, the commission has been established and the Trinidad and Tobago's side has reached out to Guyana with a view to having the bilateral commission—



Madam Chairman: Up to date. Ms. Toussaint: That is right.

Madam Chairman: Okay, fine, you could say that. Okay, right. Has there been any challenges in terms

of the establishment of such a commission?

Ms. Toussaint: None that has been drawn to my attention, Madam Chair.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. Thank you very much. Members, are there any other questions from the Committee for the Ministries? Okay, well I will continue. To the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries: Has there been any development on the Article 3(1)(a) and (b) regarding the leasing of lands in Guyana with private investors of Trinidad and Tobago for agricultural production? Are you aware of what is happening with that?

**Mr. Ali:** Madam Chair, thanks very much for the question and firstly let me apologize if the Members and yourself noticed that we were temporarily disconnected. We had an electrical surge in the vicinity and all of the building shut down and we had to get back online. So apologies for that.

Madam Chairman: Okay.

Mr. Ali: So we are aware of the questions that you have asked and unfortunately, there are not any tangible updates to be provided at this time in terms of progress in that matter regarding the leasing of lands in Guyana, but there are several inherent—as with any leases or anything to do with property, there are several inherent issues that need to be resolved prior to the execution of a lease and therefore at the technical level, there is still some discussion happening between the two Republics in terms of the lands that were originally identified and/or designated by Guyana and the suitability/desirability by potential lessees of Trinidad and Tobago. So I cannot give further detail on that, just to say that, you know, discussions on that continue and ongoing.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. All right. Thank you very much for your response. Now, I do not have any further questions for either Ministries. Members, do you have any other questions? Okay, no other questions. Well I would just like to thank the members from the Ministries. The members of the team from the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs and the members of the team from the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries.

Before we go, do you have any questions for us in any other things that we may not have covered in the questions and you would like to inform the public about this very important areas that we are talking about here? Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, anything that we have not touched on that you would like to inform the public about.

**Ms. Toussaint:** Thank you, Madam Chair. One area in which Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana have been not so much a direct and overt collaboration between the countries but through which both countries have been benefiting is under the implementation of the CSME. Our records show that both countries' nationals have been applying for skills certificates and they have been granted and I think that with the expansion of categories, that exchange can only grow to the benefit I think of both countries, with expanded opportunities for work, for business and for movement of services as well. So I just wanted to add that. Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. Great. I know there is a recent statement made by the Prime Minister of Guyana saying that you know Trinidad had been very good to Guyanese in the past in terms of that same thing, in terms of employment but he was calling the Guyanese back home, he is probably calling some Trinidadians back home too, back to Guyana for employment in certain areas. So I am glad to hear that, that there was great co-operation in terms of the CSME. Thank you very much for that information.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, do you have anything that we may not have covered and you would like to inform us and the public about it?

**Mr. Ali:** Thank you, Madam Chair. No, at this point in time, I think we have raised the issues that we intended to raise today and therefore I would just like to thank you for the opportunity to have done so thus



far.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. So as we have no further questions, I would just like to thank you all very much for coming and informing us and the public about what is happening in this very important area of cooperation between the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in the areas that you are responsible for. We will be having another public hearing next month in other areas like trade and tourism, et cetera. So I just want to thank you all very much for your submissions and we do expect for the areas that you said you will give us further information on, the Secretariat will be following up with you on those areas. So once again, thank you.

Ms. Toussaint: Thank you, Madam Chair and Members. Good afternoon.

**Mr. Ali:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair and to members of the Committee and to my colleagues at Foreign and CARICOM Affairs. Good afternoon to everyone.

Madam Chairman: Okay, thank you.

Meeting adjourned at 3.17 p.m.



## UNREVISED VERBATIM NOTES OF THE ELEVENTH VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HELD (IN PUBLIC) ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 2023, AT 1.36 P.M.

### **PRESENT**

Mrs. Maria Dillon-Remy Vice-Chairman

Mr. Rodney Charles Member
Ms. Shamfa Cudjoe Member

## **ABSENT**

Mrs. Paula Gopee-Scoon Chairman
Mr. Terrence Deyalsingh Member
Mr. Brian Manning Member
Mr. Anil Roberts Member
Ms. Donna Cox Member

Ms. Sharla Elcock Secretary

Ms. Renee Batson Assistant Secretary

Mr. Justin Jarrette Graduate Research Assistant
Ms. Katharina Gokool Graduate Research Assistant

## MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Mr. Randall Karim Deputy Permanent Secretary

Ms. Vindra Singh Trade Analyst

Ms. Kriyaa Balramsingh
Ms. Ruqayyah Scott

Senior Trade Specialist
Associate Professional

## MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND ENERGY INDUSTRIES

Mrs. Penelope Bradshaw-Niles Permanent Secretary

Ms. Karinsa Tulsie

Deputy Permanent Secretary

Director, Energy, Research and

Planeire Director

Planning Division

## MINISTRY OF TOURISM, CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Mrs. Simone Thorne-Mora Quinones

Mr. Tej Ramlogan

Mr. Keon Francis

Mr. Brian Gift

Permanent Secretary

Director, Culture

Cultural Officer II

Tourism Advisor II

[Recording begins]

Madam Chairman:—of Guyana and we started a public meeting last month. We had the meeting in April



and at that time we had Ministries presenting, and this time, today, we will be having three of the Ministries presenting today. So this meeting is being recorded and it is being broadcast on Parliament Channel 11, and also Parliament Radio 105.5, and the Parliament's YouTube channel, *Parliament*, will be done at a later date.

For the participants who are here, just advising that the comment should be made through the Chair and when you are speaking you unmute your microphones, and when you are finished speaking that you would mute your microphones. So we welcome persons from the Ministry of Trade and Industry, and would you, Ministry of Trade and Industry, starting with the Permanent Secretary, could you please just introduce yourselves?

[Introductions made]

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you very much, members from the Ministry of Trade and Industry. We will now have the officials from the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, starting with the Permanent Secretary, could you please introduce yourself and the other members of your team?

[Introductions made]

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you very much, and we also have officials from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, starting with the Permanent Secretary.

[Introductions made]

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. Thank you very much. I am Dr. Maria Dillon-Remy, I am the Vice Chair of the Joint Select Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Chair for today's meeting, and we have other members, and we will have the other members introduce themselves.

[Introductions made]

Madam Chairman: Okay. And we will be joined soon by another member, member Cudjoe, and other members are not here today. We are also supported by the Parliament staff, and you see them here, Sharla Elcock and Justin, Katharina, and Terriann Baker. So welcome once again. And the objectives of this enquiry are, one, to consider measures implemented to strengthen economic trade and diplomatic relations between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana; two, to explore the potential for sustainable development, partnerships between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, both bilaterally and within the CARICOM context; and three, to consider ways to leverage the social and cultural proximity between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana. So I will just invite opening remarks from the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Madam Chair, members of this distinguished Committee. As I indicated, I am the Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Trade and Industry. Our Permanent Secretary incidentally is currently at a meeting of the Public Accounts Committee which is simultaneously taking place at this time. But we thank you for the opportunity given to our Ministry to participate in this enquiry on deepening existing ties and facilitating new linkages between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana. Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana are both founding members of Caricom and the Caribbean Caricom Single Market and Economy. Guyana is a major trading partner for Trinidad and Tobago and data from our Central Statistical Office indicates that Guyana is Trinidad and Tobago's largest export destination within Caricom. Indeed, over the last five years, Guyana has ranked within the top 10 global destinations for Trinidad and Tobago's exports, and we have seen that for the period 2018 to 2022, our exports increasing by over 60 per cent.

We are obviously heartened by this export performance and we believe that it provides a very strong platform in which to deepen ties with Guyana. Madam Chair, the Ministry of Trade and Industry is hopeful that our involvement in this enquiry can provide much needed clarity as may be required, and we look forward to working with the Committee to advancing its objectives.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you so much, Mr. Deputy PS. Could we have opening remarks from the member of the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, please?



Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: Thank you very much, Madam Chair, and good afternoon to other members of the Committee and those of the listening audience. The Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries is responsible for the overall management of the oil, natural gas and mineral sector in Trinidad and Tobago, and in this regard, serves as the Government's leading representative in deepening existing ties and facilitating new linkages between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana with respect to co-operation and collaboration in areas related to the energy sector based on the energy and diplomacy strategy, and also based on the memorandum of understanding between the two countries on energy sector co-operation. As such, the team from the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries is happy to be here today to engage in discussions with this esteemed Committee and to answer questions with respect to this matter. Thank you very much.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. Thank you so much. And the Permanent Secretary from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, could you give us brief opening remarks. Thank you.

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones: Once again, good day, Madam Chair, members of the Committee, the listening audience. The identification of the new Ministry, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, because prior it would have been the Ministry of Tourism and we also had the Ministry of Culture and the Arts, by *Gazette* by dated 9th September, 2020, presented opportunities for synergy between the sectors. The MTCA, as we are fondly referred to, is responsible for transforming T&T into a premier tourist destination as well as the development of Trinidad and Tobago's many cultural artistic forms. Through policy and strategic interventions, research, monitoring and evaluated trends, partnering with industries, stakeholders, and raising awareness, among other things, to improve the country's economic and social progress. We are aware that tourism and culture contributes significantly to domestic economic activity and as such we are taking advantage of the synergy of the opportunities for synergies among culture, arts and tourism. We are therefore very honoured to contribute to the discussion of this very important topic today.

Madam Chairman: Okay.

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones: [*Inaudible*] Madam Chairman: Oh. Go ahead.

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones: Trinidad and Tobago has always shared a mutual tourism-driven relationship with the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and views it as a readily available source market. Our implementing agency, Tourism Trinidad Limited, is currently crafting strategies to create beneficial linkages between both countries. Our latest numbers, 2022, have shown that arrivals from Guyana are suddenly inching back to pre-pandemic figures. We have visits to friends and relatives accounting for 27.5 per cent, followed by business conventions, 16 per cent, and leisure/beach vacations, 14.5 per cent; and our national carrier, Caribbean Airlines, currently operates some 17 flights from Trinidad to Guyana and 16 flights from Guyana to Trinidad weekly.

So areas which we will focus, and I guess we will get into further discussion, will be areas such as synergies between culture and tourism, festivals, development of a non-energy sector of this economy using culture and tourism, and we would go further into this late on as well. Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**Madam Chairman:** Great. Thank you so much for the introductions. Now, we will first start with the Ministry of Trade and Industry. You did give a bit of an overview about the trade relationships between Trinidad and Guyana in the opening statement. I would just like to ask, have any of the non-tariff barriers been identified which affect the importation of goods from Guyana into Trinidad and Tobago?

**Mr. Karim:** Madam Chair, the international trade between Trinidad and Tobago and any trading partner is governed by a number of regional and multilateral trade rules. With respect to importation, there are no non-tariff barriers that preclude or prevent Guyana's exports of goods to Trinidad and Tobago. However there are, from time to time, trade issues that arise which affect trade, and some of those I will ask my colleague to outline. We do not see it as a non-tariff barrier, we see it as the inability of an exporter to meet whatever **CITO** and firefighters' sanitary standards that we have in place in accordance with our laws. I will



ask Mr. Balramsingh to share a little bit of what some of those are.

Madam Chairman: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Balramsingh: Thank you. Thank you, DPS. Chair, at a bilateral meeting that we had with Guyana in 2001, Guyana indicated the inability to trade in live horses and that was an area of export interest to that country. Both parties, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, have been trying to facilitate the trade in horses and this has to deal with—it is a veterinary issue to make sure that it is safe—it is safe and free from diseases, and a draft agreement to regulate horses, an equine trade, was developed in 2019. This draft agreement was sent to Trinidad and Tobago in 2019 for feedback, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries is the line Ministry that was pursuing this matter; Chair, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries may be in the best position to provide an update on that draft agreement. Another issue that the Ministry—

Madam Chairman: [Inaudible]
Mr. Balramsingh: Sorry. Chair?

Madam Chairman: No. No. Go ahead.

Mr. Balramsingh: Chair, another issue that the Ministry of Trade and Industry is aware of is the trans-shipment of honey through Trinidad and Tobago's ports. Trinidad and Tobago's legislation for trade and trans-shipment of honey is governed by some very old legislation—I believe it is 1935—and Guyana has indicated that it has had problems to trans-ship honey through Trinidad and Tobago's ports. And there have been significant discussions at the level of the Council for Trade and Economic Development, that is the COTED, to advance this matter, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries and the Ministry of Trade and Industry have been working together to develop legislation.

At first we tried alternative avenues to maybe get administrative measures to facilitate the trans-shipment, but it was determined that the legislation and regulations were needed. So, the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries has developed draft legislation in collaboration with the Ministry of Attorney General and Legal Affairs. And the Ministry of Trade and Industry participated at a consultation on trade in honey with the Beekeepers' Association of Trinidad and Tobago very recently—I think it was last week—and there is some need for updating that legislation, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries may again be able to speak to the status of that legislation. Thank you, Chair.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. So just one follow-up question from that; I mean, you all have been in discussion. I know you say you are looking of updating the legislation but you have been in contact with the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries about it?

Mr. Balramsingh: [Inaudible]

**Madam Chairman:** Because if this is something that is significant in terms of trade that they are—well, I mean, it is trans-shipment for honey—what exactly are the issues though? Are you aware of what—

Mr. Karim: Madam Chair, if I could elaborate for my colleague, the issue stems—actually it was raised at the regional level since 2013 when a shipment of honey was seized that was originating from Grenada, and at that time it was recognized that our domestic legislation, and in particular section 22 of the Beekeeping and Bee Products Act, did not allow for the importation of honey from foreign destinations. Since 2013 this has been a very live issue that has continued to be ventilated at the regional level through COTED and various organs within Caricom, and Trinidad and Tobago has been urged on a number of occasions to proceed with an amendment of our domestic legislation to observe our regional commitments under the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. We are pleased to say that over the last few months, significant progress has been made, and this is as a result of joint collaboration between the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, in that, I believe, in March of this year, or it may be in April, the Cabinet has already approved a draft policy to amend the legislation.

That policy has been distributed to stakeholders within the industry, and as my colleague indicated, there was a national consultation held last week Wednesday, which we participated and supported, to apprise stakeholders of the need for the amendment of the legislation. And the draft legislation has already been



prepared by the Office of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs, and we are continuing the stakeholder consultation because it is one that is obviously sensitive; it is just a sensitive one to our local beekeeping industry, but it is one that the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries has committed to addressing in keeping with our, as you mentioned, as you premised to your question, this is something that needs to be resolved because it is obviously impeding intra-regional trade in respect of honey.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. Thank you very much for that answer. I was just—in your submission you talked about the balance of trade between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, you just want to tell us a little about that? We are—Trinidad and Tobago—

Mr. Karim: Right. As I indicated in my introduction, Guyana is a major trading partner for Trinidad and Tobago and has consistently ranked among our top 10 global export destination, but within Caricom it is our largest export destination. Over the period, 2018 to 2022, our exports, that is our total exports, have increased from TT \$2.8 billion in 2018 to \$4.5 billion in 2022, so obviously a very significant increase. Our imports range in the vicinity and has remained relatively constant, give or take, you know, slight movements in some years, around TT \$200 million per annum. So our current trade balance with Guyana is in the vicinity of currently \$4.2 billion in Trinidad and Tobago's favour. Now, that obviously begs the question, what percentage of that trade is exports and imports? With respect to our—and remember I indicated that as of 2022 our exports were around TT\$4.5 billion, when you look at the disaggregation of that trade, our non-energy exports is approximately 1.2 billion of that 4.5 billion. So 1.2, 4.5, which is about 25 per cent of those exports are non-energy, and the remaining 2.3 billion is within the energy sector. But like total exports we have seen non-energy exports also improve because in 2018 exports were approximately 700 million, and, as I indicated, in 2022, that is now up to \$1.2 billion, or just thereabout. So we are seeing a healthy improvement and export performance both in total energy, total exports, energy exports, and particularly for us at the Ministry of Trade and Industry, non-energy exports.

**Madam Chairman:** "Um-humm." Okay. We will talk to the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries subsequently, but since most of your—well, the majority of your trade is from Trinidad to Guyana is in the energy industry, the question is, what will happen as Guyana increases their energy production?—but we will talk about that a little later. Member Charles, I hand over to you. [Pause] You are muted.

**Mr. Charles:** Thank you very much. Are you hearing me now, Chair?

Madam Chairman: Yeah.

Mr. Charles: All right. I take this opportunity, I join with you in welcoming the representatives of the three Ministries in an important area in terms of our trade relations globally and within Caricom. My question to the Ministry of Trade and Industry initially, through you, Chair, is that whenever we get information on initiatives and ideas, and whatnot, in terms of facilitating trade, we normally get a list of things. Is there a target percentage or a target quantum that the Ministry of Trade and Industry is looking forwards in terms of this relationship with Guyana? We talk about 3.3 billion from the energy sector in exports and 1.2 billion from the non-energy sector. Now, Guyana's economy is good, the fastest growing economy in this region, do we have a target figure at all to which we could align the activities to see how they measure up to our expectation of maximizing our trade, our exports, Guyana?

**Mr. Karim:** Thank you, member.

**Mr. Charles:** It speaks to targets and it speaks to timelines.

**Mr. Karim:** Right. Thank you, member. That is an excellent question. The Ministry of Trade and Industry, as part of the implementation of its trade policy, has set specific targets for the growth of exports. Our trade policy is available online and we have set targets in collaboration with the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association to double our non-energy exports in select commodities, and those are targets that are contained within our trade policy. Now, as it relates to Guyana, as I indicated, we have seen the export levels in energy and non-energy, and, of course, total energy significantly increased up to 4.5 billion,



and we have done a lot of market research to understand the significant areas of export opportunities.

Mr. Charles: Excellent.

**Mr. Karim:** We envisage our non-energy exports going up to 1.5 billion by 2025, which is a 300 million increase from where we currently are, and those are being supported by a number of activities if—I guess during the deliberations of the Committee we can share with the Committee.

Mr. Charles: Thank you very much, and a very good answer in terms of the 1.5 billion increase target that you have set for 2025. Is there a concerted—a group of individuals in the Ministry of Trade and Industry who are looking at the market research in Guyana? What are the opportunities for growth there and the opportunities for us, our exporters, maximizing their involvement in the Guyanese development? And, for example, is our EximBank involved in this comprehensive approach in terms of financing those institutions and those organizations that you have identified who can take advantage of developments in Guyana? And is there a mechanism—once there is an identification of a growth area in Guyana, is there a mechanism for contacting our manufacturers, our service providers, and whatnot, so there is ongoing dialogue and incentives being provided to assist them in maximizing their export potential?

Mr. Karim: Yes. Member, that is a great follow-up question. The Ministry of Trade and Industry has within its internal apparatus a trade directorate whose responsibilities include the generation and the research for all of our targeted markets. We do on a regular basis, based on—well, as a result of a lot of the automation we have done within the Ministry of our trade processes, spent a lot of significant investments in commercializing and really scrutinizing our trade data. We have—I can share with you, if you go online at our Ministry's trade portal, \*tbizlink.gov.tt\*, you would see for the first time we have launched a number of market access tools which we are paying a significant amount of moneys for to allow our business community to be able to easily identify target markets, including Guyana, and be able to specify the specific niche areas and products. So, for example, on our portal there is something called for the ICT, the International Trade Centre, Market Access Tools, and we pay over nearly \$2million a year on making that tool freely available to members of the business community.

You spoke about the wider apparatus within Government, we do collaborate very closely with the EximBank and we do collaborate very closely with exporTT, because that is an agency under our Ministry. ExporTT is tasked with getting exporters to market and helping those exporters to not only capitalize on export market opportunities but get them ready for exports. You will be pleased to know that those activities are also coordinated very closely with the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association because we recognize governments do not trade, it is firms—it is private sector firms.

Madam Chairman: "Um-humm."

Mr. Karim: In 2022, for example, there was a trade and investment mission—there was trade mission that was coordinated by the TTMA where the TTMA led 27 companies from Trinidad and Tobago to Guyana, again, to go after specific trade and investment opportunities. There is a follow-up mission that is planned for—I believe it is October of this year, another delegation of Trinidad and Tobago firms, organized by the TTMA—[Inandible]—model we prefer to use; let the private sector organize, coordinate, we will provide the financial support and the business intelligence. And all of those activities, member, there is a bilateral commission, a high-level bilateral commission that was established recently between the Governments of Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, and all of those activities are all going to fall under the ambit and somewhat of the supervision of the high-level bilateral commission, where a much more targeted approach is going to be sought and utilized to allow our exporters to go after specific new export opportunities as Guyana continues to grow. Because as we see as Guyana continues to grow, as wealth trickles down to Guyana, the population become—the disposable income of the Guyanese population improves and there are certain power and the demand for regional goods, including that of Trinidad and Tobago will increase. So a lot of work is being done within the Ministry from a trade and business intelligence perspective, supported by our trade agencies, exporTT, EximBank, and of course the overall bilateral relationship



between both countries to take advantage of those opportunities.

2.05 p.m.

**Mr. Charles:** Excellent, Madam Chair. You know, I am pleased, as a citizen of Trinidad and Tobago to hear that we are hands on in terms of taking advantage of those relationships.

I have two further questions in this regard, and one deals with the question of the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs. I knew there was an initiative in the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs where, to support the efforts of the Ministry, they used to have foreign service officers, and they created complementary trade officers in the Ministry, in our embassies abroad. Are you aware or do we have trade officers in our High Commission in Georgetown, and are you in constant communication with them to get on-the-ground developments as they arise in terms of trade?

Mr. Karim: I think we are going to do a little better than that in the very near future, because that is a strategy that has been very successful by a number of countries, putting commercial attachés, commercial officers, as part of their diplomatic presence. You will be pleased to know that, and it is in the public domain as articulated by the Government, that the new Trade and Investment Promotion Agency is in the process of being restructured, where we are amalgamating exporTT, InvesTT, and CreativeTT. As part of that amalgamation process, the Government has already approved the establishment of commercial offices in a series of markets, one of which includes Guyana. So it is in Guyana, Miami, Jamaica, and the appointment of persons in those markets and commercial attachés in South Africa and China, et cetera.

We have already, the Ministry of Trade and Industry that is, we would have advertised those positions I believe in February of this year, and we have already recruited persons. We have a commercial attaché that has already been identified for Georgetown that will be going there very shortly. You would appreciate that it is little logistical arrangement to put in place because we are seeking to have the commercial office as part of the High Commission of Trinidad and Tobago in Georgetown. Our Ministry is working very closely with the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs to finalize those logistical arrangements, but that is exactly the vision and the institutional arrangement we are seeking to have, which is a full-time dedicated commercial officer and a deputy commercial officer on the ground in Georgetown so that there is that real-time follow-up of opportunities, and those persons who will be able to work in real time with the supporting institutions in Port of Spain. So we imagine that by the end of June that person will be based in Georgetown:

**Mr. Charles:** Excellent, excellent. The only suggestion I will have in that regard, is that you give that person, whomever he or she may be, targets. So that they go there, and if the existing trade is 200 million, your job within 12 months or two years or whatever time frame, is to increase it by 10/20 per cent annually so that there is a constant monitoring and there is a value for money in that regard.

The last question, Chair. I have been talking to some Guyanese businessmen who are interesting in importing what they call "quarrying materials", because as you understand Guyana is undergoing significant infrastructural development, buildings, highways, roads, et cetera. My understanding is that they are getting it from Suriname, Jamaica, Dominica and other countries, in terms of aggregate, and they are complaining that no export licences are being granted to legal persons to engage in quarrying, owners of quarries, so that they can meet commitments to the Guyanese market. These orders have already been placed, but apparently no export licences are being granted. Is there any truth to that or could you clarify?

**Mr. Karim:** Member, I would like to inform the Committee that the Ministry of Trade and Industry's role in that process is a very small one. We merely grant the export licence when an application is made. However, all applications are referred to the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries for a recommendation. So I hate to pass the buck on to the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, but I think that question might be best answered from the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries side.

**Mr. Charles:** Excellent, and I agree. But as far as you are aware, no export licences—because you grant the licences—or the question should be, how many export licences have been granted in the last year to



persons wishing to export aggregate to Guyana?

**Mr. Karim:** Member I do not have that information right now. Can we send it in writing, because I did not anticipate—yeah, we will send it in writing to the Committee.

Mr. Charles: No problem. Chair, back to you.

Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: Chair, do you want me to address that question now?

**Madam Chairman:** Yes, I think it would be great if you could go right ahead, because we are coming to you anyway.

Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: Okay, sure.

Madam Chairman: Okay, so you can start with that.

Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: Thank you. So, under the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, which has the responsibility for minerals as well as the traditional energy sources, there a committee called the Minerals Advisory Committee, which is made up of agencies, all the agencies which are responsible for granting of mineral licences. That committee will give consideration to any requests for export, or import requests for aggregate. So over the last year we have been advised—we are seeing several requests for export. However, due to the situation in the country, because what we would normally do is seek advice, for example, from Ministry of Works and Transport and so on, as to what the demand is locally, and to see if we have the capacity and the material to be able to satisfy the local demand in terms of our highways and what they may be using the aggregate for. And we have been advised by the Ministry of Works and Transport that at this time, due to the amount of projects that we have, it is not advisable that we export the aggregate, because we have a demand for even more than what is available locally. So that is the key reason for not recommending to Ministry of Trade and Industry at this point in time that we export.

And it is certain materials, so it depends on what the material is then we determine—we make a recommendation whether to export it or not. So that is the reason for it. It is based on our local needs and whether we can meet the local needs, and also have enough to export.

**Madam Chairman:** I will just ask one question about that. If there is a growing need, and we are looking at export, is that an area that may be seen as a point for development within Trinidad and Tobago, and is that being looked at in terms of the materials for export?

Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: Yes, it is. It is certainly. We have noted, and the thing is yes. So we are looking at it to see how that could be facilitated. But of course, as you know, we have a select number of quarries, and not all quarries have the same material. It depend on the location. The majority of the requests that we are getting is exactly the same materials that we need, that is in demand. So it is a certain type of aggregate that is in demand that we need to give consideration for. So it is not a blanket no for everything, but what the requests have been coming in for is the same materials that we need at this point.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. Were there any other questions for them? Minister of Energy and Energy Industries, you have an MOU with the energy sector, co-operation between Trinidad and Tobago and the Corporative Republic of Guyana, that was signed in 2018.

Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: Yes.

**Madam Chairman:** Would you give us an idea of how that MOU has performed, in other words what results you have seen as a result of this MOU? How has that worked?

Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: So in terms of the MOU, we had an initial meeting with respect to that specific MOU between the Ministers. Very subsequently, or I think that may have been—we had the COVID period as well. So the traditional way in which the committees were supposed to work we were not able to do it during that time. However, we continue to work together with the Government in terms of establishing ways in which we can cooperate, and that is being done at multiple levels.

One of the areas in which I think we have made significant progress, and that is more from on the education side, which is where our universities have partnered with the University of Guyana in terms of establishing programmes with respect to petroleum engineering. So both the University of Trinidad and



Tobago, they have an Associate of Science degree, and then they have also, I think, a Bachelor of Science. They have had maybe two or three cohorts which have gone through, so they are partnering in terms of that. Then the University of the West Indies have partnered in terms of a Master's programme, Masters in Petroleum Engineering.

One of the things that has happened is that specifically with the Masters students they did a virtual internship. So between the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, National Gas Company, I think National Energy Corporation, which was during the COVID, they were supposed to actually physically come for two to three weeks so that they could see how the Ministry is set up and the arrangements, and then the private sector, to go through the different areas. But they were unable to do so because of the restrictions, but had virtual sessions with them. So in the field of education I know that quite a lot has been happening.

Besides the specific remit, or very generally, what we have as well is a lot of collaboration between the energy sectors, both in terms of like our state enterprises, for example National Energy has established an office in Guyana, and they are working closely. Our Energy Chamber also works very closely with the members of the industry in Guyana with respect to the petroleum sector, and we have quite a number of the contractors and the businesses here who are partnering with persons in the industry in Guyana as well, in terms of establishing business and working together.

So while some of those activities are not strictly under the remit of the MOU, we are seeing progress in the areas that are within the MOU itself, which is in terms of energy co-operation, in terms of training, in terms of expertise and so on. So we are progressing, and so we work very closely.

Just earlier this year—every year there is a very large energy conference in Guyana, and this year both the Prime Minister and the Minister of Energy and Energy Industries, along with an entire contingent, we had—National Energy and the state enterprises, had a pavilion within that conference. And part of that we opened it up, it was opened up for other smaller companies or contractors to form part of that pavilion, and so they would have had a presence in Guyana as well. So we continue to work very closely within the two industries to see how we can assist and, you know, how we can continue to cooperate.

**Madam Chairman:** What is your goal as you partner with Guyana? I am saying that because our energy sector is on the decline—I mean, it has been talked about—whereas theirs is now coming up and increasing. People would ask, do you see Guyana as a competitor and, therefore, how you are going to deal with them in terms of competition? Is that an issue really for Trinidad and Tobago in terms of their energy development and the relationship with Guyana?

Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: So there are two things. In terms of over where we are at, while our production is declining there are certain areas in which we are already established, in terms of our LNG, in terms of our petrochemicals. So even we have a refinery already. We already have a skilled labour force and so on. So what we have working for us, the expertise, but we also have ready infrastructure and the availability of a ready market, for example, in terms of natural gas. And with natural gas in particular, it is not like the oil where you can store it, so you have to have a ready market for it, either in terms of your export and so on, which takes time to develop.

So, again, there is the opportunity there to see if there can be benefits to both countries, in terms of exploring what may happen in terms of that sector. And not only—because you also have Suriname very close by as well with new resources. Even in the development of the Guyanese sector, Trinidad and Tobago served as a base for logistics, before you had the actual production of their petroleum. While they were building their infrastructure just to produce, right here in Chaguaramas, you know, a lot of the companies use here as the base, before they could send their boats and staff and so on.

So I think in terms of our location as well, we are well placed to continue in that way. So we see that not all competition is bad. [Laughter] We can take advantage of that. They are at a different point to where we are at. We have been in the industry 100 years now and so we are looking to new and different



things as well. But certainly we can both, I think, benefit from each other as nations.

So I just wanted to point you too, to the fact that there is another memorandum of understanding, which is broader than energy, but which energy plays an important part, which was signed in 2022, and that is memorandum of understanding on enhanced and renewed co-operation. There is a bilateral commission which has been set up, and under this it would not be only energy but also other sectors are being looked at holistically, in terms of our relationship with Guyana. And our Deputy Permanent Secretary here, she is the person that sits on that committee, and they are doing quite a lot of work in terms of looking at what the future holds in terms of energy. But I think they are also other parts of other industries and so on, that would be a part of that. So I could ask her to just elaborate a little bit more about that.

Madam Chairman: Yes, if that is possible.

**Ms. Tulsie:** Sure. The MOU with regard to renewed and enhanced co-operation would be with regard to key areas of interest, including energy, as the PS would have mentioned. I believe counterparts from the Ministry of Trade and Industries, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, Ministry of Sport and Community Development, I believe. So several areas, targeted areas for us to look at in collaboration with Guyanese counterparts eventually when the commission is set up to meet for its first meeting.

So the focus would really be targeted areas now coming out of the energy sector co-operation MOU. The Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries and the energy sector representatives from Trinidad and Tobago, will now have a targeted focus in terms of action oriented items that we would want to look at, some of which the PS would have already alluded to in terms of leveraging our existing energy infrastructure in Trinidad and Tobago. Looking at building capacity, sharing expertise, sharing knowledge, building the technical capacity with—I think if you look at it holistically as a region, the fact that Guyana's industry is now developing, and with Trinidad and Tobago's extensive experience in the energy sector, we can look at it as a way of building regional energy security through this collaborative approach.

**Madam Chairman:** When is the first meeting of your bilateral?

**Ms. Tulsie:** It is actually being arranged to be held. The agreement would have entered into force in December 2022, and the first high level meeting was supposed to have been held in the first quarter of 2023. Arrangements are being made from what we have been informed by the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, for us to have that first meeting very shortly.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. All right member Charles, and member Cudjoe, if there are any questions you have to ask. I hand over to member Charles. [*Pause*] You need to unmute.

**Mr. Charles:** I join with you Chair in welcoming the team from the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, as we see both of us, groups to enhance our capabilities and our capacity to operate for the mutual benefit of Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago in the energy sector. Of course we are aware of some jealousies and what not, and the potential always exist for parochialism, but there could be a mutuality of interests and a mutuality of benefits.

In that regard, Article 3 of the Memorandum of Understanding on Energy Co-operation calls for the establishment of a:

"Joint working group comprising a maximum of ten (10) representatives, of which each of the Parties will designate five (5) members..."

It was stated in the Joint Working Group in your report that that working group is yet to be convened to perform its function under the MOU. The question that arises is: Is there any development in this regard? Has it been superseded by that other committee that you spoke about? Specifically, who are the Trinidad and Tobago's representatives on the Joint Working group?

Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: Thank you very much for that question. So we would have sent through the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM affairs our representative, and we have the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries. We have also, I think, the Director of Energy, Research and



Planning here. We have the head of our legal unit as well on that committee. We have a representative from the National Energy or National Gas Company, and also a representative from the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs. So those are the representatives that we have specifically for the MOU on Energy Co-operation.

I am not sure, quite sure. I know, as I said, the Ministers did meet. But very shortly after we can only assume, because of the arrangements and the logistics with the pandemic and all that went with it, that it may have been difficult to really continue to forge the relationship in that way.

We know as of 2022, the Bilateral Commission we are putting as much effort and work into it. We see now that travel has begun, we have been having meetings and meeting at different trade shows, because the President of Guyana was here for our Energy Conference. The Prime Minister was in Guyana for their Energy Conference, and with that we have delegations which would have been meeting and talking about how things.

What I can say, even in the absence of the formal working groups, that we have been looking for avenues in which we can proceed in terms of the actual methods and the ways in which we cooperate. But I do not want specifically that the new Commission supersedes it, but certainly right now because of what is happening, that may be the major avenue at this point in time in terms of the formal arrangements on a bilateral basis for the energy sector.

Mr. Charles: Thank you very much, Madam Permanent Secretary. One of my standing concerns, it crosses all Ministries and it crosses most Departments in Trinidad and Tobago, is the question of setting targets that are measurable. So we could say we have an MOU, and if the MOU did not exist trade would develop in energy organically. People will leave Trinidad and Tobago in the service industries in Guyana. Does the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries have measurable targets in terms of where they wish to see Trinidad and Tobago's trade position with Guyana in energy in the next five years for example?

We have been told somewhere, and I hope I have the figure correct, \$3.2 billion in the energy sector exports, and I do not know for what period. But is there a measurable target, so we could say in five years' time our situation measurably will look like? Oil, no exports, a methanol, urea, it will increase by 20 per cent or 10 per cent or whatever? So that the Joint Working Group has a target in front of them, that would govern their workload. Do we have that?

Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: Thank you very much for that question. So it is a very good question, because what we have been talking a lot about, which I have raised with those sitting here with me, and even for example with some of the state enterprises, is the fact that right now I think we need to establish a baseline. In terms of the energy exports, we have been tracking that, so we have numbers in terms of the value and the amounts of those exports, but that is just one part of it.

So what we have been doing, working on, is establishing some of the other areas, for example, what is the extent of the presence in the energy sector in terms of companies, in terms of personnel. And what we realize is that we need to do some work in terms of establishing the baseline, and that is where we are at right now. Before we had specific targets, and so I am hoping that by the next time we meet with you as a Committee that we would have the numbers in terms of the target, but we just have to take it one step backwards. So that we start at the base in terms of knowing what our baseline is before we do the targets. But yes, that is a burning question for us and we are working on it.

**Mr. Charles:** Thank you very much, Madam Permanent Secretary. This is a selfish question in terms of my constituency. There is a drilling school in St. Madeleine, and I knew that it was used for training, I think, persons desirous of getting into the drilling industry from Nigeria. I think 100 or so school intake. Is that in use, and is this part of this education interaction and collaboration with the Guyanese authorities?

**Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles:** Well, I will just give you a fun fact, because that is the National Energy Skills Centre, NESC. The school is there. As a matter of fact, I think the company who actually helped to run that is a Guyanese company.



Madam Chairman: Interesting.

2.35 p.m.

Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: Yeah, so I mean, I just wanted to say as well, we have participation of persons, Guyanese persons within our energy sector as well. We have at least one established company and I think they were also associated with that drilling school, in terms of helping to run it and that kind of thing. So, the school is still there, as a matter of fact, I am on the board of governors and we are looking at ways in which to utilize it. But I know for example, the former Principal of UWI, Prof. Clement Sankat, I saw him at the Guyanese conference earlier this year and he is actually working on their own trade school which would be very similar, in terms of developing, because we already have the association in terms of the degrees.

Madam Chairman: UWI.

Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: In terms of petroleum engineering, but the actual technical skills, in terms of drillers and so on, they are working on establishing their own school. And part of the discussion we had was on how we could collaborate on that level, given the fact that we have NESC here, and he is doing something similar. And well of course he has lived and worked here for a long time in terms of education and he is also doing the same there. So we have that collaboration and those discussions, which will be continuing as well.

Mr. Charles: Very good. And my last question and this—

Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: Went on mute.

Ms. Elcock: Member Charles, you are muted. Member Charles.

**Madam Chairman:** Member Charles, you need to unmute yourself please, you are muted now. [*Pause*] Okay, member Charles you are muted.

Mr. Charles:—which seems to be one of the large companies involved in Guyanese production. Are we—Madam Chairman: Member Charles. Member Charles, you have to start over. Most of your time spent, we did not hear you because you were muted. So please, start over your last question.

Mr. Charles: All right, the last question—thank you Madam Chair, through you—

Madam Chairman: Yeah.

**Mr. Charles:** Are there any discussions at all, perhaps the Ministry of Energy is aware, of the potential for getting, acquiring whatever access to Guyanese oil? In simple terms, that is the question.

**Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles:** So acquiring the oil, if I could just ask for clarification, is that like, the produced oil or—?

Mr. Charles: Both, because if we are collaborating with Guyana, I would imagine—for example—when I was studying in Canada scholarships were given by the Canadian Government, they called it the "Canadian development agency scholarship". A range of developing countries and the strategy in that was to get the next generation of engineers and whatnot, close to the Canadian industry and whatnot. And I was just thinking, are we at all talking in any way, any discussion, with respect to those who are producing? Or those who are likely to produce in Guyana, or the government of Guyana? In any way that we could work to the mutual benefit to their utilization and monetization of their oil, in Guyana. Or is that off-limits to the Ministry of Energy?

Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: Well, the—

**Mr. Charles:** This is a difficult question albeit, you could choose not to answer.

Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: So, let me put it in this way, all of what we are doing—because right now Guyana has a large amount, a significant amount of oil and gas. So the way in which the industry is, is that at any part of the value chain you would be involved in some way, in terms of their current production. The thing is, the players that they have now in terms of Exxon and so on, I mean they are a major and they are integrated and so they would have their own supply chain. So, for example, we have some international service companies here, which were established in Trinidad and Tobago for a long time, which are



international, but they would have had their base in the region here and so, they would be involved in specific things in terms of the drilling. And so, within the industry, we would have contractors who would be involved in diving, construction in terms of different areas, who would be doing welding, who would be doing pipeline inspections and so on. And so, all of those things inevitably leads to the production of their oil and eventually their natural gas. So in whatever way we contribute, even in terms of training the engineers and so on, it is really with respect to that.

So, in terms of the actual purchasing of oil, that could only be—right now we do not have a refinery that is operational and we too are selling oil. So in terms of those discussions, to say at this point in time we can [Inaudible], I am not privy to where there are any current arrangements. But, at this point in time with the memorandum of understanding and the discussions that are being had, I mean, there is a future ahead of us and so, there are a lot of possibilities as that what could happen.

**Mr. Charles:** Thank you, very much.

Madam Chairman: Okay.

Mr. Charles: Over to you Chairman.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you, Ministry of Energy. I think we could go to the Ministry of—we will come back to you for any other areas that you would like to mention, that we have not asked questions on, that you think it is important that the public knows about. But I think the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts have been waiting for a long time to tell us what has been happening. Would you just like to tell us about what has been happening with the—tell us a little more, in terms of, culture and the arts co-operation, collaboration between our two nations.

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones: Thank you Chair. There has not been any, what I would call a dedicated agreement or MOU with respect to culture and linkages between Trinidad and Guyana except we alluded to the 1999 framework agreement to the deepening of bilateral co-operation. There was cursory mention with culture in respect to youth development. And then, prior to the culture division joining the Ministry in 2020, there was not a focus on monetizing culture.

Madam Chairman: "Mmhmm."

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones: So we find, you used the words "promotion to national development," but now with its nexus in tourism, there is that recognition and that focus to have tourism and culture increasing the contribution to national development, yes.

Now, I would have my Director of Culture, speak a little more on—So our focus today, I would think, is more on possibilities, what we can do, what ideas we have. What we can—oh, and I did forget to say in 2017, there was an attempt, there was a meeting between Guyana and Trinidad. And there was an agreement that there would be further meetings, where we would actually focus on culture, you know, deepening the linkages, however, that never materialized. But we did develop an agenda of possible areas of co-operation and that is what I would have my Director of Culture give a little more on.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay, before you go to the Director of Culture, I am seeing here that you did talk about the memorandum of understanding on renewed and enhanced corporation, after the framework, your ten-year framework agreement did not really probably bring much—you said you do not have an agreement now? Or—

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones: [Inaudible] as of the 2022.

Madam Chairman: 2022, yes.

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones: Yes, it is mentioned as tourism and it does not say culture—

Madam Chairman: Tourism.

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones:—but we cannot separate the two because—

Madam Chairman: "Mm-hmm".

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones:—as we have a saying here, we cannot compete on sun and sand and sea, so a lot of focus is on culture—all of the different types of tourism. The focus is on cultural tourism.



Madam Chairman: Right.

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones: So we cannot them curate both of them.

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones: So, our representatives on that committee would be discussing a lot of

cultural initiatives, cultural issues—

Madam Chairman: Okay.

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones:—that would for done for us.

Madam Chairman: Alright, okay. So let your director tell us about what is happening, in terms of the

ideas that you have.

Mr. Ramlogan: Good day, Chair. As PS alluded to earlier about monetizing culture, just to go back a bit. Over the years, what we would have found, the Government would have provided support, financial support, for a lot of organizations clearly from a heritage perspective. There was nothing—the financial aspect—the monetizing aspect of the culture because they were a new society. What we have found over the years, is that we have seen progress with that. We have seen a large number of organizations developing, a large number of artists, and this is evident from the grants that we got. But as a society, as we move forward and the world moves forward, there is this talk about cultural industries and sustainability and so on. So within the time that we are operating now with the challenges within sector, we have to be more mindful of how we utilize resources. So anywhere we can find ways to help develop the sector, we grasped at those opportunities and cultural agreements present an ideal opportunity to do that.

Besides the cultural aspect of performances as part of the exchange, a part of exchange is also—you have exchanges of experts in various fields, whether it may be literature, visual arts, whatever it may be. So what we want to focus on, going forward is to maximize that potential for developing both, not only Trinidad but looking in terms of helping to develop Guyana as well as a training partner. So basically we want to look and see what opportunities—I think it was mentioned earlier that Guyana is now moving into oil and we are moving away.

Madam Chairman: "Mm-hmm".

**Mr. Ramlogan:** So there might be something there, what is it they have been doing to manage their cultural sector that could be of benefit to us going forward. So, we have been looking in terms of whatever opportunities we have to help us develop on a non-energy based sector. We are looking at both culture and tourism and more so now, as a Ministry whatever synergies that may exist that we can—whatever lessons that we can learn.

Also, one of the main focuses of the Ministry going forward is on festivals. So Guyana has a lot of festivals, we have a lot of festivals both heritage festivals like, Eid, Divali and so on, we provide financial assistance. And then you have the arts festivals, literary festivals and music festivals. All of these, they are potential for development, so we can see what festivals that exist there in terms of lessons that we can learn. But also, how we can help Guyana develop their festivals as well. Along the same way, you would have the arts as well and when I use the word "arts" I mean all of the arts, performing arts, visual arts and so on.

Now, one of the things of culture, one main aim of culture is human development. Culture basically does that, it is human development. Within any particular culture you have elements of which can development into products. So from products, you monetize products, you have a cultural industry. So what we want to do also is to explore the heritage aspect of it, see how we can share, and build and learn from each other, in that way it will also help develop our cultural products. In addition to that also, in looking at the heritage aspect, we could look in terms of that setting up networks with artistes, musicians and other persons within the sector. For example, today with technology you do not have to meet in person to produce music.

Madam Chairman: "Mm-hmm."

Mr. Ramlogan: So we will set up networks with artistes across there, we can leave them, they can collaborate and the music and the arts can grow because each country would have their own background



and their own ideas, so we can learn and vice versa. Of course, that will also build—the more we endorse and support the heritage the better the cultural products will be also.

Madam Chairman: "Mm-hmm."

**Mr. Ramlogan:** Okay. And following from that also, we would want to see how we could develop a robust trade of cultural goods and services, the full range. Also in exchange, of course I mentioned also experts in the areas, so like, let me just give an example, we may want to develop the pan industry for pan tuners, they may have pan tuners there, or maybe vice versa. Guyana is going into the oil sector, maybe they might be able to give us raw materials to produce that support that industry, the steel pan industry. So we can explore those areas. And also, we liaise with Guyana to see what other areas we can support, in terms of helping to develop.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay, member Cudjoe, I will just ask, just hold one second, you will come in next. Where are you— these are your ideas that you have or have you yet started discussions with your counterparts in Guyana?

Mr. Ramlogan: No, we have not started.

**Madam Chairman:** You have not okay. But tourism has? I mean, you all are well advanced in tourism or is tourism still in its initial stages also?

Mr. Gift: Correct, we are also part of the High Level Bilateral Commission—

Madam Chairman: Right.

**Mr. Gift:** And we had an opportunity to meet with our Guyanese counterparts. We have had discussions within the Commission itself in terms of some the proposed areas for tourism with regard to collaboration with Guyana.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay, I did not hear what you said at the end. In the proposed areas?

**Mr. Gift:** I said that, we have had discussions within the High Level Bilateral Commission with who were are in collaboration with, but we have yet met with our Guyanese counterparts—

Madam Chairman: Okay all right.

Mr. Gift:—to engage discussion.

Madam Chairman: Member Cudjoe.

Ms. Cudjoe: Thank you, Madam Chair. Can you hear me clearly?

**Madam Chairman:** Yes, we are hearing you clearly.

Ms. Cudjoe: Okay, good. My question is for Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts as it relates to tourism. Now, many years ago, about four or five years ago, the tourism stakeholders both in Trinidad and Guyana, those in Tobago too, were interested in forming a collaborative platform, collaborating on the platform to promote eco-tourism. Quite often tourists who travel to Guyana for eco-tourism purposes want to also experience Trinidad and experience Tobago. So we were talking about having a platform or promoting workshops where our stakeholders and Guyanese stakeholders can work together to build packages using the flight between Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago, so that the tourists could island hop for the purpose eco-tourism. Are we still having those discussions? Where are we with that, as it relates to those collaborative efforts to promote eco-tourism in the Caribbean?

## 2.50 p.m.

I mean, if we start in Guyana we can do so for many other Caribbean islands and make it a Caricom initiative. But I think we are close enough to Guyana and have enough similarities for tourists who are interested in exploring eco-tourism in the southern Caribbean to, you know, participate in. Are we still having those conversations with Guyana? And where are we now? Thank you.

Mr. Gift: As I would have mentioned, we are in the process of developing areas of collaboration between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana. One of the things that the Ministry has noted is that Guyana has been identified as one of the top 10 sustainable tourism destinations and it is ranked number one as the best econ-tourism destination.



One of the areas that we would want to look at is in terms of production development. Product development with regard to sharing of information and the transfer of knowledge with regard to the development of sites. We know that Guyana is very rich in its eco-tourism, heritage and development of national parks. So through the work of the bilateral high commission it is envisaged that we would have that opportunity to further discussions in this regard and to have further dialogue with the relevant stakeholders in Guyana, you know, not only to learn about eco-tourism but to assist in the development eco-tourism here in Trinidad and Tobago.

Madam Chairman: Member Cudjoe, do you have any other questions, follow up?

**Ms. Cudjoe:** No. No further questions at this time.

Madam Chairman: So, I would just ask—we have three important Ministries here, tourism, culture and the arts. You are, let us say, just getting off the ground in terms of the co-operation, collaboration. We have Trade that has been very involved over the years and seeking to expand. We have Energy that has, well again, seeking to expand in terms of the group co-operation. I am just asking you whether you are seeing—whether as even though you are different Ministries whether you see opportunities for building on what some of the others have, in other words, building on what other Ministries have gone before and have, let us say, may have overcome and you can build on that in terms of your particular portfolio. So that at the end of day you would have gained from what the others would have gone through. Do you see that as something that is necessary as you go forward in terms of building the relationship between Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago? So, I you am asking all of you.

Mr. Karim: Okay. I will take the first stab of that question, Madam Chair. Certainly at the Ministry of Trade and Industry we do believe in a-whole-of-government approach. Trade, I spoke primarily in the introduction and in the initial set of questions about trading goods but there is also an important aspect of trading services which we are also very keen on and pushing and expanding. The work of the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries includes energy services and it is a fact that as the Guyanese economy has continued to propel because of oil and gas exploration, there have been a lot of opportunities for energy service providers. And to that end that fits in very nicely with our international trade goals and objectives of the Ministry of Trade and Industry because, as we keep being reminded by our Minister and successive governments, we are not only the Ministry in trading good, we are also the Ministry of trading services.

Madam Chairman: Services.

**Mr. Karim:** And certainly that aligns very nicely with work that we also support in collaboration with the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries. Then services obviously expand to tourism services because that also falls under the ambit of services.

We work very closely at, not only the ministerial level at the level of Ministers but at the level of technocrats as we would have shared during the course of this short session. I think the establishment at the high level bilateral commission is really going to be a great initiative to pull together all of the stakeholders. I am sure in your briefing documents you would have discerned that there were previously a number of MOUs in various functional areas and there are a number of activities and dialogue between Ministries and sectors across both countries. But I do not believe and I stand to be corrected, that there was never one high level coordinating entity at—within Trinidad and Tobago at a government-to-government level. And I think the High Level Bilateral Commission, it is something new. It was formed last year and formalized at the level of the heads of government of both countries.

As my colleagues from the Minister of Energy and Energy Industries has indicated, the DPS in the Ministry and myself and our members of the bilateral commission and we are seeing a lot of good work and effort being put into the work of the commission by various Ministries across the Government, energy, trade, sports, tourism, the Tobago House of Assembly and a number of Ministries being coordinated by our High Commissioner in Georgetown and NEC as well. So we do intend to collaborate very closely, learn from each other's—build on each other's access because all our various Ministries have their own networks



in Georgetown, their own experts, their own access to persons and expertise and resources and we are collaborating at a technical level as well to leverage and build on each other's resources and, of course, learn, learn and support each other's objective which ultimately is more trade in goods and services to lead to economic prosperity for all citizens.

**Madam Chairman:** Great. Thank you for that. Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts and Ministry of Energy and Energies Industries, what was your take on that?

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones: Chair, while the— as you said, the Ministry in the tourism [Inaudible] is at the phase of, yes, in the phase of discussion at a technocrat level, we have had discussions and I cannot, as I said, it is at discussion level, so it has not been signed off by the Government. We have [Inaudible], for example, when we look at festivals because festival tourism, as the director would have alluded previously, forms a big part of what we want to promote. And we have that close—Guyana and Trinidad we have a close cultural background, you know, the racial diversity, the music, the chutney, the calypso, the religion, you know, the Phagwa, all those things, the indigenous communities.

So when amongst ourselves when we are discussing that where we could take advantage that where we have a Caribbean fest, you know, a festival and where we invite persons from Guyana to be part of it. So if we are having a big Indo-fest, for example, and we have Guyanese singers and dancers together with Trinidad singers and dancers because we—a large part of our tourism market is the diaspora market.

Madam Chairman: Mmm-hmmm.

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones: So they are coming not just to hear Trinidadians. They come to hear Guyanese too, so we could actually increase visitor arrivals, visitors from the diaspora from Canada, from New York, from Miami, from London. So as I said, it is not a formal proposal but since we have been discussing that matter at the technocrat level but we will put in a formal proposal and present to our superiors. And, Chair, and Mr. Francis would like to add something.

**Mr. Francis:** Yeah. Just to add, yes, as we have stated, we are at the beginning of the discussions somewhat but also to recognize that the CARIFESTA model and framework has provided a lot opportunities for discussion over the years and—

**Madam Chairman:** And that has been going on for a long time.

Mr. Francis:—for a long time and particularly—

Madam Chairman: Yeah.

Mr. Francis:—within the last two we had 2017/2018 in Barbados—

Madam Chairman: Yeah.

Mr. Francis:—in those areas. And then we had in 2019 in Trinidad.

Madam Chairman: In Trinidad.

**Mr. Francis:** And provided a lot of opportunities for our artists and cultural workers to collaborate and a lot of discussions would have been informally had out of those festivals. So the bilateral commission really provides the opportunity to capitalize on those discussions that have already been taking place informally and I think they are at a very prime position to just move forward at this point in time with really nailing down ways forward and how we can go forward.

**Madam Chairman:** So, I my last question to you, PS, would be, when will that be taken forward to the next step?—having talked for a while in terms of and getting your ideas together. When would you—what is your time frame for putting that?—the next step.

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones: Well, we are guided by the commission.

Madam Chairman: You are guided by—

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones: Well, the discussions at the commission's level.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. So what would your role be in pushing it, in moving it from where you have it right now, excellent ideas, to the next stage?

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones: Next stage, well—my director here and his team will sit down and prepare



the proposals.

Madam Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Francis: So once the connections are—once the formal connections are made so that we can have those discussions, we will be better able to present proposals to move forward. I believe at this point in time that is really where we are at in terms of moving forward. Once the connection is made and there is that formal structure in place and we can have the discussions and trade the ideas to really understand how we can go forward and what the key needs are, then we could move forward.

**Madam Chairman:** And remind me of who is responsible for making those connections? You said it was at the level of the commission. Remind me of what—how does that move forward then?

Mr. Gift: If I may? The commission, the high level bilateral—

Madam Chairman: The high level bilateral commission.

**Mr. Gift:**—it is chaired by Ambassador Enill and through both the Ambassador and the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs we would be able to initiate discussion with our Guyanese counterparts.

Madam Chairman: Okay.

Mr. Gift: So it would have been mentioned earlier in today's meeting that the commission has not met as yet with Guyana. We are awaiting word from Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs. We are supposed to have a meeting of high level bilateral commission next week Monday so we will have perhaps further details into where that meeting with the Guyanese counterparts are. But at this point in time we do not have a date as yet. We have not been informed by the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. But you will be in readiness. That is what I am hearing you say. You will be in readiness for whenever those discussions come up? Yes?

Mr. Francis: Yes.

Madam Chairman: That is what I heard. Okay.

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones: We are ready. We are ready.

**Madam Chairman:** You are ready. Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, this conversation about building. Yes.

Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: Yes. So in terms of leveraging on what other Ministries are doing. I think there is the role for synergy, you know. Even as I went to Guyana earlier this year for their conference, one of the questions I asked my team is, who is not in Guyana? It is very familiar, you know, in terms of the businesses there. A lot of, in terms of banking, in terms of the manufacturing, the retail sector. So there are a lot of ways in which, even as the Ministry of Trade and Industry would have indicated, we already have a relationship and we already have a base on which to continue to build and to continue to relate in both ways. Right? I know there is the movement of artists and so on between the countries and I think that we can leverage that.

So, for example, in the area, even in terms of business, there is business tourism. So you might go to do business or someone might come to do business here but as part of that we would have a cultural show. We would have a visit to a site or you might put it, you know, along with some other type of festival you have, you know. We were just talking about the CPL, for example, you know, so sport where would move from country to country, you know. People fly all over for cricket and those kinds of things.

So, I think it is a matter of really, you know—we have opportunities to learn from each other and not just government but also the private sector, so we cannot play that down because sometimes they are making a lot more in-roads than we might be making through the formal arrangements but they might be going, you know, getting into areas and collaborating with each other from country to country in a way that it is not always captured formally. So, I believe, that, yes, we have the opportunity and that is why I think networking and also, you know, ensuring that we keep the conversations like this open so that we could be aware of what each other is doing, the public and the private sector could be aware, members of the public, individuals who also have their own initiatives they may be able, you know, also reach out to us. So, I think,



yes, there is a great opportunity for us to build on what the other has done and, of course, the bilateral commission at this point in time seems to be the main avenue, but I think there are others. Yeah.

**Madam Chairman:** Right. Great. You have to have it from top and at the bottom.

Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: Yes. Yeah.

**Madam Chairman:** Right. Great. I think it is now quarter to four, 10 to four, and I think we have come to the end of our questioning but I would just like you to, each one of you, and I think we will start with the Ministry of Trade and Industry, just give a summary, just give your closing remarks and I will come after trade to Energy and then to Tourism, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Arts. Just give some closing remarks, please.

**Mr. Karim:** Thank you, Madam Chair, members of this Committee. We joined just over a little one and a half of dialogue. It seems so short with such an important issue. As I started off, on behalf of our Ministry, and as shared with Committee, we do have a very strong base certainly from a trade perspective in terms of our bilateral relationship between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana. It is one that we are seeing continuing to grow, both organically, I mean as PS energy has indicated. Business takes place with or without governmental activity.

Madam Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Karim: But with governmental activity it can grow more. And in that context we are guided by member Charles in his quest with respect to targets because we believe that as a country in advancing its trade investment, energy or tourism objectives, we have to be very focused, very action-oriented and very deliberate in how we organize ourselves to achieve targets. And we wish to assure the Committee that from the Ministry of Trade and Industry's angle of the relationship, we are very much utilizing commercial intelligence to drive and drive those targets. We are working very closely with the agencies under our remit to achieve those objectives and we assure the Committee that we will continue to work with our brother and sister Ministries as we seek to really engage the Republic of Guyana in a much more deliberate and focused manner to grow our trade and increase investment activity.

Madam Chairman: Thank you so much. Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries.

Mrs. Bradshaw-Niles: Thank you, Chair. And thank you for inviting us here. Just to summarize. Notwithstanding the memorandum of understanding of the energy corporation the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries and the state enterprises such as National Energy, as well as the private sector through the Energy Chamber and its members, continue to forge relationships on industry level between Trinidad and Tobago and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

And the energy—on the education side there have been advancements in terms of co-operation in that sector. And as I earlier mentioned we have the University of Trinidad and Tobago undertaking programmes at the bachelor's level. The University of the West Indies at the masters level and I omitted the same National Energy Skills Centre, they also in 2022 graduated 10 graduates from Guyana, instructors. So they are training trainers for the Guyana Linden Technical Institute and they were contracted by the Ministry of Education Guyana to do that. So, we also have on the technical skills level we have collaboration in that area. We continue to work diligently for the mutual benefit of both nations with respect to the energy sector and that includes minerals and renewal energy as well. Thank you very much for the opportunity to share here today.

**Madam Chairman:** Great. Thank you so much, PS. And the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, closing remarks. Yes.

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones: Chair, again, as keeping with what my two colleagues would have said, we thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts, some of our plans and/or ideas on this very important topic of deepening linkages between Trinidad and Guyana given our proximity, our cultural history. As we continue to promote destination Trinidad more and more to ensure that tourism and by extension culture is, because we cannot separate the two, so I could continue more to the national economy, we will be looking



at not just—not just Guyana but any other island, any other country in the Caribbean and Latin America. So it is all part of the, yes, here today we are here to discuss Guyana but it is taking advantage of all linkages because we have accepted the fact that the energy industry is not as, how should I say?—it is not lucrative as before, so we need to tourism/culture sector have recognized that we can do a lot, a lot more.

And we can, again, as we said because of this closeness with Guyana, I mean, I get excited when I think about having this great big Indo-fest, you know, with plane loads of people coming in, yes, and bringing in the foreign exchange. So, we thank you for inviting us here because actually what it does now is, we would be talking but you have actually spurred us on, you know, what I call subtle pressure. Yes? So at our next meeting and the meeting hopefully it comes up on Monday—

Madam Chairman: Yeah.

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones:—we would ensure we have a voice and we present, so that when we have to appear before you again, we would be coming with milestones.

Madam Chairman: Yes.

Mrs. Thorne-Mora Quinones: We promise. Thank you, Chair.

**Madam Chairman:** Excellent. I too I am very excited on behalf of the Committee, we thank you for your appearance and I actually feel as though I have been at a—you know, this—usually there are so many—you are hearing some many negative things happening, negative things happening, things are not happening. I have been really stimulated here this evening by, not just what is happening, but also the possibilities of what can happen.

And I also see, you know again, Caricom, we have been having so many, let us say, we have been wanting so much more from Caricom and what I am hearing from you here is that by what you are doing, you are also bringing our nations closer together in terms of the ideals of, you know, building of Caricom, at least, with our two countries here in terms of what you are doing, in terms of building relationships. And I am hopeful and would just like to encourage you all to continue because the growth and the trajectory that you are talking about, I am not sure where it will end in terms of—or what are the possibilities in terms of ending where this can end.

So I just want to encourage you all and if there are any questions, any follow-up questions we have after our discussions, we will send it to you. And I just want to thank you again for appearing here this evening. I am sure the public would have gained a lot as to what these Ministries are doing in terms of this bilateral co-operation. So thank you and good afternoon.

**3.15 p.m.:** Meeting adjourned.



## **APPENDIX III**

# DETAILS ON TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GUYANA



Details on Trinidad and Tobago's Bilateral Relationship with Guyana:

Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana have long shared cordial bilateral relations, with diplomatic relations dating back to 1963 and formalised on May 26, 1966. In October 2015, there was a mutual agreement between both countries to reinvigorate the existing Framework Agreement between the two countries with a focus of energy relations, agriculture, trade and eco-tourism. A corollary of this was the strengthening of ties through the establishment of diplomatic missions. His Excellency Bishwaishwar Cammie Ramsaroop-Maraj, the then High Commissioner for the Co-operative Republic of Guyana to Trinidad and Tobago presented credentials on October 6, 2016. The High Commission for Guyana to Port of Spain was formally established a few months later, in February 2017. Trinidad and Tobago's High Commission in Georgetown was re-established approximately two years later, on September 28, 2019.

Citing financial constraints arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and the concomitant impact on the national economy, Guyana advised in October 2020 of the closure of its High Commission in Port of Spain. This decision took effect on 31 December 2020. Guyana's diplomatic representation in Trinidad and Tobago is now in the form of a Consulate General, with Ms. Maharine Deborah Yaw serving as Consul General (Ag.).

Notwithstanding this change in diplomatic representation, Guyana has been keen to express the importance accorded to the bilateral relationship with Trinidad and Tobago. Accordingly, the bilateral relationship has been tending toward further and deeper co-operation. In this regard, there has been engagement at varying levels including government-to-government, business-to-business and people-to-people interactions. These engagements have been in the form of Official Visits, bilateral meetings, technical exchanges, as well as trade and other special missions, which have been occurring over the last five (5) years with increased frequency.

MFCA Submission dated March 10, 2023



## **APPENDIX IV**

FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR THE DEEPENING OF BILATERAL CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA





# FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR THE DEEPENING OF BILATERAL COOPERATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana (hereinafter referred to as the "Contracting Parties"):

**DESIROUS** of strengthening the traditional ties of friendship existing between the two nations;

AWARE of the mutual advantages arising from commercial, economic, technical and cultural cooperation in the fields of mutual interest;

**DETERMINED** to undertake joint actions to promote the attainment of higher levels in social and economic development.

NOW AGREE as follows:



## **ARTICLE I**

- 1. The Contracting Parties hereby undertake to prepare and implement by mutual agreement, technical, commercial, economic and cultural cooperation programmes and projects in the promotion of the present Agreement.
- 2. Such programmes and projects shall involve in their execution, the encouragement of closer links between private sector organisations and entities of the Contracting Parties in the promotion and improvement of trade and investment between the two countries.
- 3. Details and procedures of particular cooperation programmes and projects under this Agreement shall be the subject of specific agreements between the Contracting Parties or their designated agencies.

### ARTICLE II

- For the purpose of this Agreement, the bilateral cooperation between both countries may include the following features:
  - (a) Promotion of trade and investment between the two countries and the encouragement of closer links between their private sectors, including the facilitation of joint ventures and other forms of



cooperation between enterprises;

- (b) Joint or coordinated implementation of programmes of technical cooperation and research in the areas of agriculture and agro-processing, petroleum extraction, fisheries and environmental issues of mutual interest;
- (c) Provision and exchange of experts to assist in operational and advisory services;
- (d) Encouragement of sporting and cultural links as well as exchange programmes aimed at the development of youth within the two States;
- (e) Cooperation in human resource development particularly through the training of nationals;
- (f) Exploration of areas in which joint or coordinated external representation may be feasible in the overseas missions of both countries;
- (g) Activities designed to further the process of integration in such fora as CARICOM, the Association of Caribbean States, ACP/LOME and the Free Trade Area of the Americas;



(h) Any other modality agreed upon by the Contracting parties.

## **ARTICLE III**

In the implementation of the programmes and projects to be carried out pursuant to this Agreement, the Contracting Parties may, provided they deem it convenient, mobilise resources and request participation, as appropriate, from international and regional financial institutions and technical cooperation organisations as well as institutions from third countries.

## ARTICLE IV

- 1. In order to carry out the coordination of actions towards the implementation of this Agreement and to achieve the best conditions for the execution thereof, the Contracting Parties shall establish a High Level Bilateral Commission which shall be comprised of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Finance and Trade of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, or their alternates and officials identified by the Ministers.
- 2. The Chairmanship of the Commission will be the responsibility of the country hosting the meeting of the Commission.



- 3. The High Level Bilateral Commission will meet annually in Georgetown and in Port of Spain alternately, at such time as may be agreed or whenever the Ministers consider it convenient. The Bilateral Commission shall have the following general responsibilities:
  - (a) To promote commercial, economic, technical and cultural cooperation between the Contracting Parties;
  - (b) To analyse, evaluate, approve and monitor the bilateral cooperation activities hereinabove referred to.
- 4. The conclusions of the meeting of the High Level Bilateral Commission shall be reflected in a Final Act which shall be signed by the respective Heads of Delegations.
- 5. The work of this Commission will be supported by technical groups which will be referred to as Sub-Committees. These Sub Committees will establish their own schedules in accordance with the mandate of the High Level Bilateral Commission.

## ARTICLE V

1. Each Contracting Party will notify the other in writing through diplomatic channels when it has completed the formalities required by



its domestic law for the entry into force of this Agreement. This Agreement will enter into force on the later of the two dates of receipt of such notification.

- 2. This Agreement shall remain in force for a period of ten years. Thereafter it shall be automatically renewed for successive periods of five years each unless determined in accordance with this Article.
- 3. Either Party may denounce this Agreement at any time. The denunciation shall take effect six months from the date on which it was notified in writing through diplomatic channels to the other Contracting Party.
- 4. In the event of termination of this Agreement, the programmes and projects in progress shall not be affected thereby and shall continue until completion, unless the Parties otherwise agree.

## **ARTICLE VI**

Any dispute that may arise from the interpretation or application of this Agreement shall be settled by agreement between the Contracting Parties.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Agreement.

Done in the city of PORT OF SPAIN on this 19<sup>th</sup> day of August of the year 1999 in two originals in the English language, both texts being equally authentic.

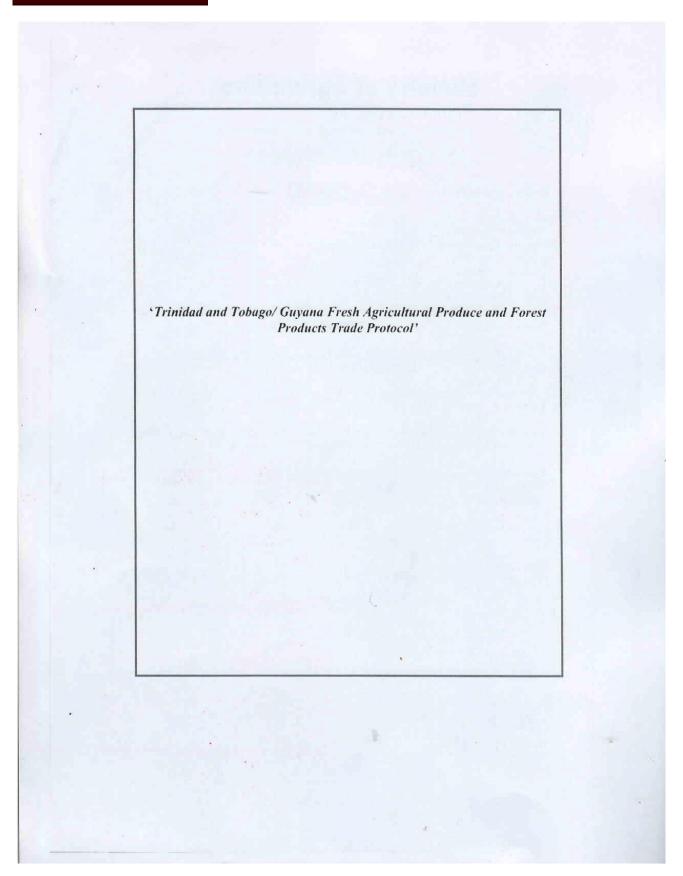
FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA



# **APPENDIX V**

# TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO/GUYANA FRESH AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE AND FOREST PRODUCTS TRADE PROTOCOL, 2009







Terms and Conditions for Trade in Fresh Agricultural Produce a Forest Products from Guyana to Trinidad and Tobago (under t Management of the Ministry of Agriculture, Guyana) hereinaft referred to as the 'Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Agricultural Produc and Forest Products Trade Protocol'

The terms and conditions set out below will relate **only** to commercial shipments and are not meant to accommodate individual travellers.

Individual travellers will be subject to normal quarantine regulations at ports of entry.

All produce must be grown in Guyana. Farmers must be registered and certified as growing commodities for export to Trinidad and Tobago and they must keep records of all crop production related activities.

### A. Approved Pack houses and Registered Farmers

- Where required, fresh agricultural produce shall be taken only from farms within pest free areas. A Pest Free Area being defined as an area within all of the country or part of the country, or all parts of several countries as identified by competent authorities in which a specific pest does not occur. A pest free area may be surrounded by or adjacent to an area in which a specific pest is known to occur but is subject to control measures.
- Produce must be prepared and packed at approved pack houses. All
  produce must be taken directly to the pack house where the post harvest
  treatments and pre-clearance inspections will be done.
- Guyana authorities shall recruit adequately trained Field Officers to assist in preparation of farms for certification and for farm and pack house monitoring.
- Appropriate staff of the Plant Health Services Division, of the Ministry of Agriculture, Guyana will certify farms and pack houses subsequent to the initial certification done by the Plant Health Inspectors of Trinidad and Tobago. Certified farms which actively supply exporters shall be subject to visits by field officers at least once each month.
- Plant Protection Officers will be trained to ensure the proper execution of the Terms and Conditions outlined in the Trinidad and Tobago/Guyana Agricultural produce and Forest Products Trade Protocol. This training will be coordinated by Guyana Marketing Corporation with technical assistance provided by Ministry of Agriculture, Guyana



# B Produce Quality and Post Harvest Treatments

Guyana authorities must appreciate the need for exporting quality produce and maintaining its presence and market share in Trinidad and Tobago.

Minimum quality standards are defined as follows:

The produce shall be:

- Clean (free from soil, foreign material and foul odours).
- Free of injury (absence of harvest wounds, bruises or punctures)
- Firm (neither soft nor having soft spots)
- Free from disease (no sign of fungal/bacteria growth or the development of dry or soft spots)
- Free from pests (no signs of live or dead insects or other arthropods at any stage
  of development in or on the produce or package)

Produce quality will be maintained through the following:

- Field Officers shall monitor on an ongoing basis the quality of produce to ensure adherence to minimum quality standards
- The National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO) officials through market surveys shall monitor produce quality in the Trinidad and Tobago market. Shortcomings will be reported promptly to the Guyana authorities who shall address them in a timely and appropriate manner
- Training will be provided to farmers, exporters, and pack house operators on Quality Assurance, Good Agricultural Management Practices and Export Marketing. This training shall be coordinated by Guyana Marketing Corporation.
- The produce shall be subject to any post harvest treatments as may be deemed necessary
- Produce must be allowed to dry before packing

# B. Packaging

- Where cartons are used, the Guyana Marketing Corporation must ensure that they are new, sturdy and free of contamination and where otherwise an agreed procedure shall be followed for use of alternative packaging
- Where bags or sacks are employed, the fabric will be of crocus, jute or synthetic net, new and free of contamination and where otherwise, an agreed procedure shall be followed for use of alternative packaging
- Cartons must retain the conventional size: no telescoping of the cartons will be permitted
- The contents of the carton should not exceed 40 lbs (18.2kg)
- The weight of produce packed in sacks or bags should not exceed 50 lbs (22.7 kg). Where the weight of the produce is in excess, the packaging must be clearly labelled and identified as exceeding the standard weight
- There must be no mixing of different produce within the package
- The name and address of consignee, consignee number, exporter name, pack house number, name of produce, farmer number, country of origin and weight of package should all be legibly recorded on the label of each package



### D. Storage of Produce within the Pack house

- Produce which has already been cleaned and packaged must be stored separately from unprepared produce
- Field personnel shall not be allowed to handle treated produce
- The packages should not be placed directly on the floor of the pack house but stored on pallets or be similarly elevated

# E. Inspection and Certification of Produce

- Staff of the Plant Health Services of Guyana shall be responsible for the inspection of all produce for export to Trinidad and Tobago
- After the produce has been inspected and approved for export, the Guyana Plant Health Services officials will issue the Phytosanitary Certificate in accordance with the import permit requirements
- In the event that a notifiable pest/disease is discerned, such produce will not be certified as fit for export
- Sanitising procedures will be monitored to ensure compliance with recommended measures by Plant Quarantine Services of Trinidad and Tobago
- Guyana Marketing Corporation Officials reserve the right to visit pack houses and examine packing operations

# F. Exporter's Responsibilities

- Exporters shall not prepare produce for export until a valid import permit is presented
- The exporter or Pack house manager must keep records of all produce taken from certified farms
- The exporter of forest products and the Guyana Forestry Commission must keep records of all exports of forest products and their associated treatments
- These records must be accessible to the Guyana Marketing Corporation and Plant Quarantine Officials of both countries
- Exporters shall be responsible for the security of their produce after it has been inspected and approved for export to Trinidad and Tobago
- Any produce that arrives in Trinidad and Tobago not accompanied by relevant documentation from Plant Health Officials of Guyana shall be confiscated and destroyed, or returned to Guyana at the expense of the exporter/importer



# G. Importers in Trinidad and Tobago

- All importers of fresh agricultural produce and forest products from Guyana must acquire an import permit from the Plant Quarantine Services of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources of Trinidad and Tobago.
  - Importers of fresh agricultural produce will only be allowed to import produce from certified farms in Guyana through approved pack houses. Importers of forest products will only be allowed to import products from exporters registered with the Guyana Forestry Commission.

# H. Inspection in Trinidad and Tobago

 All produce will be subject to a thorough inspection at the point of entry into Trinidad and Tobago.

Any breaches of the protocol will result in either:

- a) confiscation and destruction of consignment or
- b) return of consignment to Guyana at the expense of the exporter/importer.
- No liability shall be attached to any officer of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources of Trinidad and Tobago.

# I. Visit by Trinidad and Tobago Officials

- Trinidad and Tobago's Plant Health Officials reserve the right to make one

   (1) scheduled visit per year to ensure the terms and conditions of the trade protocol are maintained.
- The duration of each official visit will be limited to a maximum of four (4) persons for a maximum period of five (5) days
- The cost of return ticket(s), hotel accommodation, meals and ground transportation will be borne by the Government of Guyana. All other costs will be borne by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago
- Where there is need for additional visits the cost shall be borne by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago

# J. Pesticide Management

- Farmers shall be required to maintain records of all pesticides applied on each crop. These records will include: trade names, active ingredients, percentage active ingredient, application rates, date(s) of application and pre-harvest intervals for pesticides used in growing these crops.
- These records shall be made available to the Plant Health Officials of Trinidad and Tobago on request.



# K. Breaches by Importer

- Any importer who after being warned in writing of any breach of this protocol and continues the breach shall be denied import permits to facilitate the trade.
- Import permits shall be issued only when importers indicate willingness to, and can demonstrate compliance with the terms and conditions of this protocol.

# Breaches by Farmers, Exporters and or Packing houses

 Any farmer, exporter or packing house operator who after being warned in writing of any breach of this protocol and continues the breach shall be decertified until the breach(es) has/have been corrected.

Ministry Agriculture, Land and

Marine Resources, Frinidad and Tobago.

EMMSTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LAND AND MAKING RESOURCES

Ministry of Agriculture, Guyana Permanent Secretary

Ministry of Agriculture

Date. 7/12/09



# **APPENDIX VI**

# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON FOOD SECURITY



# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

# BETWEEN

THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

AND

THE COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

CONCERNING COOPERATION IN THE AREA OF FOOD SECURITY



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND THE COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA



# CONCERNING COOPERATION IN THE AREA OF FOOD SECURITY

**CONSIDERING** that the attainment of food security and the reduction of the food import bill are a key priority of the Parties:

**RECOGNISING** that the global food insecurity is a source of concern worldwide because of rising food prices; food price volatility; declining food production levels due to climate change; elevated demand resulting from economic and population growth; pressure on food supplies from the increased use of biofuels; poor harvests; natural disasters; export controls and restrictions; and other such factors;

MINDFUL that the scarcity of arable land, access to land available for agriculture and farming, and the costs associated with food production activities impact upon food prices, the alleviation of poverty and hunger and improved human security and wellbeing, especially within the CARICOM region:

**AFFIRMING** that food security is essential to human security and socio-economic stability:

**RECALLING** the offer of the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana to CARICOM Member States to provide access to land for the pursuit of agricultural production;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** the offer by the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana to the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to make available land for the purposes of food production and agro-processing, in line with Trinidad and Tobago's National Food Production Action Plan 2012-2015:

WISHING to strengthen the ongoing efforts of the Parties to collaborate, encourage and facilitate improved food security:

**DESIROUS** of cooperating in planning, developing and implementing programmes and projects aimed at the mutual achievement of increasing food production in a sustainable manner, improving current levels of food security and reducing the food import bill:

Have reached the following Understanding:

ARTICLE I



### Aim

- 1.1 This MOU provides guidance for the development, promotion and strengthening of bilateral cooperation between the Parties through the development of joint initiatives and activities that will make significant contributions to improving food security and create sustainable productive long term employment for citizens of both parties.
- 1.2 This MOU does not impose action targets for the Parties.
- 1.3 The Parties reserve the right to make suggestions relating to co-operation projects and co-ordination of activities, as deemed necessary and appropriate.

### ARTICLE II

### Scope

- 2.1 Both Parties undertake to prepare and develop programmes and projects for the purpose of improving food security in a sustainable manner and reducing their respective food import bills in accordance with the aim of this MOU.
- 2.2 In the execution of such programmes, projects and activities the Parties will give consideration to developing capacity in sectors critical for food security and reducing the food import bill including but not limited to small ruminant production, dairy, beef and poultry production, certified seeds (rice) production, corn and soy bean for animal feed, garlic, onion, legumes, coconuts, citrus and aquaculture.
- 2.3 In the execution of such programmes, projects and activities, the Parties will give consideration to cooperation between the private and public sectors and where necessary collaboration with scientific and technical research bodies will be promoted.

### ARTICLE III

# Programmes and Activities

- 3.1 The programmes and activities envisaged under this MOU include:
  - a. Partnership between the Parties in facilitating the leasing of lands in Guyana by private investors of Trinidad and Tobago for the pursuit of agricultural production, including agro-processing, and generally in providing a facilitative environment and the necessary support to attract such investments:
  - Negotiation of lease rental rates based on location, size of farm and the proposed type of enterprise;
  - c. Access by investors of Trinidad and Tobago to the agricultural incentives, subsidies and





exemptions from taxes and duties available to nationals of Guyana;

- d. Cooperation by the Parties on technological innovation such as supporting applied research for improved food crop varieties and animal species, sustainable intensification of agriculture and promoting appropriate equipment and best practices in farm and post-harvest uses and the transfer and dissemination of information, technology and knowledge
- e. Interventions by both Parties to strengthen market performance and improve value chains, including input and output markets;
- f. Additional programmes and activities in areas related to food security to be jointly designed and agreed by the Parties.

# ARTICLE IV

# Core Areas of Cooperation and Partnership

- 4.1 This MOU provides guidance for the Parties to plan and develop joint initiatives and activities in order to promote collaborative action for the implementation of food security measures and strategies.
- 4.2 Through joint efforts, the Parties shall address the following core areas of cooperation within the scope of this MOU:
  - a. Harmonisation and standardization of policies, strategies and programmes;
  - b. Improvement of food security:
  - c. Capacity development;
  - d. Market development;
  - e. Information exchange and knowledge transfer; and
  - f. Reduction of the food import bill.

# ARTICLE V

# Agreements

- 5.1 This MOU serves as a framework for co-operation between the Parties and is the basis for specific implementing agreements in relation to co-operation of the parties in the area of food security. The agreements will be in writing and will specify the terms of collaboration regarding specific activities as agreed by the Parties.
- 5.2 The conclusion of such agreements shall be subject to the availability of funds and shall be concluded in accordance with each Party's interests and needs, respective rules, regulations and



established policies, practices and procedures. The agreements will be reviewed periodically, on a regular basis, as agreed by the parties.

# 5.3 If this MOU is terminated:-

- a. any agreement which is concluded under it will continue,
- b. the Parties will cooperate so that any joint activities can be brought to an orderly conclusion.

### ARTICLE VI

# Monitoring and Coordinating Mechanism

- 6.1 The Parties shall establish a management committee on the signing of this MOU. This committee shall consist of six persons; three representing Trinidad and Tobago and three representing Guyana. This Committee shall be chaired by one of the members selected by the Management Committee and the Chairmanship shall be rotated between the parties. The function of the Management Committee are as follows:
  - (a) to ensure the proper implementation of the MOU:
  - (b) to ensure compliance and execution of this MOU, as well as specific Agreements which may be concluded within its framework;
  - (c) to agree and coordinate the specific activities, programmes and projects in furtherance of the objectives of this MOU and propose the means necessary for their execution;
  - (d) to monitor and evaluate the development of cooperation between the Parties;
  - (e) to evaluate the impact of the programmes and projects and recommend modifications as necessary to the Parties; and
  - (f) any other duties assigned by the Parties.
- 6.2 The Committee shall meet at least twice annually on dates to be agreed upon by the Parties. The meetings of the Management Committee shall be held alternately in Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana or in any other place as agreed upon by the Parties. The draft agenda for each meeting will be prepared by the Management Committee after consultation with the Parties at least two months prior to the meeting and submitted to the Parties.
- 6.3 The Chairperson of the Management Committee shall be responsible for providing each Party with a signed copy of the confirmed minutes within one month of the meeting.
- 6.4 The Management Committee shall regulate its own procedures and create specialized working groups to assist in the fulfilment of its duties. The Committee shall co-op experts to assist it in carrying out its functions as it sees necessary.

ARTICLE VII





# Mutual Responsibility and Good Faith

- 7.1 It is the responsibility of each Party, to ensure that the principles, procedures and obligations set out in this MOU are observed.
- 7.2 Each Party undertakes to act in good faith with respect of each their responsibilities under the MOU and to adopt all reasonable measures to ensure the realization of the objectives stated herein.

# ARTICLE VIII

# Amendments

8.1 This MOU may be amended in writing by the mutual agreement of the Parties.

# ARTICLE IX

### Commitment of the Parties

- 9.1 The relationship between the Parties under the MOU shall be based on the principles of cooperation, trust, mutual respect and equity.
- 9.2 Each Party shall use its best efforts to achieve the intent of the MOU in a timely and cost effective manner.

# ARTICLE X

# Confidentiality

10.1 The parties will ensure that confidential information which is disclosed to each Party which is not in the public domain is kept confidential.

### ARTICLE XI

# Settlement of Disputes

11.1 Any differences that may arise concerning the interpretation or application of this MOU shall be resolved through discussions between the Parties.

# ARTICLE XII

# **Rights and Obligations**

12.1 This MOU does not create rights or obligations under International Law.

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# ARTICLE XIII

# Termination

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13.1 Either Party may terminate this MOU by giving at least six months' advance notice to the other Party of its intention to do so.

# ARTICLE XIV

# Signature and Commencement

14.1 Activities under this MOU are intended to commence on the date of its signature

SIGNED at Man of Food Andrew in duplicate, this 6 day of Sept.

FOR THE FOR THE

REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF

**GUYANA** 



# **APPENDIX VII**

# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON ENERGY SECTOR CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA





# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON ENERGY SECTOR COOPERATION BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND THE COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Cooperative Republic of Guyana (hereinafter referred to individually as "the Party" and collectively as "the Parties");

**CONSIDERING** the commitment of both governments to continue the development of cooperation mechanisms to foster the creation of an environment conducive to energy integration on the basis of the principles of reciprocity, solidarity and respect for sovereignty;

**RECOGNIZING** that the development of the energy sector contributes significantly to the strengthening and economic and social development while improving the quality of life of the citizens of both Parties;

The Parties have reached the following understanding:

# Article 1 Objective

This Memorandum of Understanding on Energy Cooperation (hereinafter referred to as MOU) establishes the process through which the Parties agree to work with each other in the development of the energy and energy related sectors of the Parties with the aim



of developing and promoting joint projects throughout the hydrocarbon value chain in accordance with the provisions hereof and without prejudice to their respective national legal systems.

# Article 2 Areas of Cooperation

- 1. The Parties may cooperate in the following areas:
  - (a) technical assistance in the areas of exploration and production of hydrocarbon resources;
  - (b) the exchange of information on public policies in the area of the regulation, administration and sovereign management of hydrocarbon resources and technology transfer;
  - (c) the exchange of information on government programmes throughout the hydrocarbon value chain and related experiences;
  - (d) the promotion of training and capacity building of technical personnel and the development of energy technologies through, inter alia, technical visits, secondments, seminars and presentations;
  - (e) the promotion of cooperation and exchange of experiences between state-owned petroleum enterprises for the development of joint projects utilising mechanisms convenient to the Parties;



# Article 3 The Executing Committee

- 1. The Parties will designate the Ministers responsible for energy and energy related industries shall comprise the Executing Committee for the implementation this MOU.
- 2. The Executing Committee will establish a Joint Working Group comprising a maximum of ten (10) representatives, of which each of the Parties will designate five (5) members respectively.
- 3. The Executing Committee will develop the guidelines and the policies of the Joint Working Group.
- 4. The Parties will provide written notice of its representatives of the Joint Working Group to the other Party within thirty (30) days from the entry into force of this MOU.

# Article 4 Joint Working Group

- 1. The Joint Working Group will identify and evaluate the feasibility of the projects and activities in pursuance of the objective of this MOU, and will advise on potential areas of cooperation between Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana in accordance with guidelines set by the Executing Committee.
- 2. In the performance of its functions under this MOU, the Joint Working Group will:



- (f) the development of policies, plans and protocols relating to health, safety and the environment and the establishment of procedures to prevent and respond to operational accidents which may result in damage, environmental impacts and personal injury;
- (g) the development of policies relating to local content;
- (h) the identification and development of projects throughout the hydrocarbon value chain;
- the identification of projects in the area of construction and maintenance of plants and infrastructure related to transportation, storage and supply of hydrocarbons and derivatives;
- the exploration of possibilities for synergy through exchange arrangements and other delivery mechanisms for hydrocarbons and derivatives; and
- (k) any other means of cooperation agreed to by the Parties in the areas related to the objective of this agreement in accordance with the national legal system of each country.
- The Parties may enter into specific agreements for the development and implementation of the activities described above.



- (a) establish Joint Technical Teams comprising of representatives from the Parties and such other persons as either Party may appoint;
- (b) establish the Terms of Reference of the Joint Technical Teams to advance the achievement of cooperation activities in accordance with the objective of MOU;
- determine the priority and specific content of the activities to be undertaken in fulfilment of the objective of this MOU;
- (d) require the Joint Technical Teams to report to Joint Working Group within three (3) months of their creation, unless otherwise agreed;
- (e) receive, consider and make recommendations in writing with supporting documentation to the Executing Committee on the matters referred for its determination and advice pursuant to Article 2 of this MOU:
- invite other persons to attend meetings at the request of either Party, as required; and
  - (g) report to the Executing Committee established herein within sixty (60) days of the receipt of a written report from Joint Technical Teams.
- 3. The Joint Working Group may request the services of experts from the hydrocarbon industries of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Cooperative Republic of Guyana to advise on matters to be addressed in the process of implementation of this MOU.



# Article 5 Expenses

- 1. Each Party will bear its own internal expenses related to any activity carried out under this MOU in accordance with its respective budgetary allocations.
- 2. The Executing Committee will mutually agree in advance to the contracting of third parties and the distribution of costs related to any activity undertaken under this MOU.

# Article 6 Labour Relations

All personnel or representatives designated by a Party to participate in cooperation activities under this MOU shall be deemed to be under the direction and supervision of such Party and shall continue to be governed by and subject to the terms and conditions of employment of that Party. There shall not be any implied labour or contractual relationship between the personnel or representatives of a Party and the other Party or between personnel and representatives of the Parties.

# Article 7 Confidentiality

1. Each Party accepts that all information provided directly or indirectly by the other Party shall be treated as confidential information and shall be held and protected in strict confidence,



except as required by law and shall not be further disclosed by the receiving Party without prior consent of the disclosing Party.

- 2. The term "confidential information" does not include information that is or comes within the public domain other than through the fault of either Party.
- 3. The confidential information disclosed by one Party shall remain the property of that Party, who may request the return thereof at any time. Upon receipt of such request, the other Party will promptly return to the disclosing party all original confidential information disclosed hereunder and shall ensure that all copies and reproductions thereof in its possession are destroyed.
- 4. The obligations contained in this Article will survive for a period of ten (10) years after the termination of this MOU, unless otherwise agreed by the Parties.

# Article 8 Non-Exclusivity

This MOU does not provide any exclusivity or prohibit either Party from entering into agreements or instruments of this type with third parties.

# Article 9 Existing Arrangements

Unless the Parties agree otherwise, this MOU will not affect existing arrangements of either Party or existing discussions between the Parties as at the date of entry into effect of this MOU.





# Article 10 Dispute Resolution

Any dispute between the Parties arising from the interpretation, application, implementation, or compliance with this MOU will be resolved through negotiations by the Joint Working Group in the first instance or by the Executing Committee. Where the dispute has not been resolved within the ninety (90) working days, the dispute shall be resolved amicably between the Parties through diplomatic channels.

# Article 11 Sovereignty

Nothing provided in this MOU will affect the rights of the Parties over their respective archipelagic waters, territories, maritime zones and air space under their sovereignty and jurisdiction and all natural resources in respect thereof, in accordance with the national laws and regulations of the respective Party and the applicable rules and principles of international law.

# Article 12 Amendment

This MOU may be amended by written agreement between the Parties through diplomatic channels.





# Article 13 Non-Binding Nature

The Parties acknowledge that this MOU shall not constitute a legally binding agreement between the Parties in any respect, nor is it intended to create rights or provide remedies enforceable by either Party.

# Article 14 Entry into Effect and Duration

- 1. This MOU will enter into effect on the date of signature of both Parties and shall remain in effect for a term of five (5) years, and will automatically be renewed for further periods of five years each, unless both Parties mutually agree otherwise, or either of them terminates it as hereunder.
- 2. Either Party may notify the other Party at any time through diplomatic channels of its intention to terminate this MOU. Termination shall be effective six (6) months after the date of the receipt of the notification.





3. The termination of this MOU shall not affect the development of programmes and projects agreed to by the Parties as at the date of termination, the implementation of which shall continue unless otherwise agreed by the Parties.

Signed in the city of Georgetown on the 19. day of September 2018 in duplicate.

FOR THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

FOR THE COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA



# APPENDIX VIII

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND
TOBAGO AND THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF
GUYANA ON RENEWED AND
ENHANCED CO-OPERATION



# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA ON RENEWED AND ENHANCED COOPERATION

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana (hereinafter referred to individually as "the Party" and collectively as "the Parties");

RECALLING the close and cooperative relations that have long existed between their peoples and countries;

RECALLING that their two countries have concluded the Framework Agreement on the Deepening of Bilateral Cooperation; a Trade Protocol on Fresh Agricultural Produce and Forest Products; a Memorandum of Understanding concerning Cooperation in the area of Food Security; and a Memorandum of Understanding on Energy Sector Cooperation;

DESIROUS of strengthening the ties of friendship between the two countries through a renewed framework for collaboration and practical cooperation;

ACKNOWLEDGING the mutual benefits that can result from collaboration and cooperation in areas of mutual interest including the commercial, economic, technical and cultural sectors;

TAKING into account the goals and objectives of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas Establishing the Caribbean Community including the CARICOM Single Market and Economy;

CONVINCED that closer cooperation between the countries will advance the objective of regional integration within the Caribbean Community;

NOW AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

# Section I Objective

- By this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Renewed and Enhanced Cooperation the Parties agree to work with each other in the areas of trade and investment, agriculture and food security, security, energy, and infrastructure, and other areas as may be determined, with the aim of developing a strategic cooperation partnership for the mutual benefit of their respective countries and the wider Caribbean Community.
- The Parties may enter into complementary cooperation agreements in specific areas of common interest.

# Section II

# **Areas of Cooperation**

The Parties agree to cooperate in a number of areas including:

- a) Encouraging cooperation and joint action between enterprises in their respective countries;
- b) Pursuing enhanced cooperation in agriculture and food security, security, energy, infrastructure, trade and investment, including addressing non-tariff barriers and other impediments to the flow of goods and services between them, and any other areas, as may be determined, to contribute towards sustainable and resilient development of the two countries, and to the advancement of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy;
- Promoting cooperation in the areas of sports and culture, tourism, and the strengthening of educational exchange.

# Section III

# Financing

 The implementation of the programmes arranged under this MOU will, where possible, be undertaken through any modality as agreed by the Parties.  For the implementation of the specific programmes that are adopted, the Parties may seek, once agreed jointly and when it is considered feasible, the participation of third-Party sources of funding for the execution of the joint programmes and projects.

# Section IV

# High Level Bilateral Commission

- 1. For the purpose of implementing the present MOU, a High-Level Bilateral Commission (hereinafter referred to as "the Commission") will be established, which will meet alternately in the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, or virtually, as may be determined between the Parties.
- The Commission will be coordinated by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the two Parties and will include experts from both Parties and representatives of the public and private sector organisations concerned.
- The first meeting of the Commission will take place within three (3) months of the entry into force of the present MOU and thereafter, the Commission will meet annually, or as otherwise agreed by the Parties.
  - 4. The functions of the Commission will include:
    - a) Formulation of specific proposals for cooperation and collaboration between the two states in identified areas;
    - b) Supervision and execution of the present MOU;
    - c) Examination and approval of specific projects to be undertaken by the Parties;
    - d) Review of the progress of cooperation activities between the two countries and formulation of recommendations to the Parties on activities and projects that may be undertaken;
    - e) Any other function that may be mutually agreed by the Parties.
  - The Commission will determine its own rules of procedure.



# Section V

### Confidentiality

- Each Party accepts that all information provided directly or indirectly by the other Party will be treated as confidential information and will be held and protected in strict confidence, except as required by law and will not be further disclosed by the receiving Party without prior consent of the disclosing Party.
- The term "confidential information" does not include information that is or comes within the public domain other than through the fault of either Party.
- 3. The confidential information disclosed by one Party will remain the property of that Party, who may request the return thereof at any time. Upon receipt of such request, the other Party will promptly return to the disclosing Party all original confidential information disclosed hereunder and will ensure that all copies and reproductions thereof in its procession are destroyed.
- The obligations contained in this Section will survive for a period of ten (10) years after the termination of this MOU, unless otherwise agreed by the Party.

# Section VI

# Dispute Settlement

Any difference or dispute arising with respect to the interpretation or application of this MOU will be resolved in good faith through diplomatic channels.

# Section VII

### Entry into Force

This MOU will enter into force on the date after the Parties notify each other through diplomatic channels of the fulfillment of domestic legal requirements in their respective countries for the MOU to enter into force.



### Section VIII

# Modification

This MOU may be modified by mutual consent of the Parties in writing and the modifications will take effect in accordance with the provisions of Section VII.

# Section IX

# Duration

This MOU will be effective for a period of five (5) years and automatically renewed for successive equal periods, unless one of the Parties notifies the other Party in writing of its intention not to renew the validity of the MOU, at least three (3) months before the date of expiration of the validity of the MOU.

# Section X

# Termination

- This MOU may be terminated at any time by either Party informing the other of its intention to terminate this MOU and the termination will take effect three (3) months after the date of notification to the other Party.
- Unless otherwise agreed, the termination of this MOU will not affect
  the implementation of the programmes and projects which are ongoing under
  this Memorandum or complementary agreements.
- In the event of this MOU being terminated, each Party will be solely responsible for the payment of any expenses it has incurred pursuant to the termination.

### Section XI

# Legal Status

- The foregoing represents the understanding reached between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana in the matters referred to in this MOU.
- This MOU constitutes a statement of mutual undertakings by the Participants freely entered into in good faith. It does not create rights or



obligations under International Law.

In witness whereof the undersigned, being duly authorised by their respective Governments, have signed this MOU.

Signed in the city of Georgetown on this 22nd day of May, 2022 in duplicate.

REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND

TOBAGO

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE

CO-OPERATIVE

REPUBLIC OF GUYANA



# **APPENDIX IX**

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
FRIENDLY CO-OPERATIVE
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CITY
OF PORT OF SPAIN, TRINIDAD AND
TOBAGO AND THE CITY OF
GEORGETOWN, CO-OPERATIVE
REPUBLIC OF GUYANA







# REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FRIENDLY COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP

Between

THE CITY OF PORT OF SPAIN IN

THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

And

THE CITY OF GEORGETOWN IN THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

\*\*\*\*

THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (hereinafter called "this MOU") on the establishment of Friendly Cooperative Relationship between the CITY OF PORT OF SPAIN OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO and the CITY OF GEORGETOWN IN THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA (hereinafter referred to individually as the "Party" and collectively as the "Parties").

WHEREAS in accordance with the principles of the joint communique on the establishment of diplomatic relationships between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Republic of Guyana to enhance mutual understanding between the City of Port of Spain in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the City of Georgetown, Republic of Guyana.

WHEREAS by letter dated 1st July, 2020, His Worship the Mayor Ubraj Narine expressed interest in the twinning of the City of Georgetown in the Republic of Guyana with the City of Port of Spain in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

AND WHEREAS in pursuance thereof the Council of the Port of Spain Corporation held mutual discussions with His Worship the Mayor Ubraj Narine and his team on 15th July, 2020 and 25th September, 2020.

AND WHEREAS the Parties desire to enter into the herein described MOU in which they shall work together to accomplish the goals and objectives set forth.



AND WHEREAS the Parties take into consideration the existing friendly relations between the two Countries, in compliance with the relevant laws and regulations of the respective Parties.

AND WHEREAS the Parties are desirous of establishing a mutually supportive relationship between both Cities, with the view to developing cooperation on matters relating to education, health, business and economy, tourism and culture.

AND WHEREAS the Parties recognize that this MOU is not intended to create legally binding rights and obligations under international law between the Parties.

AND WHEREAS the Parties represent and warrant to the other that it has the full power and authority to enter into and perform its obligations under this MOU.

IN CONSEQUENCE THEREOF the Parties have agreed to enter into this mutually beneficial MOU in areas as follows:

# Article 1: Objective

The objective of this MOU is to establish diplomatic relations and to enhance mutual understanding, develop friendly relations and promote mutual and reciprocal cooperation between the Parties

# Article 2: Area of Cooperation

In order to achieve the objective referred to in Article 1 of this  $M\mathcal{O}U$ , both Parties agree to undertake the following:

- To identify themes common to both parties that can generate new initiatives to further nurture social and cultural relations;
- To facilitate exchanges and promote cooperation in the fields of education, health, business and economy, trade, tourism and culture;
- To exchange information geared toward enhancing the policy-making within its respective jurisdiction;
- 4. To establish and maintain regular close communication between the two Cities.



# Article 3: Functions and Responsibilities

In furtherance of the Objectives and Areas of Cooperation hereinabove stated, the City of Port of Spain hereby accepts the request by the City of Georgetown to engage and more specifically participate in areas of mutual concerns and interests as follows:

- The provision of technical advice and assistance in shipping and the port development in the City of Port of Spain;
- To create and encourage cultural exchanges in the mutual promotion of cultures including Music, Arts and Craft;
- To create educational opportunities, facilitate and promote exchanges between students from both Cities;
- 4. To create and expand mutually beneficial economic opportunities for the two (2) Cities;
- To collaborate and share data, knowledge and best practices for improved local government operations;
- 6. To promote tourism opportunities by building on the recognition of each other's City;
- To encourage and promote commercial activities between the City of Port of Spain and the City of Georgetown.

# Article 4: Designation of Representatives

The Parties may appoint a designated representative in their respective Cities to act as liaison to ensure the appropriate communication for the implementation of this MOU.

For the City of Port of Spain:

For the City of Georgetown:

Annette Stapleton-Seaforth Chief Executive Officer

Mmari Hollingsworth Protocol Officer



#### Article 5: Cost and Implementation

The Parties may within the limits of the respective laws of each Party, enter into separate agreements on specific matters.

#### Article 6: Dispute Resolution

- The Parties will exercise good faith to resolve any disputes between them arising from or in connection with this MOU;
- Any dispute over the interpretation or application of this MOU will be settled amicably by negotiation between the Parties and will not be referred to any national or international court or tribunal;
- Notwithstanding the existence of a dispute or difference, the Parties shall proceed diligently with the performance of their respective obligations under this MOU.

## Article 7: Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure

Neither Party shall, at any time, disclose to any person, company or third party, any confidential information acquired pursuant to this MOU, or any confidential business or operations of the Parties proprietary or otherwise without the prior written consent of the other Party.

#### Article 8; International Rules and Regulations

Each Party shall ensure that all the international rules and regulations inclusive of the United Nation's policies, and local laws and policies governing its own jurisdictions are adhered to.

#### Article 9: Amendmen

This MOU may be amended at any time, by mutual agreement in writing by the Parties, specifying the date in which such amendment shall enter into effect. An amendment will take effect from the date of receipt of the latter notification.



#### Article 10: Entry into Force, Duration, Renewal and Termination

- This MOU shall enter into force on the date of signature by the both Parties and shall remain in offect for a term of three (3) years;
- This MOU shall be renewed for a further term upon written mutual agreement of the Parties of at least ninety (90) days prior to its expiration date;
- Either Party may terminate this MOU at any time, by providing in writing, notice of its intention to terminate, at least ninety (90) days in advance to the other Party;
- The termination of this MOU will not affect the completion of any cooperation
  activities/programmes made pursuant to this MOU, unless the Parties otherwise agree.

#### Article 11: Notices

Any notice, request or consent required or permitted to be given or made pursuant to this MOU shall be in writing. Any such notice, request or consent shall be deemed to have been given or made when delivered in person to an authorized representative of the Party to whom the communication is addressed, or when sent by registered mail, facsimile transmission or electronic mail to such Party at the following address:

His Worship the Mayor
Port of Spain City Corporation
City Hall
2-4 Knox Street
Port of Spain
Telephone: 1(868)299-0870 Ext. 2224
Email: pose\_mayor@mail.com

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is signed by the parties the 4th day of November to the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-Two, in true copies.

Mis Worship the Mayor of the City of Port of Spain in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago His Worship the Mayor of thy City of Georgetown in the Co-operative Republic

of Guyana

Witness:

Witness:



# **APPENDIX X**

# TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S TOP 10 EXPORTS TO GUYANA AND TOP EXPORTING COMPANY TO GUYANA FOR 2021 AND 2022



# **Top 10 Goods Exports**

Trinidad and Tobago's top 10 exports to Guyana for 2021 and 2022 comprised products from the energy and non-energy sector including liquefied natural gas, pre-cooked foods, non-alcoholic beverages, unsweetened biscuits, mineral water and cigarettes. The top 10 exports represented 70.54% of the exported value for 2021 and 78.31% of the exported value for 2022. Table 2 refers.

Table 2: Top Exports in 2021 and 2022

		2021		2021 2022*		
No	HS Code	Description	Value (\$TT Million)	HS Code	Description	Value * (\$TT Million)
1	27101930	Diesel Oil	1,291	27101930	Diesel Oil	1,676
2	27101220	Motor Spirit	867	27101220	Motor Spirit	1,208
3	27101911	Kerosene Type Jet Fuel	143	27101911	Kerosene Type Jet Fuel	248
4	19049000	Pre-Cooked/Prepared Foods From Cereals	59.5	19049000	Pre-Cooked/Prepared Foods From Cereals	70.9
5	89019010	Other Transport Sea Vessels	203	31021000	Urea	70.1
6	31021000	Urea	63.1	27101973	Lubricating Oils	65.7
7	24022000	Cigarettes Containing Tobacco	38.1	19059010	Biscuits, Unsweetened	49.9
8	27101990	Other Petro Oils	6.1	27111200	Propane, Liquefied	48.2
9	27101973	Lubricating Oils	39.6	24022000	Cigarettes containing Tobacco	44.7
10	19059010	Unsweetened Biscuits	39.2	22021090	Other Waters	41.7

Source: Central Statistical Office (CSO), \*Single Electronic Window

# Top 10 Goods Exporting Companies for 2020 and 2021

The top exporting company to Guyana for 2021 and 2022 was Paria Fuel Trading Company Limited, with total exports valued at TT\$2.4 billion in 2021 and TT\$3.1 billion in 2022. See **Table 3** below.

Table 3: Top Exporting Companies in 2021 and 2022

	2021		2022*		
Rank	Company	Value (\$TT Million)	Company	Value* (\$TT Million)	
1	Paria Fuel Trading Company Limited	2,444	Paria Fuel Trading Company Limited	3,172	
2	D.S. Belcon Limited	108	S.M. Jaleel & Co., Ltd.	92.9	
3	Ramps Logistics Ltd.	64.1	Phoenix Park Gas Processors Limited	73.8	
4	Pcs Nitrogen Trinidad Limited	60.1	T & T Nat. Petroleum Mkt Co. Ltd	70.3	
5	S.M. Jaleel & Co., Ltd.	59.2	Pcs Nitrogen Trinidad Limited	70.1	
6	Phoenix Park Gas Processors Limited	54.9	Bermudez Biscuit Company Ltd.	64.7	
7	Bermudez Biscuit Company Ltd.	53.4	Associated Brands Industries Ltd	64.1	
8	Holiday Snacks Ltd.	51.9	Holiday Snacks Ltd.	55.4	
9	T & T Nat. Petroleum Mkt Co. Ltd	47.6	West Indian Tobacco Co., Ltd.	44.6	
10	Associated Brands Industries Ltd	43.4	Vemco	39.6	

Source: Central Statistical Office (CSO), \*Single Electronic Window (Not official National Data)



# **APPENDIX XI**

# TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S TOP 10 IMPORTS FROM GUYANA AND TOP 10 GOODS IMPORTING COMPANIES FOR 2020 AND 2021



Table 4: Top Imports in 2021 and 2022

		2021			2022*	
No	HS Code	Description	Value (\$TT Million)	HS Code	Description	Value* (\$TT Million)
1	10062030	Parboiled Brown Rice, In Packages For Retail Sale	33.5	10062030	Parboiled Brown Rice	47.1
2	10063060	Other Wholly Milled Parboiled Rice	31.5	10063060	Other Wholly Milled Parboiled Rice	25.8
3	22060090	Oth. Fermented Bev., Mixtures	25.9	22060090	Other Fermented Beverages	21.3
4	17011390	Other Raw Cane Sugar; Not Centrifug.	17.9	10062040	Other Husked Parboiled Brown Rice	18.4
5	10062040	Other Husked Parboiled Brown Rice	12.6	10064090	Other Broken Rice	14.5
6	10064090	Other Broken Rice	9.2	10063050	Wholly Milled Parboiled Rice	12.0
7	19021900	Other Uncooked Pasta	8.7	19021900	Other Uncooked Pasta	11.7
8	10063050	Wholly Milled Parboiled Rice	7.9	10064010	Broken Rice	9.0
9	17011490	Other Raw Cane Sugar	7.1	17011390	Other Raw Cane Sugar	8.9
10	10063049	Other Wholly/Milled White Rice	6.4	30049050	Other Medicaments	6.8

Source: Central Statistical Office (CSO), \*Single Electronic Window

# Top 10 Goods Importing Companies for 2020 and 2021

In 2021, Lawrence Marketing Limited was the top company importing products from Guyana into Trinidad and Tobago, with total imports valued at TT\$56.4 million. For 2022, Trinidad Import & Export Co. Ltd was the top importing company with total imports valued at TT\$18.6 million. See **Table 5**.

Table 5: Top Importing Companies in 2021 and 2022

	2021		2022		
Rank	Company	Value (\$TT Million)	Company	Value (\$TT Million)	
1	Lawrence Marketing Limited	56.4	Trinidad Import & Export Co. Ltd.	18.6	
2	Trinidad Import & Export Co. Ltd.	22.7	J.M.H. Enterprises Ltd.	16.6	
3	Gopaul & Company Limited	20.3	Persad's W/Sale & Retail Gro Co Ltd	15.3	
4	Persad's W/Sale & Retail Gro Co Ltd	16.1	Edward B. Beharry & Company Trini	14.8	
5	Happi Products Limited	14.7	Alstons Marketing Co. Ltd	14.4	
6	Abdul Haseeb Aziz	12.6	Happi Products Limited	13.5	
7	Trinidad Parboil Limited	9.6	Trinidad Parboil Limited	12.1	
8	Beaver Distributors Limited	9.6	Diadem Trading Limited	9.1	
9	Edward B. Beharry & Company Trini	9	Gopaul & Company Limited	8.9	
10	Naisa Brand Products Ltd.	8.9	Trinidad Distillers Ltd.	8.6	

Source: Single Electronic Window



# **APPENDIX XII**

# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN GUYANA AND THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO







## Memorandum of Understanding

Commencement Date:

the last date of signature by both parties of this document being [2021-08-5]

Between

AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (GUYANA) INC. with address located at Guyana Marriott Hotel, Block Alpha, Battery Road, Kingston, Georgetown, Guyana

and

AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO), with address located at 62 Maraval Road, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

# Background

- 1.1. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) made between the AmCham Guyana and AMCHAM T&T provides for the establishment of a mutual co-operation between these two institutions.
- 1.2. Recognising the value of promoting mutual co-operation for the advancement of their respective members and the promotion of trade and investment, AmCham Guyana and AMCHAM T&T agree to the following terms as set out below.

### 2. Purpose

- 2.1. The purpose of this MoU is to set out the understanding between the Parties without any intention to create legal relations, rather in the spirit of mutual cooperation. Any collaborative ventures that may bind the Parties are subject to separate contractual arrangements. The purpose of this MoU is to explore opportunities for collaboration to their mutual benefit, to set out the respective roles and responsibilities of the Parties in working cooperatively to further each other's and their mutual interests.
- 2.2. No funding will be required from either Party except as mutually agreed from time to time. The Parties agree that all financial arrangements will be negotiated for each specific case prior to commencement of the activity and will depend on the availability of funds.





# **APPENDIX XIII**

# DETAILS OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S AGRI-INVESTMENT FORUM AND EXPO II - AUGUST 19-21 2022



# Agri-Investment Forum and Expo II - 19-21 August 2022 - Trinidad and Tobago

The Agri-Investment Forum and Expo II, held in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago from 19-21 August 2022, was a tremendous success and met all its objectives.

The Forum served as the impetus to stimulate conversations among key stakeholders, such as policymakers, potential foreign and local investors, financial partners and donor agencies to explore gaps, opportunities and investments to achieve the vision set by the CARICOM Heads of Government to reduce the regional food import bill by twenty-five percent (25%) by 2025.

It culminated with four (4) Memoranda of Understanding signed among the CARICOM Private Sector Organization Inc. and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the Caribbean Supermarket Association, Caribbean Manufacturer's Association, and the Caribbean Agri-Business Association.

There were also panel discussions between local and regional partners on four (4) thematic areas:

- (i) Food and Nutrition;
- (ii) Agriculture, Innovation and Technology;
- (iii) Agriculture, Finance and Marketing; and
- (iv) Agriculture, Trade, and Investment.

The Expo had two hundred and ninety-one (291) booths that displayed approximately three hundred and seventy-five (375) companies across the entire agriculture value chain from primary producer to manufacturer and distributor. Exhibitors also included regional partners from Barbados, Guyana, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname. The Expo was well subscribed with over 30,000 visitors.

# Outcomes to-Date/Final Outcomes

- Three hundred and thirty-four (334) total number of registered applications.
- Fifty-two (52) business-to-business (B2B) meetings were held (29 Participating Firms, 13 Participating Buyers and Agencies
- All participants in meetings and seminars would have been exposed to key contacts and gained information on support services that could benefit small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).
- Many of the participants have indicated their intention to send applications in for items like the Grant Fund Facility, the Research and Development Facility and Co-financing.
- Follow-up on these leads are ongoing.

MFCA Prehearing Submission dated March 10, 2023



# **APPENDIX XIV**

# GUYANA/TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO FOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN









# THE COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA AND THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO FOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Cooperative Republic of Guyana and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago after the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on renewed and enhanced cooperation on  $22^{nd}$  May, 2022 and the official visit of the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Youth Development and National Service (MYDNS) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries (MALF) from  $26^{th}$  June to  $1^{st}$  July 2022 for food security and youth participation in Agriculture, the proposed log frame is provided as an overview of the priority areas of engagement detailing project components, activities, responsible agencies and timelines in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Proposed Log Frame.

Objective: To establish and execute the Guyana/Trinidad & Tobago Food Development Plan					
<b>Project Components</b>	Project Activities/Description	Responsible Agency	Timeline		
1. AQUACULTURE	Guyana to provide a technical team to evaluate and provide recommendations for Aquaculture production in T&T (Brackish, Marine, and Fresh).	MOA, MALF and MYDNS	22 -23 July 2022		
2. RICE	Guyana to assist with seed and technical support for Aromatic Rice (Basmati) production for 5000 acres (Guyana to engage the High Commission of India) – Guyana Scientist to visit by end of July.	MOA, GRDB, MALF, and IHC	November, 2022 (First set of seed to be ready)		
3. HUMAN RESOURCES	Exchange Programmes for Students, Technical Staff and Farmers.	MOA (GSA, NAREI), MYDNS and UTT	4 – 6 August 2022		
4. AGRO- PROCESSING AND FOOD DISTRIBUTION NETWORK (MARKET INTERGRATION)	Guyana to be a hub for Investors to establish Processing facilities (ground provision, peanuts, etc)  T&T to establish Agro- processing facilities in Guyana for regional distribution.	MOA, MINTIC, MOFA, MALF, and MTI	19 -21 August 2022		
	Guyana, T&T, Roraima: Tri- lateral agreement on Trade for meats and fresh produce (Hub in Guyana).				
5. LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION	Embryo Genesis - to introduce new and improved breeds in both countries.	MOA, GLDA, MALF, MYDNS, and MTI	15 – 17 September 2022		



	Hatchery development - both countries, with support from Brazil, to develop the hatching egg industry. Private Sector investment and Youth participation (Business and Job creation)		
6. SHADE-HOUSE AND COCONUT PROJECT	Guyana to assist with technical support, design, layout, building and planting material for the Shade-house project.  Guyana to provide 5000 Coconut seedlings.	MOA, MALF and MYDNS	14 – 16 July 2022 (1 <sup>st</sup> visit)
7. TECHNICAL TASKFORCE	Both countries to set up technical working group for the removal of trade barriers and to ensure regional food security – to be led by Ministers.  T&T to assist with cocoa and coffee germplasm.	MOA, MALF, MTI	End of July 2022
8. CORN AND SOYA	Guyana to expand production to supply both countries.  T&T to provide capital investment through state and private sector to secure supplies for value-added production.	MOA, MALF, MTI, Roraima	24 – 26 November 2022

#### Other collaborations:

SPORT and CULTURE (CPL and Guyana Carnival) – Guyana to arrange for Youths (200) from Trinidad and Tobago to attend the events and arrange accommodation.

# Abbreviations

MOA – Ministry of Agriculture
MALF – Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries
MOFA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MYDNS – Ministry of Youth Development and National Service
MTI – Ministry of Trade and Industries
MINTIC – Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce
GRDB – Guyana Rice Development Board
GSA – Guyana School of Agriculture
UTT – University of Trinidad and Tobago
NAREI – National Agriculture Research Extension Institute
IHC – High Commission of India