

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 26, 2023

The House met at 1.30 p.m.

**PRAYERS**

[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, I have received communication from Ms. Vandana Mohit MP, Member for Chaguanas East, who has requested leave of absence from today's sitting of the House. The leave which the Member seeks is granted.

PAPERS LAID

1. Consolidated Audited Financial Statements of exporTT Limited for the financial year ended September 30, 2018. [*The Minister of Finance (Hon. Colm Imbert)*]
2. Annual Audited Financial Statements of the Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Business Development Limited for the financial year ended December 31, 2019. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
3. Annual Audited Financial Statements of the Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Business Development Limited for the financial year ended December 31, 2020. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
4. Annual Audited Financial Statements of the Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Business Development Limited for the financial year ended December 31, 2021. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
5. Audited Financial Statements of the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited for the financial year ended September 30, 2021. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
6. Audited Financial Statements of the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited for the financial year ended September 30, 2022. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]

UNREVISED

Papers 1 to 6 to be referred to the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee.

PRIME MINISTER'S QUESTIONS

Petrotrin Refinery Utilization

(Guyana's non-acceptance of offer)

Madam Speaker: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. David Lee (*Pointe-a-Pierre*): Thank you, Madam Speaker. To the Prime Minister: Given the non-acceptance by the Government of Guyana to utilize the Petrotrin refinery as offered by the Government at the International Energy conference in Guyana in February 2023, will the Prime Minister state what is the Government's intention for the refinery going forward?

Madam Speaker: Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Madam Speaker, Madam Speaker, I have nothing to answer in the context of this mischief by my colleague from Pointe-a-Pierre except to say that no refinery was offered to the Government of Guyana so there can be no question about the Government of Guyana and any non-acceptance. That interpretation, Madam Speaker, is the consistent approach by our colleagues here to put the worse complexion on our circumstances in the hope that it will hurt the interest of the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Madam Speaker, what I did as the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and featured speaker at that conference, speaking to a room full, hundreds of people engaged in the hydrocarbon business in all areas, I did say to the gathering, to the world, that we did have a refinery which the Government does not have any oil to operate, and the refinery is available to any person or agent who might be in a position to be interested. To say, Madam Speaker, that then the refinery was offered to Guyana and Guyana did not accept it is the

mischief of my colleague from Pointe-a-Pierre.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Prime Minister based on what you just clarified, could you then state what is the Government's intention for the refinery going forward?

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: I did not clarify anything. It was crystal clear what I did and it is crystal clear what you have done and what you are doing.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Anybody who followed that conference would have seen what I said, would understand what I have said. I spoke to any person who is interested and my colleague is deliberately misrepresenting this situation. And with respect to what I have to say about the refinery, the future of the refinery, I said it a thousand times and it requires no further repetition.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you Prime Minister for your clarification once again. Could you then state based on what you offered the refinery to the world at the energy conference, could you state if you have gotten any feedback from the world about the refinery?

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Madam Speaker, we have said if we had anything to report that is worthy of the attention of the population, as we have done from the beginning, we will do so, and therefore that speaks for itself. When we have something to report, if we have something to report, we will do what we have done all along, which is to keep the population apprised so that they can be informed as to what is happening. At the moment, Madam Speaker, the refinery is there and available, and Petrotrin is open to any offers that might be made. At this point in

time we do not have anything to report.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Charles: Thank you, Madam Speaker. If the Prime Minister says that it was offered to the world and not Guyana why am I reading on the 16th of February 2023 from the Trinidad *Guardian* that Guyana is not interested in the Pointe-a-Pierre refinery? Are they mad?

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: That is a matter for you and the *Guardian*, not for the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Oropouche East. Member for Naparima.

Minister of National Security

(Justification for inquiry made)

Mr. Rodney Charles (Naparima): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Will the Prime Minister advise on the justification used by the Minister of National Security to instruct the Commissioner of Prisons to question a Prison visit by a Judge, and thus potentially infringing on the Constitutionally enshrined separation of powers principle?

Madam Speaker: Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Madam Speaker, Madam Speaker, in anticipation of exactly this approach, the Minister will make a statement in the next few minutes.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Charles: Was the Prime Minister consulted before this action was taken?

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Madam Speaker, I have not been in the habit and I will not now tell the Member for Naparima when I was consulted and by whom; you are

very previous.

Mr. Charles: Did the Prime Minister reprimand his errant Minister of National Security subsequent to this announcement by him?

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Madam Speaker, I have no Minister to reprimand, but I suspect that the Opposition Leader has somebody to beat.

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Procurement Regulator

(Filling of vacant position)

Mr. Rodney Charles (*Naparima*): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Given the view by the former procurement regulator that the vacant position of procurement regulator “must be filled immediately given the gravity of the work to be done with the recent full proclamation of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act”, will the Prime Minister indicate the steps being taken to fill the position?

Madam Speaker: Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Madam Speaker, the former Procurement Regulator is not an adviser to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, and this matter is a matter which resides within the purview of the President of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Speaker. To the Prime Minister. Prime Minister a supplemental. Could you state if you and your Government would be willing to support a recommendation to the President of Trinidad and Tobago for Mr. Moonilal Lalchan's reappointment for a second term?

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Madam Speaker, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago does not expose itself to lobbying in that unseeingly way that the Member—

[*Inaudible*]

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Siparia Fire Station

(Non-Functional Appliance)

Mr. Rudranath Indarsingh (*Couva South*): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Prime Minister following the deaths of Ms. Kemba Morris and her eight-year-old daughter Zaya at a house fire at Quinam Road, Siparia mainly due to a non-functional appliance at the Siparia Fire Station, will the Prime Minister inform this House whether an audit has been ordered of all fire stations by the Government to determine their level of readiness and preparedness to swiftly respond to the citizens needs in periods of emergency?

Madam Speaker: Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Madam Speaker, I will not join the Member for Couva South and seek to politicize this or any other tragedy, except to say, Madam Speaker, that I am in no position to say that the death of these people were caused by a non-functional fire unit. Madam Speaker, that is an irresponsible statement—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley:—and the Government will not join Couva South in saying that, because the circumstances of the death of those two unfortunate people are not so simply ascribed. However, Madam Speaker, more than one year ago, on March 20, 2022, the Cabinet of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago approved a sum of \$30.1 million under the Development Programme to acquire a fleet of vehicles for the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service. The vehicles included 3 water tenders, one emergency tender, one ambulance and one chemical industrial tender, among other vehicles. The vehicles were to be assigned to the fire station of

Mayaro, Penal and Point Fortin. This is part of the ongoing work of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago which consistently operates on the basis that we strengthen where we have to, and we strengthen further, and over time we go from strength to strength, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Charles: Mr. Prime Minister why do you continue to defend the incompetence of the Minister of National Security, when there was a fire—

Hon. Members: [*Continuous desk thumping*]

Mr. Charles: One hour for a fire appliance to reach to save two lives.

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima! Member for Naparima!

Mr. Charles: You absolved the Minister.

Hon. Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima I rule your question out of order.

Mr. Young: He mention [*Inaudible*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West please contain your comments. Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Prime Minister the question which found itself on the Order Paper was in keeping with the Standing Orders of the House of Representatives, and taking into consideration what you have just outlined, are you aware currently that the Couva South fire station, which is also called the Savonetta Fire Station, and located in close proximity to the Point Lisas Industrial Estate, at the moment does not have a hazardous material truck to respond to any industrial accident on the industrial estate?

Madam Speaker: Member, again, having regard to the question asked, the answers given, according to the Standing Orders, that this question is out of order. Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much Prime Minister. Is the Prime Minister concerned at all about the level of readiness and availability of equipment at fire stations across the country in light of just yesterday a fire in Penal in which it is reported in the news that multiple calls had to be made to several fire stations to respond to that tragedy?

1.45 p.m.

Madam Speaker: Prime Minister.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Madam Speaker, it is precisely because as Prime Minister I am concerned why the Cabinet was moved to allocate that \$30 million in 2022 so that we can improve our readiness and be better able to respond across Trinidad and Tobago as the circumstances warrant.

Madam Speaker: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Prime Minister, taking into consideration that the Cabinet was moved to allocate \$30 million for the acquisition of equipment, are you moved to inform this House or are you aware that currently the Fire Services of Trinidad and Tobago have less than 10 per cent functioning, breathing equipment for the use of fire service officers in the country?

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: I am not aware of that, Madam Speaker, but if my friend from Couva South has said that, I know it is not true.

Mr. Hinds: “Ohhh.”

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: All questions were asked. Member for Couva South.

**Proclamation of Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act
(Functioning Procurement Units/Officers)**

Mr. Rudranath Indarsingh (*Couva South*): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Given the pending and full proclamation of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act No.1 of 2015, will the Prime Minister inform this House whether all three hundred and fourteen (314) public bodies which will have to adhere to the said legislation have functioning procurement units/officers in place?

Madam Speaker: Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Madam Speaker, section 61(2) of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act No. 1 of 2015, simply states, and I quote:

“For the purpose of this Act, a public body shall have a procurement officer who shall be responsible for public procurement and the disposal of public property for that body and shall notify the Office, in writing, of the name and designation of its procurement officer.”

As such, Madam Speaker, this function can be performed by permanent secretaries, deputy permanent secretaries, chief executive officers and other suitable heads of department or senior officers within Ministries, statutory bodies and state enterprises. There is no statutory requirement in the law for procurement units. However, it is expected that procurement entities will utilize suitable existing personnel and engage additional staff only if necessary to assist the designated officer, procurement officer as is, in the performance of his or her duties under the procurement Act.

Madam Speaker: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: So Prime Minister, as the Head of the Government of Trinidad

and Tobago and the very fact that these 314 bodies fall under your overall purview, as the Head of Government, you are in no position to tell this House how many public bodies are in a state of readiness given the full proclamation of this piece of legislation?

Madam Speaker: Prime Minister.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Madam Speaker, we were long in coming and long in preparing for today. There were points of view by certain persons as to what was required to be ready. In fact, if you take a poll out there now, Madam Speaker, you might still find some people who will tell you that they are not ready and who may never have been ready. One of the reasons why this legislation took so long to be proclaimed was an understanding in some quarters as to what readiness meant and the Government finally put its foot down and said, the law is now proclaimed and we expect that all persons will comply with the law as I have just described there a moment ago.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Member for St. Augustine.

Ms. Ameen: Supplemental. Prime Minister, can you say what method would be utilized in those state agencies such as regional corporations who do not yet have a procurement officer, according to the law, to tender contracts and go about their procurement in the meantime?

Madam Speaker: Prime Minister.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: I just said that senior officers in agencies and enterprises can be designated procurement officers. There is no special person to be there for that to happen. Once the person designated has been designated as the procurement officer the law would have been followed.

Madam Speaker: Member for Chaguanas West.

Three-Member Repatriation Committee**(Details of)**

Mr. Dinesh Rambally (*Chaguanas West*): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Will the Prime Minister provide details of the remit of the three-member repatriation committee and any updates as to what they have accomplished to date?

Madam Speaker: Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Madam Speaker, at an earlier time the Government was very clear as to what the remit was for these persons who are assisting the Government in dealing with this very sensitive matter. The persons are in fact engaging the families and the persons of interest, and at the moment they have not yet reported to the Government so therefore there is nothing to report at this stage.

Madam Speaker: Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Rambally: Prime Minister, given that we have what is referred to as the Nightingale Committee since 2018, how is this repatriation committee's work expected to complement where this Nightingale Committee has actually reached?

Madam Speaker: Prime Minister.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Madam Speaker, in speaking to the state about this matter and the role that these people, the three-man committee, will play, it was not in the context of any Nightingale Committee. This was a different arrangement by persons who had gone out there with the ability to assist the Government with whatever work the Nightingale Committee was doing, the Ministry of National Security, the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs and so on. So there is no particularization in measuring who has done what and who has reached where. It is one assignment and all the components will be managed by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

Madam Speaker: Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Rambally: Thank you, Prime Minister. Does the Repatriation Committee have any timelines with which to work with in terms of repatriating children in conflict zones?

Madam Speaker: Prime Minister.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Madam Speaker, that question was answered by the chairperson because that question was put. It is a very strange question because we had tried to indicate how sensitive and how difficult this matter is and therefore it would be ridiculous to be putting a timeline on it because we do not even know exactly what we are dealing with, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Rambally: Prime Minister, we have had the Nightingale Committee making statements to the effect that their work is very advanced and this is as at 2020. We are in 2023 and some of the children in conflict zones, their ages are of course increasing and in this context as Prime Minister, does the National Security Council have any concern over the potential radicalization of these children given the gap of time we are working with?

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Madam Speaker, I do not know any human being whose age is not increasing, but the bottom line is that this matter is not as simplistic as the Member is trying to make it. It is because the Government is concerned, why we have taken the initiatives we have taken. The initiatives are dealing with a matter which is largely out of our reach and our resources and we are making every effort to ensure that that situation changes for better as we go forward. But given the nature of the problem, Madam Speaker, it cannot be simplistically put about timelines and dates and Nightingale Committees and so on.

Madam Speaker: Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Rambally: Prime Minister, I thank you for your responses. Is the Prime Minister in any position to tell us of international partners who are on board with assisting in this process?

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Madam Speaker—

Madam Speaker: Member, I mean, I have allowed you some leeway with the questions, but at this stage I rule that the question is out of order based on the Standing Orders for a supplemental question. Member for Naparima.

Separation of the Ministry of National Security

(Reasons for Disagreeing)

Mr. Rodney Charles (*Naparima*): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Given the chronic institutional challenges facing several critical agencies under the purview of the Ministry of National Security inclusive of the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service, the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force, the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Services, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and the Trinidad and Tobago Forensic Science Centre, will the Prime Minister provide the House with his reasons for disagreeing with the Opposition recommendation to separate the Ministry of National Security into two portfolios of Home Affairs and Defence?

Madam Speaker: Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Madam Speaker, that is very simple, it does not make sense.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Madam Speaker, because the Member has seen that on the American news that they have a Homeland Security and a Defence, I simply want to draw it to the attention of the Member for Naparima who I suspect has a hand in this, that the United States has 340 million people and a number of enemies which

requires a department of defence. Trinidad and Tobago is in no such position and therefore to talk about our problem in solving crime is to have a Ministry of defence and a homeland security is copycat, gobbledygook nonsense.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Prime Minister, you are wrong. I did not get it from the United States but—

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: “Where you got it from?”

Hon. Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima, this is a question, this is not about rebuttal and that is for the debate. So I will ask you to use your time very wisely, 15 seconds and ask a question.

Mr. Charles: Is the Prime Minister satisfied with the performance of the Minister of National Security given all these institutions that are collapsing under his watch?

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Madam Speaker, the Government is quite happy to know that the Opposition has a fetish and the Opposition sees everything in Trinidad and Tobago as collapsing. No such thing is happening. And, Madam Speaker, they have failed to bring about a collapse of Trinidad and Tobago and therefore I can tell the country I am satisfied with the Cabinet, I am satisfied with the Ministers and in the event that I am not you will see the appropriate action taken.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Is the Prime Minister saying in spite of the plethora of murders, in

spite of the collapse of the fire services with limited appliances—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Charles:—that you are happy with the performance and therefore not recognizing that it is too much for this incompetent Minister.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping and crosstalk*]

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Madam Speaker, the Member has a good reason why he does not want a particular person to be National Security Minister. But I can tell you there is a louder call in the Opposition for you to go from there.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Two-Day Regional Symposium

(Total Cost to Taxpayers)

Mr. Rodney Charles (*Naparima*): Will the Prime Minister inform the House of the total cost to taxpayers of hosting the recently concluded two-day Regional Symposium on “Violence as a Public Health Issue” held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel?

Madam Speaker: Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am very happy for the opportunity to respond to this particular member on this particular matter, because I saw this Member at a press conference of the Opposition telling the country as usual, mischief and misinformation, that this symposium cost \$15 million. Madam Speaker, that is not true and the Member must withdraw from doing that. Madam Speaker, the estimate for that conference is \$1.5 million. The Member removed the dot and told the press conference in this country, as if he knows something about it, that we had a \$15 million symposium at the Hyatt. The Member should get up and apologize now for spreading

misinformation and for lying to the public.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping and crosstalk*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: If the Prime Minister had listened carefully he would have—I asked a question, 1.5 million, 15 or 20—

Madam Speaker: Listen, I would like you to get familiar with Standing Order 30 with respect to the contents of the question. I will not allow a continued infraction.

Mr. Charles: Is the Prime Minister aware that that 1.5 million could have fixed every pothole in Naparima, Princes Town and Moruga/Tableland.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: And so would your salary.

Hon. Members: “Oooh goood!”—[*Continuous desk banging*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Mr. Prime Minister, will you index my salary of \$17,000 as your \$70,000-plus is indexed?

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: That does not even make sense.

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima. Question 9.

2.00 p.m.

Former Commissioner of Police Gary Griffith's Request

(Prime Minister's Consideration)

Mr. Rodney Charles (*Naparima*): Will the Prime Minister state whether he will consider the former Commissioner of Police Gary Griffith's request to meet with him as well as the Opposition Leader to discuss solutions to our raging crime crisis?

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Madam Speaker, as Chairman of the National Security Council of Trinidad and Tobago, I have very good reasons not to meet with Gary Griffith under any circumstances.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Charles: Madam Speaker, is the Prime Minister's response—

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: And in so far as meeting with the Opposition is concerned, I meet with them all the time in this Chamber, in front of you, Madam Speaker, and they have obstructed every single attempt we had to fight crime in this country.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: In the event that the Opposition intends to change its course and support the Government in crime fighting, as the country's Opposition in this Chamber, out of this Chamber, the Government always stands ready so to do.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Mr. Prime Minister, is it not abundantly clear to you that you have failed?

Madam Speaker: Member, Member, Member, just one minute. Again, I will ask you to familiarize yourself with Standing Order 30 with respect to how you pose the questions and what is allowed. That beginning, intro, preamble, whatever you call it, is out of order.

Mr. Charles: Mr. Prime Minister, would you not say that there are benefits to consultation with people who may know more than you about the crime situation in Trinidad and Tobago?

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Madam Speaker, the Member might be surprised, but we do that all the time.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Fresh Elections - Tobago House of Assembly**(Prime Minister's Appeal)**

Mr. Rodney Charles (*Naparima*): Will the Prime Minister provide the House with the legal basis for his recent appeal to the Chief Secretary of the Tobago House of Assembly to hold fresh elections?

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Madam Speaker, the legal basis under which I speak in this country has been established under our Constitution, 75 and 76.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Is the Prime Minister aware that under his watch, elections were postponed both in Trinidad and in Tobago and therefore, it seems inconsistent to call—

Madam Speaker: Member, Member, I will not allow that question under the Standing Orders. Member for Oropouche East.

URGENT QUESTIONS**Severe Floods and Distress****(Commencement of Urgent Works)**

Dr. Roodal Moonilal (*Oropouche East*): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. To the Minister of Works and Transport: In light of the severe floods and distress experienced yesterday, will the Minister indicate what urgent works will commence to ensure that the devastation will not reoccur in the days ahead?

Madam Speaker: Minister of Works and Transport.

The Minister of Works and Transport (Sen. The Hon. Rohan Sinanan):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, over the past three days, the country experienced substantial rainfall which would have caused flash flooding in

prone areas. The Drainage Division and other arms of the Ministry of Works and Transport triggered existing protocols to ensure that the necessary pumps were on standby and utilized to quickly reduce water levels.

In addition, the Ministry's programme at rivers and outlets across the nation has allowed for the necessary quick run-off of water. Once water had receded, the Ministry's team has been assessing the impacted areas and drainage infrastructure to ensure that if repairs are needed, they will be done immediately.

The Minister intends to continue its programme of works which has targeted over 500 desilting projects, clearing of drains and culverts, as well as infrastructure work to deal with the embankment and river reshaping. As the Ministry executes various measures, we note that the issue of flooding continues to loom large on the international stage, as the world, not just Trinidad and Tobago, grapples with new and challenging weather patterns.

In the days ahead, the Ministry intends to remain vigilant and focused on its programme of works as it seeks to improve the infrastructure for what, we have been advised, will be a challenging rainy season. Madam Speaker, the statistics show that the rainfall experienced was one month's rainfall over a two-day period. I thank you.

Mr. Moonilal: Minister, thank you for the reply. But did you not hear earlier your Prime Minister indicating that you ought not to compare Trinidad and Tobago to the world. There are fundamental differences earlier. So could you then tell us what precisely are the projects related that have been undertaken in the areas prone to flooding yesterday, basically the eastern part?

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Madam Speaker, this year, the Ministry of Works and

Transport has embarked on a very vigorous programme; over 500 desilting programmes, most of them in areas that are prone to flooding. Just two days ago I answered a question from Caroni East where almost 40 projects were established and thankfully, the Member saw the results of those projects. I did not get any calls from him over the last two days. These programmes are being rolled out throughout Trinidad and the Ministry will continue to focus on the work ahead. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Dr. Ragbir: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Hon. Minister, in light of the severe flooding in Sangre Grande yesterday, do you believe that the Drainage Division of the Ministry of Works and Transport has done enough mitigation measures to prevent flooding, that what took place yesterday? Thank you.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Minister of Works and Transport.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I want to compliment the Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla because yesterday I heard him on the television indicating basically the Ministry has done a lot, but unplanned developments are contributing to the severe flooding. Clearly, the Minister recognized the work that the Ministry is doing and the—sorry, the Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla recognized the work the Ministry is doing and I can give you the assurance that this work will continue. Thank you.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Madam Speaker: Leader of the House.

The Minister of Housing and Urban Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, there are 22 questions for oral response. We will be answering all of them. There are five

questions for written response. We will be answering question 149 only and we are kindly asking for a two-week deferral for questions 147, 148, 150 and 151.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTION

COVID-19 Vaccines from the Government of China

(Details of)

149. Mr. Davendranath Tancoo (*Oropouche West*) asked the hon. Minister of Health:

Given that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago acquired COVID-19 vaccines from the Government of China, will the Minister provide:

- a) the overall cost of COVID-19 vaccines acquired from China;
- b) the number of vaccines which subsequently expired; and
- c) the cost of those expired vaccines?

Vide end of sitting for written answer.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Upsurge in COVID-19 Cases

(Measures Taken to Protect Vulnerable)

119. Dr. Rishad Seecheran (*Caroni East*) asked the hon. Minister of Health:

Given the current upsurge in the number of COVID-19 cases, will the Minister state what urgent measures will be taken to protect the vulnerable in our population against COVID-19?

The Minister of Health (Hon. Terrence Deyalsingh): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The view that there has been an upsurge in the number of COVID-19 cases, as stated into question, is based on a completely false premise. The factual evidence indicates that the moving seven-day average for the month of January 2023 was 54.6; in February, it was the 60; in March, it was 47, going

down; and as of April 15, 2023, it was 16. The number of cases is trending downwards, therefore not upwards, and there is no surge. Further, the hospital occupancy rate for COVID-19 for the month of January was 10 per cent; in February, it was 8 per cent; in March, it was 11 per cent; and as of April 20, 2023, it was 8 per cent.

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago continues to implement measures to protect the entire population of Trinidad and Tobago, inclusive of the vulnerable population, against COVID-19, and these measures include:

1. The continued provision of COVID-19 testing services at various public health facilities for the entire population.
2. The continued provision of services required for the treatment and care of COVID-19 patients, with the Couva Hospital and Multi-Training Facility being the main hospital within the parallel health care system for patients accessing ICU and HDU levels of care.
3. The continued availability and administration of COVID-19 vaccinations at public health care facilities.
4. The continued recommended practice and, where appropriate, the use of COVID-19 public health measures, such as handwashing and sanitizing, social distancing and wearing of masks.

And finally:

5. The continued communication to the public on the status and measures for COVID-19 prevention, treatment and care, using social and mainstream media.

Thank you.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Minister, has the Ministry of Health

undertaken to implement any of Prof. Seemungal committee's recommendations for improving clinical outcomes of persons who have contracted COVID-19?

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: Madam Speaker, the very decrease in the number of cases and the number of deaths are testimony to the fact that we have implemented all or most of the clinical measures suggested. Thank you very much.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Minister, how is the Ministry of Health trying to increase the vaccination numbers in the vulnerable population?

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: Thank you. Madam Speaker, the RHAs—so let us go back in time. Before Carnival, we launched a very aggressive two-week pre-Carnival campaign with the vulnerable population. If memory serves me right, we did around 7,300 doses of COVID vaccines over that two-week period to protect them during Carnival. Since Carnival, we are administering roughly about 1,000 doses per month, whether it is first dose, second dose, boosters, and we continue to advise persons to become vaccinated, especially the vulnerable. We continue to communicate with people in our NCD clinics, which are the most vulnerable, to come in and to be vaccinated. Thank you.

Dr. Bodoë: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Minister, in view of your confirmation that the numbers are decreasing, are you in a position to say when the Couva Hospital will no longer serve as a COVID facility and they return to the service of the population?

Madam Speaker: Member, that question, according to the Standing Orders, is out of order. Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Minister, will the Ministry allow the importation of reformulated COVID-19 vaccines for sale to the public as this may now become a yearly booster as is seen around the world?

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: Thank you. Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Health has

never ever prevented the registration, importation and sale of registered COVID-19 vaccines via distributors. The point that the Member refuses to accept, which we have been saying all along, is that it is simply not available by the manufacturers to the private sector. The manufacturers from day one were only dealing with sovereigns, that is countries, and to the best of my knowledge, that is still the position adopted by the manufacturers. They are not, to the best of my knowledge, allowing private sector interests to import. There is no talk about “we” not allowing it. That does not arise. Thank you very much.

**Commencement of Remedial Works
(Cunupia River, Southern Main Road)**

122. Dr. Rishad Seecheran (*Caroni East*) asked the hon. Minister of Works and Transport:

Will the Minister state when will remedial works commence on the retaining walls that were removed from banks of the Cunupia River, in the vicinity of the Southern Main Road?

The Minister of Works and Transport (Sen. The Hon. Rohan Sinanan):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, this project scheduled to be conducted under the Flood Mitigation and Erosion Control Programme. The tender documents have been sent to NIPDEC and it was published on the 10th of March. I understand the evaluation is taking place. Thank you.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you. Minister, when is the expected completion date of these works as the rainy season is upon us?

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Madam Speaker, the project is being evaluated by NIPDEC. Once that evaluation is completed and a contract has been awarded, then I will get a date for the completion of the project. Thank you.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you. Minister, does the Ministry of Works and Transport intend to dredge and desilt this area to increase the capacity of the river during the

rainy season?

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Madam Speaker, I know the term “dredging” is loosely used in the Parliament. Dredging a river is a long process. You have to get CEC, you have to apply to the EMA to do dredging in a watercourse like that. What we normally do, we do desilting, and all rivers that require desilting will be on the programme. Once this job is completed, the team will ensure that the watercourse has the capacity that is required. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Member for Caroni East.

2.15 p.m.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you. Minister, upon completion of this project, would the Ministry enforce the river reserve laws to prevent a reoccurrence of the loading of the holes?

Madam Speaker: Okay. So Member, again, I would not allow this under the Standing Orders as a supplemental question. Yes, Member.

Dr. Seecheran: Will the Ministry of Works and Transport also repair the pedestrian railing that had been completely destroyed on the bridge?

Madam Speaker: Again, Member, this question is about retaining walls? Okay, so under the Standing Orders, this question is not allowed. Member for Naparima.

**Registered Fishing Vessels
(Mandatory Life Jackets)**

126. Mr. Rodney Charles (*Naparima*) asked the hon. Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries:

Will the Minister state whether the Ministry is exploring mechanisms to make life jackets mandatory for all registered fishing vessels as part of a comprehensive strategy to save more lives at sea?

The Minister of Works and Transport (Sen. The Hon. Rohan Sinanan):

Madam Speaker, I will take the question. The answer is yes. The short answer is yes. Thank you.

**Criminal Activity Behind Bars
(Prevalence of)**

127. Mr. Rodney Charles (*Naparima*) asked the hon. Minister of National Security:

In light of the Minister's contribution on February 3, 2023, that persons are carrying on business from within the prison system, through contacts on the outside, will the Minister state why the Government has not been able to address the prevalence of this criminal activity behind bars?

The Minister of National Security (Hon. Fitzgerald Hinds): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The Ministry of National Security has taken note of the very serious issue of criminals carrying on illegal activities from within the nation's prisons given its implication for public safety. As such, the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service in collaboration with other elements of the law enforcement platform has sought to treat with this serious problem through the deployment of several innovative, detection and interdiction strategies to stymie the trafficking and trade of contraband within its institutions. These include:

- Conducting regular and impromptu searches;
- Deploying prison interdiction team, officers at major trafficking hubs;
- Live video surveillance monitoring;
- Establishing and activating a drone interdiction team since drones are

becoming a problem;

- Training of staff in evidence management;
- Increasing patrols of the perimeter walls;
- Increasing the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service K9 asset base;
- Targeting of rogue staff facilitators via the use of intelligence, and
- Conducting static and dynamic patrols in collaboration with the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service.

In this regard, the Commissioner of Prisons reported the following:

- In 2021, approximately 3,637 items were seized with an estimated value of \$1,043,951.
- In 2022, 68,748 items were seized with an estimated value of \$6,860,431.
- 96 inmates were charged in 2021 and 82 inmates were charged in 2022.

Given the Prison Service's heightened security approaches, it has been recognized that even though contraband items are sometimes thrown over the prison walls, most of it is intercepted and confiscated before reaching the intended targets or inmates.

The Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service has also recorded a decrease in the total number of officers caught attempting to traffic contraband into the prison. There was a reduction in the number of officers moving from 15 in 2021 to eight in 2022. The Commissioner of Prisons has indicated that this is directly to be attributed to the deployment of the prison surveillance team with the mandate of interdicting the trafficking officers.

Mr. Charles: Madam Speaker, may I ask the question again since it was not answered. Will the Minister state why the Government has not been able to

address the prevalence of this criminal activity behind bars?

Madam Speaker: The question was asked and an answer was provided. Do you have another supplemental question, Member?

Mr. Charles: It does not make sense, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: That is fine. Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

**Secondary Road Rehabilitation and Improvement
Company Limited
(Status of)**

128. Dr. Rai Ragbir (*Cumuto/Manzanilla*) asked the hon. Minister of Rural Development and Local Government:

Will the Minister inform this House of the status of the Secondary Road Rehabilitation and Improvement Company Limited?

The Minister of Works and Transport (Sen. The Hon. Rohan Sinanan): Thank you. Madam Speaker, I will take the question as well.

Madam Speaker: Minister of Works and Transport.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Thank you. Madam Speaker, in fiscal 2022, the Secondary Road Rehabilitation and Improvement Company Limited was established to develop existing road infrastructure of the secondary road network. The responsibility of the company was added to the portfolio of the Ministry of Works and Transport with effect from 3rd March, 2023. The Ministry of Works and Transport is currently working along with the company to plan scoping and execution of projects. Thank you.

T&T Citizenship Application

(Tests regarding Laws and Rules of Governance)

129. Mr. Rodney Charles (*Naparima*) asked the hon. Minister of National Security:

Will the Minister state whether foreign nationals, who apply to obtain Trinidad and Tobago citizenship are tested on their knowledge of our laws and rules of governance?

The Minister of National Security (Hon. Fitzgerald Hinds): Thank you yet again, Madam Speaker. To apply and to be considered for Trinidad and Tobago citizenship, applicants are required to fulfil the requirements as laid out in the Citizenship Act of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Section 7(1) of the Act states and I quote:

“...the Minister may cause any person of full age and capacity to whom this section applies to be registered as a citizen of Trinidad and Tobago if that person makes a prescribed application for registration to the Minister and satisfies the Minister—

- (a) that he is of good character;
- (b) that he has an adequate knowledge of the English language and of the duties of a citizen of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago;
- (c) that he has either resided in Trinidad and Tobago or has been in the service of the Government, or has had partly such residence and partly such service, throughout the period of five years, or such shorter period (not being less than twelve months) as Minister may in the special circumstances of any particular case accept, immediately preceding the date of his application.”

Unquote. Applications for citizenship are submitted to the Citizenship and Residency Unit of the Ministry of National Security which is charged with managing the process. Subsequent to the applicant satisfying the stipulated criteria, officers of the Immigration Division of the Ministry of National Security conduct verification interviews with the applicants as a second step in the

validation process and procedures.

Mr. Charles: Is the Minister aware that in the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States, applicants for citizenship are required to pass a test that tests their knowledge of their Constitution and the major institutions of governance in the country, respective countries, so that when they become citizens, they are apprised of how the governance situation operates? The question is do we have an example like in the United States and in the UK?

Hon. F. Hinds: I am aware of many, many, many things. I have just outlined the procedure that obtains in Trinidad and Tobago in accordance with the laws of Trinidad and Tobago, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Charles: Do the laws of Trinidad and Tobago, the procedure you have outlined, allow for a test to ascertain the competence of the applicant to understand how the country operates?

Madam Speaker: Member, I think that question has been asked in two forms and answered. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Dragon Gas Field

(Negotiations with Venezuelan Government)

130. Mr. David Lee (*Pointe-a-Pierre*) asked the hon. Minister of Energy and Energy Industries:

Given the Minister's statement in the post-Cabinet briefing as reported in the Trinidad and Tobago Newsday on February 23, 2023 that, "in the second week of March he will be visiting Caracas to continue negotiations with the Venezuelan Government on the Dragon Gas Field deal, will the Minister state:

- a) the Members of the Venezuelan Government who were present at the negotiations;

- b) whether the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of Venezuela have agreed on any terms of payment to monetise the Dragon Gas Field in light of the Government of the United States of America stipulation; and
- c) the commodity that has been offered or highlighted to be used as payment in lieu of money, in light of the stipulations by the United States of America?

Madam Speaker: Minister of Energy and Energy Industries.

The Minister of Energy and Energy Industries and Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Hon. Stuart Young): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the Members of the Venezuelan Government who were present at the recent negotiations that I attended along with a Trinidad and Tobago delegation, included Mr. Pedro Rafael Tellechea who at the time was the President of PDVSA, Mr. Juan Santana, the President of PDVSA Gas, and Ms. Annabelle Rivas, the legal advisor to PDVSA.

Madam Speaker, contrary to the narrative that is being attempted right now, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago continues to be in very active negotiations and discussions with both the Government of Venezuela as well as PDVSA with respect to the Dragon gas production.

Madam Speaker: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Development of Dragon Gas Field

(Commencement Date of Licence)

131. Mr. David Lee (*Pointe-a-Pierre*) asked the hon. Minister of Energy and Energy Industries:

Given that the Government of the United States of America granted a two-year license to develop the Dragon Gas field, will the Minister state the

expected commencement date of this license?

The Minister of Energy and Energy Industries and Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Hon. Stuart Young): Madam Speaker, the OFAC licence will commence when the negotiations are concluded and all relevant issues resolved.

Madam Speaker: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Minister, based on what your response is, could you state a timeline when you feel the negotiations would be completed?

Hon. S. Young: Madam Speaker, this question is directly in relation to the OFAC licence that was granted on or around the 24th of January of this year. We continue to be in discussions.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Minister, just for clarity, when the negotiations have been completed, could you say if then the two-year licence would then begin?

Hon. S. Young: Madam Speaker, I do not want to be premature at this stage. Let us await for the passage of time and the outcome of the discussions that are taking place, and as with everything else, at the appropriate time, the relevant announcements will be made as were made immediately upon the issuance of the OFAC licence on the 24th of January this year by the hon. Prime Minister.

New Cut Channel River Banks in Woodland

(Details of)

138. Mr. Davendranath Tancoo (*Oropouche West*) asked the hon. Minister of Energy and Energy Industries:

Given that Heritage Petroleum Company Limited has agreed to rebuild the river banks of the New Cut Channel in Woodland, will the Minister advise:

a) when repair works will resume to the river banks; and

b) the expected completion date?

The Minister of Energy and Energy Industries and Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Hon. Stuart Young): Madam Speaker, Heritage Petroleum Company Limited has committed to the reinstatement of the embankment on the South Oropouche River at Woodland for approximately one kilometre from Main Road towards the pipeline right-of-way. Material was brought and compacted to access the pipeline in response to a loss of primary containment event. In consultation with the Ministry of Works and Transport, Drainage Division, it was decided that the repair strategy would be executed in two phases. Phase one, a narrow temporary embankment to contain the river flow while still allowing access to complete the pipeline works. Phase two, the final Ministry of Works and Transport approved dimensions post-pipeline upgrade.

Heritage has since completed phase one, the embankment repair, since September 2022 and this has allowed for the containment of the river as it reasonably practicable. The subsequent pipeline upgrade works were completed in February 2023 and the site has been demobilized. The design and acceptance of phase two embankment has been completed and approved by the Ministry of Works and Transport. Subsequently, Heritage has issued a purchase order to a capable contractor for execution of the works and is requesting the support of the Ministry of Works and Transport to lead the community engagement such that the work can commence on phase two construction.

Madam Speaker, I am told that the latest estimate is the project is expected to commence by May 2023 with a duration of three months.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, hon. Minister. Can you advise who the contractor is that was selected for this particular purpose?

Hon. S. Young: Madam Speaker, this Minister certainly does not get involved in

who the contractor is and on this occasion, I do not have that information.

Mr. Tancoo: Can the Minister commit therefore to provide that information to this honourable House when it becomes available to himself?

Hon. S. Young: Madam Speaker, if the appropriate question is asked in the normal manner as pursuant to the Standing Orders, I am sure that the appropriate response will be provided.

National Drainage Plan

(Status of)

139. Mr. Davendranath Tancoo (*Oropouche West*) asked the hon. Minister of Works and Transport:

Given the Minister's statement as reported in the Trinidad and Tobago Newsday on May 24, 2020 that a National Drainage Plan was being developed with funding from the Corporacion Andina de Fomento (CAF) Development Bank, will the Minister provide an update on the status of the National Drainage Plan?

The Minister of Works and Transport (Sen. The Hon. Rohan Sinanan):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The work under the Andean Development Bank in respect to the National Drainage Plan was divided into two strategic action plans out of which will flow projects for development. At this stage, approximately 20 projects have been identified for design, review and tender preparation. These projects are in various stages of development. I thank you.

2.30 p.m.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 2178

(Details of Detained Nationals)

152. Mr. Dinesh Rambally (*Chaguanas West*) asked the hon. Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs: In light of Trinidad and Tobago's adoption

of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2178, will the hon. Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs state:

- a) what policy, if any, has the Government implemented to treat with detained nationals who are children in Syria, Iraq and/or Turkey and whose families are seeking assistance to have them returned; and
- b) the guidelines which are being employed by the State in considering the repatriation of children in Syria, Iraq and/or Turkey?

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (Sen. The Hon. Reginald Armour SC): Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago as a Member State of the United Nations is fully committed towards ensuring the continuous implementation of its mandate United Nations Security Resolution 2178. In so doing, the Government recognizes the need to take all appropriate steps to repatriate its nationals who are detained in declared geographical zones and/or conflict zones.

As the Member ought to be aware, the hon. Prime Minister, Dr. Keith Rowley, as Head of the National Security Council and other Government Ministers, including the Attorney General, held a formal meeting at Whitehall on Monday 27 March, 2023 with a team appointed by the hon. Prime Minister as Head of National Security Council, consisting of former Speaker of the House of Representatives Mr. Nizam Mohammed, Mr. Kwesi Atiba and Mr. Patrick Edwards. The meeting focused on, and is a work in progress undertaking, aimed towards developing a framework and guidelines for the modalities and process, for locating and the repatriation of said nationals and communicating with their families in the meantime who are seeking assistance to have them returned.

Of paramount importance to the Government, Madam Speaker, is safeguarding the welfare and rights of all nationals, including children who are in these conflict zones in Syria and Turkey.

The Government continues to progress through the ongoing work and is dedicated to promoting appropriate physical, psychological, psychosocial, secure and social reintegration of its nationals, including children. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Member for Chaguanas West.

Question No. 153

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (Sen. The Hon. Reginald Armour SC): Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Government's policy with regard to designating persons as "foreign terrorist fighters" is reflected in the definition of the term, as the Member would be aware as an attorney-at-law, within the Anti-Terrorism Act, Chap. 12:07, the ATA, as follows:

"'foreign terrorist fighter' means an individual who commits an offence under section 15A;"

—of that Act. Section 15A of the Act criminalizes the offence of travelling:

"...for the purposes of—

- (a) planning a terrorist act;
- (b) committing a terrorist act;
- (c) supporting a terrorist act; or
- (d) facilitating the commission of a terrorist act..."

—with a penalty—"...of a fine of twenty-five million dollars and to imprisonment for twenty-five years."

In relation to the second item, Madam Speaker, the Government's policy with regard to designating persons as "designated entities" is section 22B of the

Anti-Terrorism Act, as the learned Attorney-at-Law, the Member for Chaguanas West will know, for designation of individuals and entities and the application of targeted financial sanctions related to terrorism and terrorist financing. In this regard, Trinidad and Tobago has designated all individuals and entities on the United Nations Security Council 1267(1999) Da'esh and Al-Qaida and the UN Security Council 1988 (2011) Taliban Sanctions List, wherein 140 individuals and entities have been listed by the Government up to April 2023.

As pertains to part (b) of the Member's question, the Government is working assiduously to locate and to repatriate Trinidad and Tobago nationals from declared geographical and/or conflict zones in Syria and Turkey, consistent with the work in progress undertaking, aimed towards developing a framework, guidelines, modalities and a process for the location and repatriation of nationals, in accordance with the existing domestic legal framework and in reliance upon cooperation with foreign diplomatic relations in Syria and Turkey. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Member for Caroni East.

Crime Mitigation Plans

(Cunupia Area)

123. Dr. Rishad Seecheran (*Caroni East*) asked the Hon. Minister of National Security: Given that a triple murder at Hassarath Road and a double murder outside Roxbury Bar, Southern Main Road Cunupia, have occurred, will the Minister state what crime mitigation plans, if any, will be implemented to curb the escalating numbers of murders in the Cunupia area?

The Minister of National Security (Hon. Fitzgerald Hinds): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. According to information received from the Commissioner of Police, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service is fully cognizant and deeply concerned about the rising murder rate in the Cunupia area, and indeed

across the entire country.

The Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, as the front-line agency, under law, in the fight against crime and criminality, continues to utilize the available resources to reduce all violent crimes, including homicide. In this regard, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service has recently launched and implemented a violent crime reduction plan, which was brought to my attention and of which I have a copy, built on the following golden pillars: precision, intelligence, prevention, pro-activity and prosecution. This plan is aimed at focusing on all criminal activities throughout Trinidad and Tobago, inclusive, of course, of the Cunupia district, with particular attention to identify small geographic locations known as hotspots that have a high incidence of violent crime.

There are 15 objectives for successful implementation which are identified in the violent crime reduction plan, some of which are: dismantling of criminal gangs, because they account for a large chunk of the murders that we experience in the land; seizing illegal firearms, which the statistics revealed 87 per cent of the murders that we had last year were as a consequence of the presence and use of illegal firearms or firearms; eradicating drug blocks; precision policing, having identified priority offenders; increasing focus on transnational organized crime; controlling movements on our roadways and public spaces; and enhancing police intelligence capabilities. To this end, the expected outcomes would be aimed at achieving 11 targets, two of which are: one, a 20 per cent reduction of homicides and a 30 per cent detection rate for homicides, as set out in the violent crime reduction plan as devised by the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. With this plan, a significant decrease in the said crimes is anticipated, thereby improving the quality of life in all communities across Trinidad and Tobago, not the least, of course, Cunupia. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Minister, given the fact that persons can be murdered less than 100meters from the Cunupia Police Station, when will you see it fit to install CCTV cameras in this hotspot area?

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Hon. F. Hinds: Madam Speaker, as I have indicated in this honourable House very recently and on diverse occasions, the Government, recognizing the importance of CCTV cameras to assist law-enforcement, in particular the police, have revamped the entire CCTV platform across Trinidad and Tobago. And as we speak, Madam Speaker, the project for the installation of—2,500 cutting-edge cameras are being installed. That takes into account, all over Trinidad and Tobago, not the least Cunupia. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you. Minister, given the proliferation of gun violence in this area, will you be willing to recommend a gun amnesty to allow illegal guns to be taken off the streets and destroyed?

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Hon. F. Hinds: I have just taken great pains to outline what the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service's plan in dealing with this issue is concerned. My own view as to whether I would recommend a gun amnesty is a matter for other considerations. What I am focused on is to make sure and support, in terms of resources and in every possible way, a plan as determined for the purpose of the police service, led by the Police Commissioner.

Madam Speaker: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Minister, is there any intention to return to the partnership initiative of community comfort patrols?

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Hon. F. Hinds: Again, Madam Speaker, I have outlined precisely what the police service has indicated is their formula as experts and professionals under law, to treat with the matter in front of us.

Madam Speaker: Member for Caroni East.

**Pfizer's Paxlovid
(Acquisition of)**

124. Dr. Rishad Seecheran (*Caroni East*) asked the Hon. Minister of Health: Will the Minister provide an update on the acquisition of Pfizer's Paxlovid (Nirmatrelvir/Ritonavir) tablets to treat COVID-19 positive patients in our nation's public healthcare institutions?

The Minister of Health (Hon. Terrence Deyalsingh): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The Government continues to explore all options as it relates to the procurement of the antiviral therapy Paxlovid; namely one, via the CARICOM Secretariat where a request was made on February 02, 2022, that is a year and two months ago; and two, bilateral arrangements with international manufacturers.

Madam Speaker: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Seecheran: Minister, given that 3,700 deaths out of 4,400 deaths were unvaccinated persons from COVID-19, why was this not given more of a priority by this Government in reducing hospitalization and death due to Covid-19 in vulnerable persons?

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: Thank you. The Member is unaware, because he is not in Government, about the geopolitical forces that are at play. And I will quote from Prof. Ali Mokdad, because I anticipated the question:

“Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation...only high income...and the

rich

in several countries, are able to access the drug at the moment.”

Oxfam:

“...quarter of...”—Paxlovid—“will go to developing countries”

—only; only quarter. These are issues that you saw with the same thing with vaccines, where the rich were hoarding vaccines and then had nothing to do with them, and countries like ours could not get vaccines. This same is applied to Paxlovid. And I urge the Member, I urge the Member to understand this. He is not in government, I appreciate that, but the Government is doing all that it can, within the constraints of international trade, to procure Paxlovid.

Madam Speaker: Member for Caroni East.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Dr. Seecheran: Minister, given what you have just said and that Paxlovid has been strongly recommended by the WHO, what approved therapeutics is the Ministry of Health using to save unvaccinated persons?

Madam Speaker: Member, I would not allow that as a supplemental question under the Standing Orders, based on the question asked and the answers given.
Member for Caroni East.

Construction of Bridge at Lalloo Trace, Cunupia (Update on Status)

125. Dr. Rishad Seecheran (*Caroni East*) asked the hon. Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries: Further to the response provided to House of Representatives Question No. 19 on November 11, 2022, will the Minister provide an update on the status of the bridge being constructed at Lalloo Trace, Cunupia?

Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries (Sen. The Hon. Avinash Singh): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the hon. Member should know that the bridge in question was completed in February 2023 and vehicular traffic has been using it since March 2023. However, there still remains some tidying-up of operations and finishes to be completed, such as the cleaning of the watercourses surrounding the bridge, which the contractor shall be undertaking during the course of the end of this month into early next month. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you. Minister, was this bridge intended to be a dual carriageway? Because the residents are complaining that only one single lane of traffic can pass on this bridge at any given time.

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Sen. The Hon. A. Singh: Madam Speaker, the bridge in question is fit for purpose, as it is an agricultural access bridge.

Madam Speaker: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Seecheran: Minister, when will the ramps and the bridge be paved, as it is currently sand and proving to be a hazard to the adjacent houses and residents?

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Sen. The Hon. A. Singh: Madam Speaker, once the weather permits, the contractor will complete the works between this month and early May.

Madam Speaker: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you Madam Speaker. Minister, the Ministry of Works has asked land owners to allow for the realignment of the river as the bridge was not correctly positioned and has created a large lagoon on the western side. Why was this not foreseen before the construction of the bridge?

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Sen. The Hon. A. Singh: Madam Speaker, I am sure if the hon. Member poses that question he would get the appropriate answer.

Madam Speaker: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Seecheran: Minister, what will the Ministry of Works do in the short term to prevent the breeding of deadly *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes and other vectors of disease in this area?

Madam Speaker: Okay. So, Member, I cannot allow that question under the Standing Orders as a supplemental question.

2.45 p.m.

Madam Speaker: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

NiQuan Plant

(Details of)

133. Mr. David Lee (*Pointe-a-Pierre*) asked the hon. Minister of Energy and Energy Industries:

Further to the response provided to House of Representatives Question No. 6 on October 10, 2022, regarding the NiQuan Plant, will the Minister state:

- a) whether the plant is operational and producing products for commercial sale;
- b) the specific taxes and amounts paid to the Government during the period April 01, 2021 to December 31, 2022; and
- c) the quantity of gas purchased monthly from the Trinidad and Tobago Upstream Downstream Energy Operations Company Limited?

Madam Speaker: Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries.

The Minister of Energy and Energy Industries and Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Hon. Stuart Young): Thank you very much, Madam

Speaker. Madam Speaker, yes, NiQuan's plant is operational and has produced product for commercial sale. The company has transferred on spec products to the storage tanks of Paria Fuel Trading Company Limited, NiQuan's offtaker, to make up a cargo for sale by Paria on the international market. The NiQuan plant is currently down for works intended to improve plant performance and is expected to be up towards the end of the month as they also work towards a gas supply.

NiQuan has paid no taxes for the period April 01, 2021 to December 31, 2022, as the company generated no revenue during that period. The company is currently building up a cargo for sale by Paria on the international market. The NiQuan Plant was down for one year from April 2021 and recommenced operations on May 28, 2022.

Gas purchases during the period May 2022 to February 2023 varied between 129.04 MMcf per month, to 631.4 MMcf per month as follows: for May 28, 2022 to June 30, 2022 purchased 129.4 MMcf; July 2022, 321.21 MMcf; August 2022, 374.70 MMcf; September 2022, 364.49 MMcf; October 2022, 421.06 MMcf; November 2022, 631.43 MMcf; December 2022, 323.89 MMcf; January 2023, 380.14 MMcf; and February 2023, 456.83 MMcf.

Madam Speaker: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

2021 Competitive Bid Rounds

(Details of)

134. Mr. David Lee (*Pointe-a-Pierre*) asked the hon. Minister of Energy and Energy Industries:

Given that the successful bids for the 2021 Competitive Bid Rounds were to be announced by September 2022 or three months after the close of the Bid Round in June 2022 as indicated by the Ministry's Bid Round timeline, will the Minister state

- a) the reasons for the delay in the announcement of the successful bids;
- b) whether the delay is as a result of the bids not meeting the requirements of the Government;
- c) whether the delay is as result of a consortium which jointly bid on the four blocks requiring more attractive or competitive terms from the Government; and
- d) expected date that the successful bids will be announced?

Madam Speaker: Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries.

The Minister of Energy and Energy Industries and Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Hon. Stuart Young): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries at the close of the deepwater bids on June 02, 2022, for the 2021/2022 Deep Water Bid Round, received bids from a consortium of bp, EOG, and BG, a subsidiary of Shell, on four deepwater blocks, 23B, 25A, 25B and 27. Following the evaluation of the bids, an interministerial team was appointed by the Cabinet to negotiate with the bidders, acceptable terms for the award of production sharing contracts on the four blocks.

It was projected that the evaluation of bids would be completed within three months. However, the technical and commercial considerations associated with deepwater exploration and development have led to lengthy negotiations. On one hand, improved viability of deepwater and tightening supply/demand gaps are driving the market. This is balanced by volatile crude oil prices, instability in the oil and gas industry, and higher challenges in developing deepwater prospects.

It is in this scenario that the parties are seeking to arrive at equitable terms that will accrue to the mutual benefit of the people of Trinidad and Tobago as a resource holder, and the bidders as key stakeholders and investors in Trinidad and

Tobago's deepwater province. The negotiations are in the final stages, and the report and recommendations of the interministerial team are expected to be submitted shortly for the consideration of the Cabinet, following which an appropriate announcement will be made on the outcome of these negotiations.

And through you, Madam Speaker, I remind the population that this is the deepwater province that so far is a very unexplored province and right now we are looking at negotiating with one of our major producers, Woodside, the first commercial terms for the development of this deepwater province. And that is where the priority is and will continue to be, so that we can bring home the production of deepwater that will then flow into these negotiations of the other blocks.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, the time allotted for Questions on Notice is now spent. The unanswered questions will be postponed to the next sitting of the House in accordance with Standing Order 29(10).

EXPIRATION OF QUESTION TIME

Question time having expired, the following questions (135, 136, 140, 141, and 142) were not dealt with:

Retired Justices Rolston Nelson SC and Mr. Justice Stanley John

(Terms and Conditions of Employment)

135. Further to the response provided to a Prime Minister's Question on February 03, 2023, will the hon. Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs inform this House of the terms and conditions that were agreed upon to employ the services of the Retired Justices Rolston Nelson, SC and Mr. Justice Stanley John (Retired) to assist in the investigation of the missing Vindra Naipaul-Coolman's case file? [*Mr. Indarsingh*]

**Factory Road, Brechin Castle and Camden Base Road
(Commencement of Rehabilitation Works)**

136. Further to the response provided to House of Representatives Question No. 13 on November 04, 2022, will the hon. Minister of Works and Transport state when rehabilitation works along Factory Road, Brechin Castle and the Camden Base Road in Couva will commence? [*Mr. Indarsingh*]

**Flood Management Master Plan
(Update on Status)**

140. Given the Minister's statement as reported in the Trinidad and Tobago Newsday on May 24, 2020 that "in March 2020, Trinidad and Tobago received US \$495,000 (TT\$3.37 million) non-repayable grant by Corporacion Andina de Fomento (CAF) Development Bank to be used for the creation of a Flood Management Master Plan to address the nation's perennial challenges with drainage and flooding", will the hon. Minister of Works and Transport provide an update on the status of the Flood Management Master Plan? [*Mr. Tancoo*]

**Coromata River Banks
(Resumption of Repair Works)**

141. Will the hon. Minister of Works and Transport advise when the cleaning, dredging and repair works of the Coromata River banks along Suchit Trace, Penal will resume? [*Mr. Tancoo*]

**Black Water River
(Commencement of Works)**

142. Will the hon. Minister of Works and Transport advise when the cleaning, dredging and repair works of the banks of the Black Water river will commence? [*Mr. Tancoo*]

STATEMENT BY MINISTER**Judge's Visit to the Port of Spain Prison****(Details of)**

Madam Speaker: The Minister of National Security.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

The Minister of National Security (Hon. Fitzgerald Hinds): Thank you very kindly, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I have been authorized by the Cabinet to make the following statement. On March 29, 2023, a request was received by the Commissioner of Prisons, from the Registrar and Marshal of the Supreme Court of Trinidad and Tobago, for an intended visit by the hon. Mr. Justice Frank Seepersad to the Port of Spain Prison scheduled for April 20, 2023, with accompanying persons. Court order CV2023-00792 accompanied that request.

On the basis on this court order, declarations were made in relation to the substantive matter and the order stated that costs were to be assessed. No mention was made of “damages.”

In the course of the usual arrangements for such visits, requests were made for the submission of the names and designations of all the persons who the judge intended to accompany him on the visit. A preliminary list was submitted to the Commissioner of Prisons on April 04, 2023, in this regard. Via subsequent oral communications, the Registrar and Marshal informed the Commissioner of Prisons that the judge intended to be accompanied by the media.

Given that the order had made no mention of “damages” to be assessed and hearing of intended accompaniment of the media, the Commissioner was unclear as to the purpose of the judge's visit. However, he proceeded to make the necessary provisions. As required, the Commissioner of Prisons informed the Minister of National Security of the intended visit of the learned judge and of the

persons who were to accompany the judge. As Minister of National Security with responsibility for the prison service, I requested that the Commissioner of Prisons ascertain the reason for the visit, given that the order had made no mention of “damages” or “damages to be assessed”.

As a consequence of the subsequent publicly expressed disquiet in relation to this series of events, I wish to remind this Parliament that the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service is an arm of the criminal justice system and a division of the Ministry of National Security. As such, it was well within my authority and purview, as the Minister with the responsibility for National Security, to ascertain the nature of the visit, and particularly so since a journalist, who was named, was to be a member of the intended entourage.

While an official visitor, as defined in the prison regulations, is entitled to visit the prison pursuant to the Prisons Rules, this privilege certainly does not automatically extend to members of an accompanying entourage. Thus, in circumstances where the intended visitors are not themselves official visitors, as so defined, the Commissioner of Prisons is duty-bound to make the requisite enquiries.

Finally, as articulately and accurately described by a media release issued by the Judiciary on April 21, 2023, visits to the prison by judicial officers are regularly facilitated by the Commissioner of Prisons. However, the nature of each request must be evaluated, so that the necessary safety measures and logistical preparations can be made to ensure that these visits are without incident. In this particular case, questions were asked, and for good reason. Answers were provided, and the visit was therefore properly planned. The visit, like many others that have been arranged over the years, came off quite successfully and without incident.

I wish to reiterate that as a member of the Executive arm of the State and a long-standing legal practitioner myself, I certainly recognize, and understand, and fully appreciate the mutual respect and comity that is required to ensure the separation of powers is strictly observed, whilst all of the arms of the State work together cooperatively in the interest of the State.

I therefore thank you warmly, Madam Speaker, for an opportunity to have delivered this statement as authorized by the Cabinet. I thank you.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: I would like to ask the Minister of National Security, in taking such a decision to seek clarification, did you consult at all with the head of the National Security Council, the Prime Minister?

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. F. Hinds: Madam Speaker, as I indicated a while ago, I was authorized to make this statement by the Cabinet of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: The Attorney General.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

**Implementation of United Nations Resolutions
on the Islamic Republic of Iran Order, 2023**

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (Sen. The Hon. Reginald Armour SC): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the following Motion in my name:

Whereas by section 4 of the Economic Sanctions Act, Chap. 81:05 the President may for the purpose of implementing a decision, resolution or recommendation by a regional or an international organisation of States or

association of States, of which Trinidad and Tobago is a member, that calls on its members to take economic measures against a foreign State make an Order with respect to—

- (a) the restriction or prohibition of any of the activities referred to in section 5 in relation to a foreign State;
- (b) the seizing, freezing or sequestration in the manner set out in the Order any property situated in Trinidad and Tobago that is held by or on behalf of—
 - (i) a foreign State;
 - (ii) any person in that foreign State; or
 - (iii) a national of that foreign State who does not ordinarily reside in Trinidad and Tobago.
- (c) the exclusion of any person, property, goods, technical data, services, transactions, ships or aircraft or any class thereof from the application of the Order.

And whereas the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 2231 (2015) relative to Iran, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) and its successor resolution, Member Countries of the United Nations were called on to impose economic sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran;

And whereas Trinidad and Tobago is required to implement the Financial Action Task Force's Recommendations 7 relative to the Islamic Republic of Iran which requires that countries implement target financial sanctions to comply with United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) relating to the prevention, suppression and disruption of proliferation of

weapons of mass destruction and its financing;

And whereas the aforementioned resolutions require countries to freeze without delay the funds and other assets of, and to ensure that no funds and other assets are made available, directly or indirectly, to or for the benefit of, any person or entity designated by, or under the authority of, the United Nations Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations;

And whereas the President, by Legal Notice No. 83 of 2023 signed the Economic Sanctions (Implementation of United Nations Resolutions on the Islamic Republic of Iran) Order, 2023;

And whereas the President, in accordance with section 4(4) of the Economic Sanctions Act, Chap. 81:05, did cause to be delivered on the 27th day of March, 2023 to the Speaker for presentation to the House of Representatives a statement setting out the specific grounds on which the decision to make the Order was based;

And whereas section 4(4) requires the statement of Her Excellency the President, be debated as soon as practicable but in any event not later than one month from the date of commencement of the Order:

Be it resolved that the Statement of Her Excellency the President, pursuant to section 4(4) of the Economic Sanctions Act, Chap. 81:05, setting out the specific grounds on which the decision to make the Economic Sanctions (Implementation of United Nations Resolutions on the Islamic Republic of Iran) Order, 2023 was based, be approved.

3.00 p.m.

Implementation of United Nations
Resolutions on the Islamic Republic of Iran
Order, 2023
Sen. The Hon. R. Armour SC (cont'd)

2023.04.26

Madam Speaker, it is accepted, and we are proudly, as Trinidad and Tobago, a member of the United Nations family of nations, and are obligated to comply with and adhere to the regulation—the obligations, pronounced on and passed by due resolution of the United Nations. It is critical in this regard, to underscore, that this Motion is premised on the requirement for Trinidad and Tobago to continue implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 of (2015) as a Member State of the United Nations and in alignment with our obligations to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), as it is known by that acronym, as well as the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, (CFATF).

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Madam Speaker, as a member of the United Nations, is thereby bound to specific international obligations in accordance with the mandates of the United Nations. This includes, but is not limited, to the duty to implement those resolutions, imposing targeted financial sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran, specifically and its successor resolutions. Resolution 2231 of (2015):

“...provides for the termination of the provisions of previous Security Council resolutions on the Iranian nuclear issue and establishes specific restrictions that apply to all”—Member—“States without”—restriction.

Madam Speaker, additionally, and in furtherance of obligations pursuant to the recommendations of FATF, the Financial Action Task Force, Trinidad and Tobago is required to comply with recommendation (7), which mandates:

“...countries should implement targeted financial sanctions to comply with United Nations Security resolutions relating to the prevention, suppression

and disruption of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and its financing.”

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Madam Speaker, poses a significant threat to international peace and security as identified by the relevant United Nations Resolutions. FATF recommendations require countries and the private sector to identify and assess the risk of potential breaches non-implementation, or evasion of the targeted financial sanctions, relating to proliferation financing and to take appropriate mitigating measures commensurate with the level of risks identified.

This will ensure that private sector entities, for example, domestic banks and financial institutions and their supervisors; in Trinidad and Tobago, our three regulators are the Central Bank, the Trinidad and Tobago Securities Exchange Commission, and the Financial Intelligence Unit of Trinidad and Tobago, are aware of the risks involved in their businesses and professions and do not unwittingly, support or become part of proliferation financing networks or schemes in contravention of relevant obligations. This will also ensure Madam Speaker, appropriate allocation of resources by countries and private sector entities commensurate with the level of proliferation financing risks which are faced.

As a standard setting body, FATF developed specific requirements to give effect to and implement these United Nations Security Council Resolutions, specifically on targeted financial sanctions to counter proliferation. FATF’s robust assessment process places FATF in the unique position of being able to evaluate how effective a national accounting proliferation financing regime is. Essentially, Madam Speaker, jurisdictions must ensure that proliferation related assets are

frozen and have national mechanisms in place to do so effectively, understanding their obligations to the United Nations Security Council Resolutions and implementing effective measures to tackle the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terminate sanctions, evasion sanctions, can be challenging for certain jurisdictions.

Diplomatic efforts to reach a comprehensive long term and proper resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue culminated in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action concluded on the 14th of July 2015. On the 20th of July 2015, the security council unanimously adopted UN Security Resolution 2231 of 2015 and endorsing the JCPOA, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. The security council affirmed the conclusion of the JCPOA marked a fundamental shift, in his consideration of the Iranian nuclear issue, expressed its desire to build a new relationship with Iran strengthened by the implementation of the JCPOA and to bring to a satisfactory conclusion its consideration of this matter. United Nations Security Council Resolution provides for the termination of provisions of previous security council resolutions on the Iranian nuclear issue and establishes specific restrictions that apply to all states without exception. Member States are obligated under Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations to accept and carry out the security council's decisions. Madam Speaker, without going into detail, it suffices that I record that Annex B of Resolution 2231 of 2015, also requires all States to take a number of actions to which this country Trinidad and Tobago is committed.

Madam Speaker, if I may continue, recognizing its international obligations in this regard, Trinidad and Tobago enacted domestic legislation, the Economic Sanctions Act, Chap. 81:05, to provide the domestic legal basis upon which this

country can implement resolutions made by an international organization of states of which Trinidad is a member, and which calls on its members to take economic measures against foreign States. Pursuant to section 4 of this Act, the Economic Sanctions Act, the Economic Sanctions (Implementation of United Nations Resolutions on the Islamic Republic of Iran) Order, 2018, was promulgated as Legal Notice No. 15 of January 17th 2019, so as to comply with the mandates of United Nations Security Resolution 2231 of 2015. Section 4 (3) of the Act provides that:

“subject to subsection (5), an Order made under”—section 4—“subsection (1) shall, unless previously revoked, remain in force for three months.”

In this vein by Legal Notice No. 44 of March 12th 2019, the Iran Order was extended in certain respects, and remains regulated as part of our domestic law. Section 4 (5) of that Act also provides that:

“Before...”—the expiration of an Order made under section 4—
“...subsection (3), the Order may be extended, either indefinitely or for a specified period, by a resolution supported by a simple majority of the House of Representatives”

In light of that fact, United Nations Security Resolution 2231 (2015), and the mandates in the annexes there to remain in effect, and clauses 21 to 23 of the Iran Order have expired, the time has now come, Madam Speaker, to establish a new order to ensure the Trinidad and Tobago’s obligations are encapsulated in law and compliance is maintained, consistent with our international obligations pursuant to our internationally-mandated and FATF-mandated recommendations.

Pursuant then to our domestic law, consistent with our international obligations, the Legislative Drafting Department and the Anti-Terrorism Unit of the Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago has been working assiduously on this matter, to ensure that the necessary steps are taken and the appropriate instruments drafted to effectively and efficiently fulfill Trinidad and Tobago's international obligations. It is in this regard then that the Economic Sanctions (Implementation of United Nations Resolution on the Islamic Republic of Iran) Order, 2023, tabled before this House, this honourable House, has been prepared.

In summary, the Iran 2023 Order will fulfill our international obligations in respect of prohibiting dealings with Iran pursuant to clauses 14 to 21, and targeted financial sanctions in respect of FATF and other prohibitions to prevent funds and other assets from being made available, directly or indirectly, for the benefit of designated individuals and entities—listed entities—under the Order. Clauses 3 to 10 of the Iran Order set out the asset freeze and clauses 11 to 13 provide for prohibited dealings with listed entities.

Madam Speaker, today's Motion demonstrates this Government's continued commitment towards ensuring implementation of the respective United Nations Security Council resolution obligations and the FATF standards as part of the domestic law of Trinidad and Tobago. Accordingly, Madam Speaker, I beg to move.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Question proposed.

Madam Speaker: Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Barry Padarath: Thank you Madam Speaker, for the opportunity to contribute to today's debate. Madam Speaker, today we are being asked to support the statement by Her Excellency the President with respect to Resolution 2231 of 2015, which deals with Economic Sanctions (Implementation of United Nations Resolutions on the Islamic Republic of Iran) Order, 2023.

Madam Speaker, in light of the support for this statement, with respect to the Implementation of United Nations Resolution on the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the Order that goes with it, it deals with the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which constitutes a substantial threat to both domestic and international peace and security. It says:

It is the right of every person to be protected from fear, intimidation and physical harm, caused by weapons of mass destruction.

It has become necessary to implement measures to prevent and disruptive financing of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and Trinidad and Tobago is required by virtue of its international obligations, to implement international instruments for the purpose of suppressing the financing of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

3.15 p.m.

Madam Speaker, over the past couple of decades, we have seen an intense response from all the nations of the world, particularly those that have been under severe attack on the issue of terrorism, on the issue of mass destruction being a substantial threat to both domestic and international peace and security. And, Madam Speaker, while that is undoubtedly so, and while we, too, in Trinidad and Tobago, lend our support to the economic sanctions, these sanctions came about

several years ago. And in conducting research for today's debate—and I would have hoped that the hon. Attorney General would have addressed some of the burning issues that surround these economic sanctions that have been imposed by the United Nations and their Member States.

Resolution 2231 (2015), Madam Speaker, is not a resolution that is new to Trinidad and Tobago. It is not new to the Office of the Attorney General, it is not new to the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs. Madam Speaker, in a previous incarnation, I had the opportunity to work in the Multilateral Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and having come from a background of international relations and diplomacy, I would have hoped that today that the hon. Attorney General would have used some of his time to go through, from where we first started, with these economic sanctions that were imposed by the concurrence of the United Nations to where we are today.

And, Madam Speaker, one of the things that I did not hear from the Attorney General, I am hoping that we would hear later on, if any other speaker contributes or the AG himself when he is wrapping up, was whether or not the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs or the Office of the Attorney General, held any bilateral or multilateral meetings with Iran and/or stakeholder countries to determine if these economic sanctions are actually working; whether or not the United Nations have had periodic review of these economic sanctions and what has been the outcome of this. Madam Speaker, it cannot be that the Parliament is summoned today, just to lend blanket, bind support to these economic sanctions. While, yes, we understand the circumstances under which we are lending our support to, and the circumstances under which this Order would have been made,

there must be some sort of evaluation in terms of the work, the ongoing work of the Office of the Attorney General, in terms of the Counter Terrorism Unit, but also in terms of the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, to lend a greater degree of awareness of where we are and where we are going. And I will tell you why, Madam Speaker, that I am particularly concerned about that.

Madam Speaker, when you look at the reviews of international multilateral organizations like the World Bank, like the European Union, and even coming out of these subset groups of the United Nations, over the past two to three years, in particular, I can point to information and evidence that is in the public domain, that suggests that the sanctions themselves are being questioned in terms of whether or not they are working, whether or not they are actually achieving the desired result.

Madam Speaker, I turn your attention to September 13, 2021, coming out of the United Nations publications and out of Tehran it said:

“A special United Nations rapporteur has called for the removal of unilateral sanctions on Iran in a report that details the effect of decades of embargos on the country”—but also in terms of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

“In the report, published on Monday, Alena Douhan, whose role is focused on the negative result of the sanctions, said that they had affected nearly every aspect of life in the country, and called for them to be lifted.

According to Douhan, even as medicines and food are supposed to be exempt from sanctions, general licenses issued by the US Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) aimed at ensuring exemptions ‘appeared to be ineffective and nearly non-existent’.

She said delivery of...”—many of the supplies—“was ‘severely undermined’ by the effects of sanctions on finance, trade, shipping, insurance and over-compliance on the part of foreign businesses and suppliers.

‘These constitute serious impediments to the enjoyment of the right to the highest attainable standard of health by all Iranians.’

Sanctions have been imposed on Iran since 1979, when the country’s Islamic revolution took place.

The overwhelming majority of the many layers of sanctions have been imposed by the United States, but others including the European Union, Australia and Canada also have a history of blacklisting Iran and are mentioned in the report.

Since 2018, when former US President Donald Trump unilaterally reneged on Iran’s UN-backed 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, Washington has enforced a ‘maximum pressure’ campaign of harsh sanctions that have been expanded by President Joe Biden, even as efforts continue to restore the accord.

The US has said that its sanctions are a response to alleged Iranian efforts to build a nuclear weapon, its actions in the wider Middle East, and repressive behaviour against its citizens.”

Madam Speaker, the response from many of the members of the United Nations, as contained in this particular report, and the effects that it has on Iran in terms of the economic implications, but also the implications as it relates to the nuclear programme and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, it says:

“...continues to be at the centre of its dispute with the US”—as well as many other countries—“with the UN’s nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency...that it was ‘not in a position to provide assurance that Iran’s nuclear programme is exclusively peaceful’.”

Madam Speaker, this was coming out from a subset of the group of the United Nations from which this Motion, 2231, the resolution of the UN has emanated from. And, clearly, it demonstrates, Madam Speaker, that even the organization, the umbrella body, from which this resolution emanated from, they seem to be at conflict with each other, Madam Speaker.

And, as I said, at the very start, while we do not withhold support and we do not see the value of the work of the UN with respect to these economic sanctions in terms of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as the financing of terrorism, et cetera, Madam Speaker, it begs the question as to whether or not these economic sanctions need to be revisited, whether or not they are actually working and whether or not it is giving the desired result that it was meant for. And that was totally absent from the piloting from the hon. Attorney General. Madam Speaker, that was the United Nations.

I turn my attention, Madam Speaker, to what the World Bank had to say on this particular issue. And, Madam Speaker, I am reminded it was just probably about over a year ago, it was the hon. Prime Minister, in a marginal meeting with the President of Iran, who acknowledged—by meeting the President of Iran, Madam Speaker—that this was the bona fide President of Iran who had been accused of so many issues relating to weapons of mass destruction, proliferation of weapons, et cetera—but the head of Government of Trinidad and Tobago, was

photographed engaging in bilateral discussions and we were never really told what those discussions were about, Madam Speaker. And some of what we wanted to hear from the hon. Attorney General, was some of that, in terms of whether or not the economic sanctions were discussed, Trinidad and Tobago's role, Trinidad and Tobago's support—but very little coming from a very unprepared Attorney General in terms of just asking us to give our blanket support with respect to this resolution, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I said with respect to the World Bank, what did the World Bank have to say on this particular issue? And they, too, have joined their voices with respect to the United Nations subsets, as well as the European Union, in terms of their questioning whether or not these economic sanctions are meeting the results that they were intended for.

And, Madam Speaker, if you would allow me, a publication from the World Bank on July 02, 2022, this is what they had to say, and it can be found on their website, Madam Speaker.

“Both the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund estimate Iran's gross domestic product is on track to decline by roughly 9% this year. (Iran's own estimates are lower...) Compare that with the 1970s and late 1980s, when...”—several countries—“imposed sanctions after...hostage at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. At that time, Iran's GDP per capita dropped by 50%, according to...”—their data.

“The World Bank and IMF estimates of economic decline take into account a sharp drop in Iran's oil exports. Before the U.S. pulled out of the 2015 nuclear deal in May 2018, Iran was exporting about 2 million barrels of

crude oil a day. Now it's estimated that Iran exports between 300,000 and 500,000 barrels daily, most of that to China...the founder of Bourse and Bazaar, an organization that tracks developments in Iran's economy.”

Madam Speaker, what the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund did, was that they looked at the sanctions that were imposed by the United Nations, in concurrence with its Member States. But what it also did, Madam Speaker, was measured it. It measured whether or not the economic sanctions were affecting the economy of Iran in any real tangible way, that it would give the desired results that were envisaged by the UN and their member countries, in terms of the impact, the economic impact, it would have on Iran in terms of not just oil production, but its capacity with respect to nuclear weapons and its capacity with respect to the proliferation of arms and ammunition.

Once again, nothing coming from the hon. Attorney General. I do not see the Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs in the Chamber, so I am guessing, Madam Speaker, that we will hear very little about those concerns; the discussions that were held with the Prime Minister and the President of Iran; and the ongoing work with the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, with respect to multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations, the European Union, the World Bank and others, who themselves have been reviewing resolution 2231 (2015), Madam Speaker .

Madam Speaker, the World Bank went on to say:

“But Iran isn't solely reliant on oil...”

And this impacts directly, Madam Speaker, the economic sanctions that have been imposed on Iran. Because you have to look at, Madam Speaker, the financing of

terrorism, the financing of weapons of mass destruction, all of that was taken into consideration when the United Nations and its Member States, in concurrence, went about determining resolution 2231. It said, Madam Speaker:

“The Iranian economy is a very diverse economy, and manufacturing is really one of the most important areas,” he says. “Currently, manufacturing accounts for about one-fifth of overall employment in the country.”

It says:

“...that includes automobiles, metals and plastics. The U.S. sanctions make it difficult for Iranian businesses to access goods needed to make the products, and it’s tough to find customers abroad because there’s fear the Trump administration”—together with others—“will also slap secondary sanctions on any company doing business with Iran.”

—on top of the United Nations sanctions 2231.

Madam Speaker it went on to say:

“...some Iranian manufacturers can stay afloat because of informal payment systems...”

And this has to do with a lot of what the Attorney General, when going through the statement of Her Excellency and the resolution itself, told us about the work of FATF and so on, Madam Speaker. What we are being told is that Iranian manufacturers, they are finding ways around payments, by going through:

“...the informal payment systems that don’t rely on banks to get money in and out of the country...”

3.30 p.m.

Madam Speaker, they said that:

“...certain goods...are not affected by secondary sanctions.

‘They’re really basic goods, like food products or like consumer products, including things like household products, like detergent or shampoo...’—et cetera.

Madam Speaker, Suzanne Maloney, an Iranian specialist at the Brookings Institution in Washington, said:

“...Iran also has ‘well-integrated’ relations with regional partners, through which it can barter, trade or use other types of arrangements to maintain...”—other—“economic activity.”

Again, Madam Speaker, if we listened to what the hon. Attorney General told us, with respect to the work of FATF and these economic sanctions, the Brookings Institution who is actively pursuing research on whether or not these sanctions are working in the way it should have, they are actually telling us, Madam Speaker, that several of the member states of the United Nations is actively—actively, Madam Speaker, assisting Iran. Neighbouring countries of Iran are actively assisting them in finding ways, in finding loopholes to circumvent having to go through the formal banking system, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, again, absolutely nothing coming from the hon. Attorney General on these issues and there must be some degree of work being brought when these Motions, orders and resolutions are coming to the House. Madam Speaker, this is really an exercise, when I listened to the hon. Attorney General, in laziness and incompetence, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. B. Padarath: An issue as important as this should have had an element of

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Mr. Padarath (cont'd)

some level of research of telling us why we are supporting this. Why are we not raising these issues? We are a Member State. The hon. Prime Minister often tells us that we punch above our weight but there was no evidence of this, Madam Speaker. There was no evidence of telling us that we have reached out to the United Nations, our representative there. There was no statement or comment coming from our representative, our permanent representative to the United Nations on this, Madam Speaker. No mention of that from the hon. Attorney General and, as I said, I see no presence of the Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs. And therefore, it suggests to me that we are just here really to rubber stamp these issues.

And no wonder, Madam Speaker, no wonder files appear, they reappear, they disappear without the hon. Attorney General knowing. Because an important issue like this, we have very little information coming out from an important body like the Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs, telling us why we should continue supporting this and why we have not raised burning questions when even the United States, the great United States, Madam Speaker—we did not hear about small countries, as important as they may be, but when the European Union and the World Bank are speaking about countries like Canada, Australia, the United States, the United Kingdom, raising concerns about these sanctions and whether or not they are giving the desired results, then you know, Madam Speaker, that somebody did not do their homework, Madam Speaker. And in this instance, it may be more than just “one somebody” because we did not hear it from the hon. Attorney General, and the Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs is not here to explain this debacle, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I want to turn your attention to *Reuters* on March 23rd when the:

“Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, said on Thursday the United States was looking at ways to strengthen its sanctions against Iran...”

And they also cited the United Nations sanctions, Madam Speaker:

“...but acknowledged the sanctions had not resulted in the behavioral or policy changes Washington desires from Tehran.”

I will read that again, Madam Speaker. This is not the UNC saying this, this is not a political entity saying this. This is the Treasury Secretary, Janet Yellen, saying that:

“...the United States was looking at ways to strengthen its sanctions...”—as well as the United Nations sanctions in terms of the recommendations being a co-sponsor—“against Iran, but acknowledged...”

This is the United States saying that they:

“...acknowledged that the sanctions had not resulted in the behavioral or policy changes Washington desires from Tehran.”

It went on to say, Madam Speaker, the:

““...sanctions on Iran have created real economic crisis in the country, and Iran is greatly suffering economically because of the sanctions...Has that forced a change in behavior?””

Has that forced a change with respect to their policy on nuclear weapons? Has that changed their policy with respect to terrorism and the financing of terrorism?

““The answer”—it went on to say, Madam Speaker—“is much less than we would ideally like...”—it to be—“Yellen told”—US—“lawmakers in the

hearing on Thursday.”

She further went on to say it did not specify the areas that they were seeing results in but rather they had hoped to focus on the areas that needed tidying up and tightening. And, Madam Speaker, a lot of that tidying up and tightening, though the presentation of the hon. Attorney General was woefully short, a lot of the work of FATF, in particular, is what the Treasury Secretary spoke about, Madam Speaker, in terms of the sanctions and the impact that it is having in terms of the desired result.

The Secretary went on to say, Madam Speaker:

The United States has imposed”—together with other countries—“multiple sanctions on Iran over the years, most recently targeting Iran’s unmanned aerial vehicle...industry over supply of drones to Russia that Washington says are used to target civilian infrastructure in the conflict in Ukraine.

Ties between Iran...”—and other countries—“have become increasingly strained as efforts to revive a 2015 nuclear deal have stalled. The U.S. also imposed sanctions recently on Iran over the death of...”—innocent civilians—“in police custody...”

Madam Speaker, while today we turn our attention to the economic sanctions, there have been other sanctions that have been placed against Iran by member countries of the United Nations. Some of them have to deal with human rights. Some of them have to deal with the ongoing conflict between Ukraine and Iran. And, Madam Speaker, a lot of the economic sanctions that have been placed by the United Nations through Resolution 2231 has an impact on those areas of other sanctions that other member states of the United Nations have imposed. But,

however, Madam Speaker, again, this was a missed opportunity from the Government to tell us about the lent support that we have provided in terms of keeping peace and order, in terms of human rights, as well as the issue of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, but also the financing of terrorism.

Madam Speaker, I once sat in the Joint Select Committee on Human Rights of this Parliament and some of the matters that was raised—and I am not going into the substantial work of the JSC, not to infringe the Standing Orders, Madam Speaker, but when I reflect on the work that was done by that Joint Select Committee on Human Rights that went into the area of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the financing of terrorism, et cetera, a lot of that work, Madam Speaker, now resides with the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, and today again we heard very little about that, Madam Speaker, in terms of Resolution 2231 and the need to support that. But more so, Madam Speaker, if we are a member country of the United Nations, supporting Resolution 2231, and we cannot say what are the reasons in terms of policy decision, policymaking from the Cabinet of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago as to why we continue to lend our support, then something is definitely wrong, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. B. Padarath: And that is why I say, it is either laziness or incompetence, or both.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. B. Padarath: And this cannot be a policy perspective of the Government on an important issue like this, Madam Speaker, that has that implication of the ties—the ties, Madam Speaker, of terrorism, financing of terrorism with local entities

that reside in Trinidad and Tobago. It cannot be.

Madam Speaker, when I reflect, as I have said, in that Joint Select Committee of what was shared with us—and I see the Member for San Fernando West is paying attention because the Member for San Fernando West continued, when he was Attorney General, to speak quite a lot about these issues, but what we got from this Attorney General? We got 10 minutes of nothingness. Ten minutes of standing up and reading the Resolution—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. B. Padarath:—without giving us any comprehensive context as to why we are here and why we are adding our support in the framework, Madam Speaker, of several of our international counterparts questioning whether or not these economic sanctions are working. We are just being told “blanketly”, “Support this, support this”, and this is the approach that this Government continues to take with every single piece of legislation that it brings to the Parliament.

Madam Speaker, I have gone at pains to show that it is not only us in the Opposition that have concerns. In multilateral institutions, World Bank, European Union, the IMF, they have all published their concerns for the world to see. But separate and apart from that, you have major stakeholders who themselves manufacture and produce nuclear weapons, who themselves are actively engaged in ensuring that countries that are known for the financing of terrorism, that they are monitored, Madam Speaker, but very little or nothing was said about that. It is how we can strengthen—it is not just taking a resolution from the UN and saying, “Because it is from the great United Nations.” I have indicated that the United Nations in their subsets, they too, Madam Speaker, they too, through their

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publications, through their representatives have shown that they are in conflict with themselves on the position of the economic sanctions on Iran.

Madam Speaker, I would like to turn your attention to a publication by the President of the National Iranian American Council, and it says:

“Why sanctions on Iran aren’t working?”

And it says:

“Despite sanctions described as ‘the toughest, most crippling sanctions ever’...”—even the US President at that time—“President Obama, the stand-off between the West and Iran over its nuclear policy trajectory remains. Is this failure due to the sanctions not being tough enough, or not having been applied for long enough to have the desired effect?”

It went on to say, Madam Speaker, that:

“Neither- according to a new report by the National Iranian American Council (NIAC). The lead authors of that report, NIAC President Trita Parsi and Research Director Reza Marashi, will present their findings at ECFR together with an analysis of the dynamics at play in the negotiations between Iran and the P5+1 and the political context in which those talks are taking place – in Washington,”—Tee-ran—“and Europe.”

What it went on to say, Madam Speaker, is from then—

Hon. Robinson-Regis: [*Inaudible*] Tehran.

Mr. B. Padarath: Tehran. Tehran, my apologies, Member for Arouca/Maloney, Tehran. The important point coming out from this publication, Madam Speaker, as far back as the presidency of President Obama from 2008, Madam Speaker, we have seen successive administrations, both in the United States, in Trinidad and

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Tobago, and around the world, Madam Speaker, lending its support to these economic sanctions. But it was identified since President Obama came in, in 2008—

Madam Speaker: Member, your ordinary time is now expired, you have 15 more minutes to complete your contribution. I would also invite you at this time to move on to another point.

Mr. B. Padarath: Sure.

Madam Speaker: Your first 30 minutes, I think you, as you have said, were at pains, but I think you have made the point about the effectiveness and all those quotations that you provided us have made the same point. So if you could use your 15 minutes to go on to another point, please.

3.45 p.m.

Mr. B. Padarath: Thank you, Madam Speaker. With respect to the publication of the President of the National Iranian American Council, one of the main things coming out from since President Obama in 2008, together with member States, having raised this issue as a worrying issue, and then having developed into a multinational approach towards the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the financing of terrorism, et cetera, it listed several critical areas in which it needed strengthening for the sanctions to be effective.

Madam Speaker, I am advised that there is a plenary group at the United Nations that is actively looking to see what recommendations can be made. I want to encourage the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs to lend their voice and their support to that light of several of the concerns that have been raised. I also want to say, Madam Speaker, as I close, that the meeting between our Prime

Minister and the President of Iran has never been fully ventilated, and in terms of the economic sanctions and the Government bringing this—you know, Madam Speaker, I recall the last sitting of Parliament, many parts of the world, including Iran, were celebrating Eid al-Fitr on that day, and almost as insensitive and callous, this Government brought this piece of legislation, almost—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Member, I remind you of Standing Order 48(1). Please keep within the confines of that Standing Order.

Mr. B. Padarath: Thank you, Madam Speaker. In the last few minutes I have remaining in terms of my contribution, I want to encourage the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, together with the Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs, maybe it may be a welcomed approach for the current Attorney General to speak with the former Attorney General, in terms of a lot of the work that was started then, and would be able to provide some of the answers to some of the questions that have been raised in the debate.

So Madam Speaker, with those few words, I thank you and I thank the House.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Member for San Fernando West.

The Minister of Local Government and Rural Development (Hon. Faris Al-Rawi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Permit me to join this debate and to get straight to the chase. We are here pursuant to our treaty and international obligations, which the hon. Attorney General put in a pellucidly clear and concise fashion. The fact that the hon. Attorney General is a man of brevity is also to be

associated with the fact that he is very precise in what he states on the record. The hon. Attorney General was abundantly clear to point to exactly why we are obliged as a Parliament to be here.

Madam Speaker, what is disturbing is that the Members of the Opposition, not for the first time, seem to be determined to malign our country and to misrepresent our international obligations without any form of control.

I say, not for the first time, because one needs only go back to *Hansard* in 2019, on the 11th January, when you could see the UNC's approach to the first iteration of the implementation of these economic sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Then it was the Member for Naparima who came to make submissions in Opposition to the carrying into effect of this law.

So, Madam Speaker, permit me to negotiate time and to put onto the record the following things, and I will tell you why it is I reject, out of hand, the entire contribution of the Member for Princes Town and the position of the UNC. I dare say that it is a dangerous position to even associate oneself with the submissions made by the Member for Princes Town.

Madam Speaker, we are dealing with the issue of an international obligation under the Financial Action Task Force, the FATF. There is a specific recommendation, which we are bound to comply with. Madam Speaker, the Financial Action Task Force is not a new creature to this Parliament or to this country, and certainly not to the UNC. Madam Speaker, it is a matter of record that Trinidad and Tobago has had four mutual evaluations to date. Our first mutual evaluation took place in April 1995. Our second round mutual evaluation took place in June 2002. Our third round on-site visit took place during May 30 to

June 10, 2005, and our third round mutual evaluation report was published in May 2007. Listen to this. Our fourth on-site visit took place in January 2015, and the fourth round mutual evaluation report from that visit in January 2015, took place in June 2016.

Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in January 2015 was the Member for Siparia. The representative who served for the United National Congress at the United Nations was a gentleman by the name of Rodney Charles, now the Member for Naparima who sits not too far away from the Member for Princes Town. In January 2015, the UNC Government committed Trinidad and Tobago to its on-site visit to our being the first in the pack to be assessed by the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force for the FATF compliance.

Madam Speaker, it is as a result of an abysmal failure by Trinidad and Tobago from the on-site visit in January 2015, under the UNC, we failed our fourth round mutual evaluation, and the mutual evaluation report produced in 2016 demonstrated that we were completely non-compliant in the vast number of areas. You know what that meant? We were effectively put onto the watch list. Economic actions of enhanced due diligence had to be put upon us, and relevant to the Motion before us today, we were deemed to be in failure of Recommendation 7 and Immediate Outcome 11.

The Financial Action Task Force, which Kamla Persad-Bissessar as Prime Minister, Member for Siparia, committed us to, in January 2015, was that we would take steps to become compliant with FATF Recommendation 7 and Immediate Outcome 11.

Recommendation 7 targeted financial sanctions related to proliferation.

What does that mean? It means anybody that could produce weapons of mass destruction. Recommendation 7 is specifically tied. In January 2015, it was tied to a number of United Nations recommendations, Security Council Resolutions, and they are as follows, for Iran specifically.

Madam Speaker we were looking at UNSCR 1737 of 2006, UNSCR 1747 of 2007, UNSCR 1803 of 2008, UNSCR 1926 of 2010. We had not yet come to the 2015 UNSCR of 2231, which is before us today. So to hear the Member for Princes Town arrive, just as Naparima did in 2019, when he arrived to say Trinidad and Tobago does not know what it is doing, and to allege that our hon. Attorney General is somehow guilty of intellectual laziness—you know there is an expression in Trinidad, “yuh previous”. And you know why “yuh previous”? Because when you do not do your homework, to understand that the UNC committed Trinidad and Tobago in January 2015 to comply with Recommendation 7 of FATF, then how do you arrive here and challenge the policy?

How does one stand up with an intellectual straight face and quote the World Bank, and then in the next breath say, “Well we have to look at terrorist financing”. Madam Speaker, the World Bank does not assess anybody for terrorist financing, or money laundering, or any of these compliance obligations. It is only the FATF. And worse yet, the European Union, under its methodology by the European Commission, they use the FATF methodology to blacklist Trinidad and Tobago or other territories.

So “lemmeh” put it in simple terms. UNC in January 2015, committed us to FATF on site evaluation. UNC failed the mutual evaluation assessments in 2015 January. The report demonstrates we were non-compliant for recommendation 7

and Immediate Outcome 11. We were committed by the UNC to put in this—now Madam Speaker, I want you to bear in mind, is not like the law did not exist, you know.

The Anti-Terrorism Act, which does listings for terrorist financing under section 22B of that Act, it was virgin territory when I became Attorney General in 2015. Not one single listing for a terrorist entity had been done, as a result of which, this Government took the step to list hundreds of entities. Why were we listing entities as terrorist financing? So that when we approach the court and we allege somebody is a member of ISIS, or al Da'esh, or Al-Qaida, or any one of these entities, the court has to have judicial knowledge of what a terrorist entity is. So you have to list them. So you go to the United Nations, you take the terrorist listings and you do it.

Madam Speaker, the Economic Sanctions Act, which is part of this Motion today, is not a new Act. The Economic Sanctions Act is law from Trinidad and Tobago. It is Chap. 81:05. That is an Act that predated these Orders. That Act is an Act of Parliament which has been around for a long time. Madam Speaker, when the UNC committed us to recommendation 7 compliance, and immediate Outcome 11 compliance, we were duty-bound to take into operation the economic sanctions. So let us get to where we are.

The relevant resolution of the United Nations, which we must comply with under FATF, lest we fail and become blacklisted, lest the European Union and Europe Commission use that reference point and further prejudice us, that says we must comply with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 of 2015. What does that mean?

When you look to the United Nations website today, if you go to the website today, you will see on the website of the United Nations, under “United Nations Security Council Resolutions”, under the heading “Resolution 2231 (2015) on Iran Nuclear Issues Background”, if you go to the tab which says “Resolution 2231”, you will see we are bound to implement the second annex, Annex II. This is the joint commitment, the agreement between the five standing members and the European Union—that is five plus one, that we will continue sanctions under UNSCR 2231. So, Madam Speaker, the hon. Attorney General said that.

The hon. Attorney General referred to Annex V. He referred to the second Annex. He referred to UNSCR 2231. But one does not expect a United National Congress, which was the Opposition, that was the Government, to just so—Princes Town is currently sitting down next to Naparima. Naparima was at the United Nations, knows this. The seat next to Naparima is Siparia. Siparia was the Prime Minister that committed us to this. Do they even talk to each other? Is there even some attempt to make common sense a reality in United National Congress, where they will talk to each other, so that the country does not become the subject of odium? So it “eh go look bad” that the official Opposition of Trinidad and Tobago has a position where we have the Member for Princes Town questioning the rationale behind the Iran Economic Orders.

4.00 p.m.

Madam Speaker, if you look to the United Nations and the agreement that they are operating by on Iran, if you recognize that Trinidad and Tobago has Iran as a trading partner, if you go to the Motion before us today, what are we doing today, Madam Speaker? We are taking by way of Order, we are taking a process

into law. The law tells us that we must consider the President's statement. The President has to make a statement. The President's statement has been put out clean and clear. The President says in the statement which is before this honourable House that we are going to take avail of our international obligations at the United Nations. We are a treaty participant. We have ratified, we have acceded. The statement says we are bound by the FATF. That statement has to then go through a three-month period and we have to come up with an Order. That Order is going to stand for a period of three months and then we have to extend it.

Madam Speaker, today what we are effectively doing is we are replacing the 2018 Order, the 2019 extended Order and we are replacing it wholesale with a new Order. But, Madam Speaker, let me put onto the record, under the Economic Sanctions Act by the Legal Notice published on the 14th of December, 2018, that is Legal Notice 185, we published the full Order. The full Order that we have today is effectively the one that was published as Legal Notice 185 of 14 December 2018.

Madam Speaker, on the 12th of March, 2019 we specifically extended by way of resolution of this House, that Naparima participated in, that Princes Town was here for, we extended the life of the Order as follows. Paragraph A, and I am reading from Legal Notice No. 44 published in the *Gazette* on the 12th of March, 2019. And by resolution of this House of Representatives we said: The life of the Order is extended as follows:

- “(a) Clauses 21, 22 and 23 of the Order shall continue in force until 18th October, 2020 and then expire;
- (b) Clauses 12, 19 and 20 of the Order shall continue in force until 18th

October, 2023 and then expire;

- (c) Clauses 16 and 17 of the Order shall continue in force until 18th October, 2025 and then expire; and
- (d) Clauses 1 to 11, 13 to 15, 18 and 24 to 28 shall continue in force until revoked.”

What does that mean, Madam Speaker? Because the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 had been attenuated by way of direct discussions with Iran, by way of joint agreement which the United States left under President Trump in 2018 but because the 2231 resolution still existed but they gave it a limited time frame, back in 2019, I then as Attorney General approached the House for the resolution asking for these specific extension dates. These extension dates came and we sought clarification for the further extension. And because there is a limited life of Orders which is changing from time to time because Trinidad takes its trade obligations seriously, the recommendation to the honourable House via our distinguished Attorney General is to re-publish the entire Order until it is revoked.

So, Madam Speaker, we do not need to hear a song and a dance of irrelevance from the Member for Princes Town, that we should listen to the World Bank and the effect of sanctions. The first and primary example is, do we have an obligation to pass this into law? The answer is yes. Why? UNSCR 2231 is specifically mandated by FATF Recommendation 7 and Immediate Outcome No. 11 that we have to do it. Is there a consequence? Yes. If we do not do it, we will be deemed to have failed in compliance and we will be blacklisted. What does that mean? There will be enhanced due diligence on our bank accounts. We will take a

step back and regress from the successes that we as a government brought home in 2020 when in my tenure as Attorney General and under this Government we came off the blacklist of FATF, if I put it in a very naked way. That did not happen by mistake. We approached the Parliament. We operationalized. We had an onsite visit in January 2020 and we did spectacularly well.

Madam Speaker, with that in mind we are conscious that 2231 has certain time frames. We are conscious that it is an ongoing exercise of discussion but we must comply. We cannot go and ask the World Bank what to do because they do not assess us for money laundering, terrorist financing and proliferation financing. They just do not do it. So, Madam Speaker, we are absolutely on solid ground.

The last point that I wish to make here is that, when you look to the Order that we are effectively putting into effect, this Order is not a vaille-que-vaille piece of paper, Madam Speaker. It is an Order which says that the courts of Trinidad and Tobago will be the only entity to consider whether there will be a listing or sanctions or freezing of assets.

In other words then, we are recognizing and the hon. AG said this, the due process of our Constitution where our courts will decide who goes on a list or not. Why am I saying that, Madam Speaker? Clearly when stones were pelting at the Government House, the hon. Member for Princes Town forgot or did not appreciate that he was living in a glass house. Laziness is where one will not go to the website of the AG's Office at the anti-terrorism tab and pull up all the Orders that we put into effect where we have listed the entities under the UNSCR 2231 obligations under Recommendation 7. It is right there.

Madam Speaker, the taxpayers gave Princes Town an iPad paid for by the

Parliament. The taxpayers pay for the staff of the Member for Princes Town. The Member for Princes Town is sitting down next to the Member for Naparima. Naparima is sitting down next to Siparia. For heaven's sake take one step to your left or your right and get the answer. One click on the website, Madam Speaker, will show you that the entire contribution of the Member for Princes Town was a glorified hodgepodge of foolishness, intellectually speaking. And, Madam Speaker, as a government serious about what we do we cannot tolerate that kind of approach.

So, Madam Speaker, the due process in the Economic Sanctions Act under the Order provides for a system of listing, delisting, judicial scrutiny, publication. If you look to the specifics of Immediate Outcome 11 you will see what we must comply with. If you look to the FATF methodology and you look to what is considered under recommendation 7, it is not a make it up as you go process.

So, Madam Speaker, I will simply say, I thank my colleague the hon. Attorney General for his diligence, his precision and his guidance to this honourable House in carrying out the work which we are obliged to undertake under law. I will pray for my dear colleague the Member for Princes Town that he finds it within his time and space to do a little more research. We are willing to lend a hand if ever necessary, Madam Speaker. I hope that he will incorporate exercise into his regime to keep himself healthy by walking to the right to talk to Naparima, a little bit further to talk to Siparia, Madam Speaker, and perhaps to use his right index finger if he is right handed to simply navigate the website of the Attorney General's Office. Madam Speaker, I thank you.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

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Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Rodney Charles (*Naparima*): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I listened to the former Attorney General and Member for San Fernando West and it is clear, Madam Speaker, that he has not had a chance to address this House, so he revelled in nonsense, revelled in talk and revelled in what he does best, add no value whatsoever to the contributions in this honourable House.

Madam Speaker, he has not lost—the Member for San Fernando West has not lost the art of understanding clearly where we are today. And he cannot get away from blaming the Member for Siparia, blaming the UNC for the idiocy and nonsense, part of which he has contributed and delivered to our country.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. R. Charles: So we continue to hear about April 1995, and June 2002, and May 2005, and January 2015, how the Government at the time committed to onsite negotiations with international agencies and how it was on June 16th that we were declared non-compliant. What the former Attorney General fails to understand or deliberately does not tell us is, that we came off the EU blacklist in 2017, Madam Speaker, two years after he was the Minister—he was the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs. We failed and, you see, it is hard to take the nonsense that comes from the former Attorney General because I sat in a Joint Select Committee in which he said that—sorry. The Minister said that if—

Madam Speaker: No. If it is one thing, it is one Member I know for sure who understands the Standing Order when you address Members, it is the Member for Naparima.

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Mr. R. Charles: Yes.

Madam Speaker: So I hope you practice what you preach.

Mr. R. Charles: Yes. And I apologize. You see, it is hard to take. It is hard to take because the Attorney General told us in the Joint Select Committee when I asked him, what do we need to come off the EU blacklist? I was told and I have it on *Hansard*, I was told that if we pass these four pieces of legislation we will come off the list. Madam Speaker, it is the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act, FATCA, he told us, it is not he, the Attorney General told us that if we pass the Income Tax (Amdt.) Bill, 2019, we will come off the list. It is on record. The Attorney General told us with a straight face and fancy language which he is accustomed, that if we pass the Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters Bill, 2018, we will come off the EU blacklist.

Mr. Al-Rawi: Madam Speaker, 48(1).

Madam Speaker: Well, Member, you know, I will allow you a little leeway. I think you are attempting to rebut but I want to remind you that this, the contribution made by the Member before you, the former Attorney General not the Attorney General, the former Attorney General was rebutting certain things that were made by the first contribution in response and therefore, you will only have very little leeway to deal with that and get on with the matter.

Mr. R. Charles: Thank you for your guidance. I just wanted to establish that the fact that we are on an EU blacklist has nothing to do with the United National Congress and everything to do with the People's National Movement Government. I move on.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

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Mr. R. Charles: Madam Speaker, once again we are here because the PNM likes to waste parliamentary time. It has to be said. It does not take this House seriously. They have reduced us to, I do not want to use the word a joke but something that is not taken seriously. Our Parliament has lost the level consequence, eminence and authority it once held because this PNM administration continues to bring piecemeal—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. R. Charles:—halfway, poorly thought out legislation before us and I will tell you why. Madam Speaker, the Legal Notice that is before us today is essentially a renewal of what was done in 2018 under Legal Notice 185. It deals with the same sanctioned individuals and companies and the same UN resolutions which under the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 of 2015 and others, and I could name them. Namely 1696 of 2006; 1737 of 2006; 1747 of 2007; 1803 of 2008, et cetera, 1835 of 2008, et cetera.

4.15 p.m.

Madam Speaker, to tell you how this administration did not know what they were doing in 2018, the Security Council resolution against Iran, which Legal Notice 83 of 2023 and Legal Notice 185 of 2018 centre around, are carded to be terminated in the year 2025, provided that Iran follows through on its requirements under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Why did the former Attorney General Faris Al-Rawi not know this way back in 2018, that it was going to—it had currency up to 2025? Madam Speaker, and I speak of the 2018 Legal Notice because it is so intimately tied to the current Legal Notice before us. And both Legal Notices deal specifically with UN Security Council Resolution 2231. I

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know whereof I speak. I was a representative at the United Nations.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. R. Charles: Madam Speaker, let me inform them that the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 of 2015 states, and I quote—I quote, Madam Speaker:

“Ten years from the Adoption Day, provided that the provisions of the previous Security Council resolutions have not been reinstated in the interim...all the provisions of resolution 2231 (2015) shall be terminated...”

So let me do the math. Let me do the math. It is not their strong suit. So 2015, plus 10, takes us to 2025. And during the debate for the Legal Notice 185 in 2019, the former Attorney General said that the Order could be extended:

“...either in a staged phase or indefinitely...”

That is on *Hansard* the 11th, 2019. Yet he concluded in the clause 4 of Legal Notice 185 of 2018 that the Orders for freezing of the assets of listed individuals would only last until 18 October, 2023. You understand how they waste our time? Why not just do one thing until 2025 and done? Why in 2018 you put a Legal Notice that expires in 2023, and here we have to dress up, come into town today to extend it for two years, when you could have done that originally and put it up to 2025 as mandated by Security Council Resolution 2231 in 2015?

So, you see, Madam Speaker, why I say they waste our time? We could have done like the calypso, “do one thing and done”. In 2018, we could have passed it up to 2025. Instead make it up to 2023, and they call all of us here today to come and extend it for two years. That is the nonsense that passes for governance on that side, Madam Speaker. It is difficult to take.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

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Mr. R. Charles: Madam Speaker, and I beg your indulgence to clarify something for the record, some misinformation that was done in 2019. I will be very brief. Before I get further into this, I need to quickly clarify a piece of misinformation that was put forward by the former Attorney General during the debate on Legal Notice 185 on January 11, 2019. At that time, the then Attorney General deliberately ignored that I acknowledged three times during my contribution that Security Council Resolution 2231 was applicable to Iran and therefore, the debate. That 2019 *Hansard* will reflect this fact on pages 208, 211 and 216. Ignoring these three acknowledgments, the then Attorney General went on to base his entire 20-minute response on the falsehood that I had said that UN Security Council 2231 was not applicable. The record of *Hansard* will show that the Attorney General was entirely wrong and in fact misled the House in making this claim, and it is no wonder that he is no longer the Attorney General of Trinidad and Tobago.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. R. Charles: I had to go to the United Nations, visit the United Nations to get clarification. I met with members of the UN Security Council, Subsidiary Organs Branch in New York to discuss Legal Notice 185, and they confirmed that the UN has no sanctions on Iran. They have only six restrictive measures. So the entire premise of these documents, Legal Notice 83 of 2023 and Legal Notice 185 of 2018, are flawed.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. R. Charles: Madam Speaker, I will get into the timelines. I will get into the timelines. This brings me to a concern with the timelines applicable to this Legal Notice before us and whether it has been brought to this House in a manner that is

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consistent with the law, specifically the Economic Sanctions Act, Chap. 81:05. I have a copy here. This statement was made pursuant—sorry, Madam Speaker, we have before us a statement by Her Excellency, former President Paula-Mae Weeks, signed on the 7th of March, 2023. Okay? That is a fact. I have a copy. Right? It is signed by Her Excellency, and it is dated the 7th of March, 2023. This statement was made pursuant to section 4(4) of the Economic Sanctions Act, Chap. 81:05, which states, and I quote:

“Within fourteen days of the commencement of an Order made under subsection (1), the President shall deliver to the Speaker for presentation to the House of Representatives a statement setting out the specific grounds on which the decision to make the Order was based...”

Madam Speaker, the process started on the 7th of March.

Under section 25 of the Interpretation Act, which deals with the “Computation of time”, 14 days after the 7th of March brings us to the 21st of March. The Legal Notice before us is dated the 27th of March. It was brought to the House on April 21st, one month later. We can only hope, Madam Speaker, that the law was followed in respect of the timelines regarding the delivery of the President’s statement to the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Otherwise, this Legal Notice which we are discussing today has not followed the law as expressed in the Economic Sanctions Act, and it may very well be improperly brought to the House. In the wind up, the Attorney General may wish to deal with this specific concern.

So, Madam Speaker, we are told that FATF requirements are one of the reasons for this Legal Notice today. We are told. And the question I ask in terms

of relevance, 48(1), the role of FATF in the UN decision-making process, where in the United Nations Security Council is there provision for FATF to be included in these matters? Is it enjoined in the Security Council? Tell us if this will get us off the EU blacklist? And we recall the pieces of legislation which we were told will get off the list. I am asking the question today, since we are told that this will make us compliant with FATF regulations, I want to know if passing this bit of legislation is going to get us off the EU blacklist.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. R. Charles: It did not help in 2018 and I am concerned that it will not help today. Yet they come to the House and talk about FATF requirements, CFATF requirements, and how this will help us get off the various blacklists.

I come to another point that Legal Notice 83 of 2023, this is this Legal Notice before us, should have been at least been an improvement on Legal Notice 185 of 2018. It should have been. I mean, 2018, '19, '20, '21, '22, '23, we had five years, could we not have improvements? Instead we came with the same old bits of legislation. Reading Legal Notice 83 of 2023, which is before us today, I see many of the same problematic provisions that were in the 2018 version. Let me repeat that. Reading the Legal Notice 83 of 2023, which is before us today, I see many of the same problematic provisions that were in the 2018 version.

The Ministry of National Security, he will still assume powers he ought not to have. Clause 14 gives the Minister the ability to ignore and bypass the Security Council completely, and authorize a person to, and I quote:

“...export, sell, supply, transfer or ship, directly or indirectly to Iran or for the use or benefit of Iran—

- (a) nuclear related items; or
- (b) resources that may contribute to reprocessing, enrichment or heavy water activities in contravention of the JCPOA.”

And this permission may be granted:

“subject to any conditions he”—that is the Minister—“considers appropriate...”

So we are passing legislation here today, and the Minister has the power to alter the Legal Notice in critical aspects, and he does that in his sole discretion without reference to the Parliament. This permission may be granted:

“subject to any conditions he considers appropriate...”

And this clause, it comes up in clause 15, clause 16, clauses 17 and 19, which is interesting, because I would like to know why the Ministry of National Security of little Trinidad and Tobago needs to have the power to grant permission under clause 19(2) for a person to trade in battle tanks. The Minister of National Security? Battle tanks, armoured combat vehicles? Let us get serious. Let us get serious. We know the competence of our Minister of National Security. He has—

Madam Speaker: Kindly withdraw that. Okay? Kindly withdraw that.

Mr. R. Charles: I withdraw that.

Madam Speaker: All right. Now, I have allowed you some leeway. You are talking heavily now about the Order. Really what is the gravamen of what is before us is the statement of Her Excellency. Okay? Given the grounds.

Mr. R. Charles: Is it not the Legal Notice?

Madam Speaker: No. Okay. So, please.

Mr. R. Charles: Okay. Okay. All right. So I will just wrap up that point that the

Minister has, in his sole discretion, to deal with that. One of the concluding points that I would like to raise is the fact that this statement by the President calling for—that we can impose economic sanctions to restrict and prohibit any specific activity by Orders, namely the Economic Sanctions (Implementation of the United Nations Resolutions on the Islamic Republic of Iran) Order, 2023. So it refers to the Order, Madam Speaker. It refers to the Order which I was referring to.

Madam Speaker, it speaks to a certain inconsistency in our foreign policy. I think the Member for Princes Town dealt briefly with it. On the one hand, they come to this House expeditiously and on multiple occasions to impose sanctions against Iran. And let me repeat, that is contained in the President's statement. Right? But on the other hand, the Prime Minister holds friendly meetings with its President, that is the President of Iran, and it speaks to the consistency of our foreign policy. Things it must make sense. It must not be a non sequitur, all over the place. In February last year, when Prime Minister Dr. Keith Christopher Rowley visited Doha, Qatar for the Sixth Summit of Heads of State and Government of Gas Exports Countries Forum, he sang high praises of the Iranian Government when he said, and I quote:

Trinidad and Tobago seeks to expand its corporation and relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran like Venezuela and Cuba.

That is our Prime Minister speaking. The Iranian President—and I am speaking here directly to the fact that the statement by the President speaks to economic sanctions.

4.30 p.m.

The Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi in response commended Trinidad and

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Tobago effusively for demonstrating the independence of Latin American countries against, quote:

“...the oppression of imperialist countries.”

Now we may ask the question, who are the imperialistic countries the Iranian President referred to and to which Prime Minister Dr. Keith Christopher Rowley did not object? They were sitting in a meeting, a bilateral meeting on the margins of this 6th Summit of the Heads of State on Government of Gas Exporting Countries Forum. Why can the Prime Minister not focus more on deepening relations with Barbados, Guyana and Suriname?—but that is another story. The US, our largest trading partner in keeping a close eye at our continued foreign policy blunders. We no longer hold leadership positions anywhere.

Madam Speaker: Member—

Mr. R. Charles: Yes.

Madam Speaker: I am really standing on Standing Order 48(1), okay. And this is the last time I am going to stand and remind you about the provisions of Standing Order 48(1). And while I am on my legs you have eight more minutes of ordinary speaking time.

Mr. R. Charles: In conclusion, I will conclude—

Hon. Members: [*Laughter*]

Mr. R. Charles: I will conclude. It is a poorly drafted bit of legislation which gives the Minister of National—

Madam Speaker: I have to remind that we do not—the resolution here is:

“*Be it resolved* that the statement of Her Excellency the President...be approved.”

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That is it in short.

Mr. R. Charles: Yes, Madam—

Madam Speaker: Okay, so I do not know that there is a legislation before us.

Mr. R. Charles: Yes, Madam—

Madam Speaker: Please, again, that will be Standing Order 48(1). I have one more last.

Mr. R. Charles: And you would not do it anymore because I am not staying longer. In this House, I understand clearly that the Opposition has no say and I leave.

Madam Speaker: Member, Member—

Hon. Members: [*Continuous desk banging*]

Madam Speaker: I would ask you to—you cannot speak to me from there. I ask you to go back and withdraw that. Member for St. Augustine and others I want to say that prolonged thumping is considered disruption. I am sure you all do not mean that. Member, Member, Member, I would like you to withdraw your last statement.

Mr. R. Charles: I withdraw the last statement on every word I said.

Madam Speaker: Right. Member for Chaguanas West.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Dinesh Rambally (*Chaguanas West*): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for recognizing me that I may participate in this debate. Madam Speaker, as I start this afternoon there is one point which is not, I assure you, it is not repeating the point, but I want to just tack on or add to a point which my colleague, Member for Naparima would have made. And the Attorney General is in the House to

probably take note of this if he had not previously, which is that my colleague would have raised section 4(4) of the Economic Sanctions Act and questioned whether or not the presentation of the Order to the Parliament was done timely. So I would not repeat that, but safe to say that the particular part of the Motion which we are debating today, the second to last recital does say:

“*And whereas* the President, in accordance with section 4(4) of the Economic Sanctions Act Chap. 81:05, did cause to be delivered on the 27th day of March, 2023 to the Speaker for presentation to the House of Representatives a statement setting out the specific grounds on which the decision to make the order was based.”

So the Legal Notice is dated and the statement is dated 7th of March and according to the Motion that we are debating it was delivered on the 27th of March. So it is out of the 14 day period. So that is something maybe the Attorney General will treat with when he is winding up. So that is what was being referred to at section 4(4) of the substantive legislation, the Economic Sanctions Act, Chap. 81:05. So I just raise that at the outset, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, in terms of what we are debating today I propose to raise a couple of matters which I believe are pertinent. Sometimes when we debate legislation we debate Bills, we debate in this particular case a Motion, it is—even though going back to the *Hansard* of where there may have been prior debate on a similar matter, it is sometimes elusive to those who are following what we do here in Parliament. And I think that I would want to deal with the matter in a particular way so I propose certain headings and this is of course an adjustment based on the speakers that preceded me on both sides.

So, Madam Speaker, I would like to just touch on the history of the power in the security council. Our approach to sanctions, something a term or art, it is a recent term of art called “lawfare” treat with the situation in Iran, the entire international law context and I would like to end with balancing liberty and security.

Madam Speaker, as I start with this particular topic, we all watch news reports of what is happening elsewhere in the world and most prominently these days is the situation in Sudan. Sometimes we look on at the development of nuclear weapons in Iran, the subject country under this particular Motion, and also the statement of the President. We also look at the bloody civil unrests in other territories and when we look at that, Madam Speaker, we sometimes ask the question, whether, for example, Russia will end or whether it will aggravate or elevate the nearly yearlong invasion of Ukraine. Whether President Putin will raise the stakes by going nuclear against Ukraine. Will China confront the US while invading Taiwan and sometimes we look on the other continents, will the nuclear capable Pakistan and India, two nuclear capable countries, engage in war over the disputed territory Kashmir and Jammu.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I raise this because when we are in other countries, in other parts of the world, we sometimes look and we call upon all governments, the international framework to take action to stop the atrocities and potential harm. So that is accepted, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In response to such events we join and I want to reiterate that we on this side we join like-minded nations at the United Nations and support calls for the United Nations Security Council Resolutions to

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impose economic sanctions and trade restrictions with the intent to change behaviours by foreign regimes that are unacceptable to people living in a free and democratic society. That is the position that we hold. After the United Nations Security Council Resolutions are passed, any new multilateral sanctions, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and restrictions and country specific regulations must be invested in. So we accept that. So we must awaken to join in the fight for democracy, freedom and justice and this is something that we definitely stand for on this side.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. D. Rambally: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I say this, on the one hand where we propose, and I say “we” collectively now in the Parliament, we join international calls for change. On the other hand businesses locally, regionally, internationally must comply with any new economic sanctions and trade restrictions placed on them. It is not enough, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for Government to pass laws. Those laws must be taken seriously and actually prevent certain trade and interactions from taking place and this is what we—the intent is behind the Motion and the attached statement of the President. So I say this and I want to set the tone that this is what we are about.

I want to turn to now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the history of the power in the security council. And as I said earlier the reason for taking this route, this adjustment to my contribution, it is because sometimes when we go to look at these matters what has been debated it can remain elusive to ordinary citizens as to what is being discussed and why we are saying some of the things we are in fact saying. So I talk about the history of power in the security council. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, very quickly, the security council is the most powerful of the principle

organs of the United Nations and for those who may not be familiar all inside here are but for those out there it comprises 15 members, five of which are permanent members, we call them the P5 countries and 10 of which are elected for two year terms.

I did make a very light comment, and I am sure the Member for San Fernando West will not mind if I share it with the House, that when the hon. Attorney General was piloting this Motion, and making the contribution, I said, “Member for San Fernando West you would have made a much more alive contribution when we are debating this”. But I said that lightly, no disrespect meant to the Attorney General, simply because on the last occasion when there were a similar Motion and a statement presented to the House, some of these matters, the then Attorney General, Member for San Fernando West would have touched on some of these matters to explain how we arrived at where we were.

This security council, Mr. Deputy Speaker, has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The council sits continuously and can take action with respect to the threats, to the peace, breaches of the peace, and act of aggression provided the five permanent members do not exercise their right of veto, those P5 countries. The requirement for the concurring vote of the five permanent members does not apply to procedural decisions which can be taken by an affirmative vote of nine security council members. Abstentions do not constitute a vote, and the reason why I am going into this because I am also showing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, how it is countries who are part of the UN can also have their say in some of these decision-makings notwithstanding being the P5 countries.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, decisions of the security council are binding on all member states of the United Nations and examples include sanctions on the supply of arms, the related material to certain countries in conflict, the security council can also authorize the use of military force, the security council may also establish subsidiary organs—

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Standing Order 48(1), please.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Again, Member, the statement from the President, let us stick to that particular statement. Again we do not want to extend it to all the various organs of the United Nations and so on, that you are speaking about. Okay, so again, please tie it up quickly or if not move on to your other point, please.

Mr. D. Rambally: Yes. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, very quickly I tie in that to the fact that the statement of the President speaks about, with respect to proliferation, financing and there is reference that paragraph (a):

“The global approach aimed at preventing non-state actors from taking part in proliferation-related activities (United Nations Security Council Resolution...”

So I am not debating the content of the resolutions. I was simply making reference, and I tie it up to say that this is how the security council puts in gear something which at the international level they deem necessary for treating with some of these illicit activities. And I move very quickly to the fact that you have sanctions and when they pass these sanctions, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have an international obligation to implement into domestic law, which is a procedure which we will have to investigate. Whilst procedurally something has ended up

here, we will have to look at the binding provisions of the Security Council Resolutions.

4.45 p.m.

We are also questioning and considering the threat to international peace and security, and so this is what the sanctions are. So that for anybody who is following this debate or proposes to engage in the debate in any form or manner, whether in the Parliament or even outside, will understand that what this prohibition is about, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So I say that, and when I spoke I said I wanted to introduce this terminology. It is recent. We call it “lawfare”. And lawfare is just simply referring to, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where we have the implementation of laws and we have the implementation of steps being taken by the UN National Security Council in conjunction with countries that have a duty to implement whatever resolution are passed. And this now is something that is replacing what we call the more traditional kinetic or what is in common parlance, we would say physical and blood-soaked art of warfare. So instead of combating terrorism and illicit activities on the part of certain countries, we are taking this route. That is the point, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So what is being debated here is in fact a situation of Iran. Not a case study, but a real situation where what is being questioned is the lawfare strategy that is to be implemented against Iran. That is what is being debated, and we are saying on this side that we have no difficulty with the particular statement of the President. What we have to do is to take it in the international law context, an area which I had introduced at the beginning that I wanted to go to. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is important that we take note why this is being placed today, where we are

debating it, why it is being introduced. Something which we must not pay any light heed to following the terrorist events of, for example, September 11, 2001, we had certain resolutions being passed and all of these national security resolutions ensure—

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Standing Order 48(1) please.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Again, Member, move on to another point.

Mr. D. Rambally: So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, following that event we come to what is before the House here today, and the simple point is that we are dealing with border; we are dealing with travel; we are talking about passenger security; we are talking about illicit financing; we are talking about phrasing obligations. These all go hand in hand with a continuous series of threats that are plaguing the international population.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, saying what I have said and being questioned about the relevance of what I said, I come to what is the balancing of liberty and security, and this is the test that we have to look at when we are considering and we are debating the statement. Yes, we are not objecting to this. We are saying, however, that there must a continuous assessment, something which was raised by Member for Princes Town when he made his contribution, something which was followed on by my colleague Member for Naparima, and it boils down to the balancing of liberty and security and this is the concluding point, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Whilst we deal with all of the matters that have been raised in this statement—it is something that it creates a legal framework, something which Member for San Fernando West referred to—it does create a legal framework for preserving international security, protecting human rights, combating terror yes,

but the body of law interacts with domestic law, and this is where we know that under previous statements which were submitted in similar situations, matters were in fact brought before the local courts. So when we are talking about debating it here, we also have to look at how it is interpreted and how it is being implemented by the domestic courts, and that is where, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we must look at the balancing of the liberty with security. So we have a situation where both the Parliament and the courts have a duty to ensure that we maintain an equilibrium between security and liberty, and that we integrate and harmonize domestic, foreign and international policy.

I am not for a moment supposing that this balance is easy to achieve because there are pressures which Member for Princes Town spoke about when he spoke about the multilateral entities. That balance is not easy to achieve because of the pressures at international levels, at domestic levels, and they often compound what it is we deem necessary, namely what is codified in the statement of the President and presented for us here today. But there must be a continuous assessment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of these provisions when implemented because these will be sought to be implemented for a substantial period of time, and that is where the balancing of liberty and security takes place. So we are not for any moment saying no to this. We are saying that we agree, that we support, but insofar as we operate within an international framework, a framework of having to be bound by the UN resolution from the Security Council, that we must also pay attention to whether in its implementation and interpretation by Parliament and the courts, that we are balancing the rights of liberty and security.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with these few words I end by saying that that one

point that I had raised in relation to section 4, subsection (4), that is an—

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Standing Order 48(1) please.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I will give you the opportunity to wrap up seeing that you are ending, Member.

Mr. D. Rambally: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is an important point, section 4, subsection (4), that we hear from the Attorney General on that point. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I agree with my colleagues on this side, and as I said, we do support subject to those matters we have raised moving forward please, and I thank you for the opportunity. Thank you.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I recognize the hon. Attorney General.

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (Sen. The Hon. Reginald Armour SC): Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I sometimes find myself having to regroup to take stock when I am faced with mixed signals. Because when I listened to the last speaker I thought I heard him say clearly that his side was not opposing the Motion—I think that is what he said—but he wanted some clarification. But I am certain that when his side commenced their contribution to this debate by the Member for Princes Town, there was a clear suggestion coming from the Member for Princes Town and indeed followed by the Member for Naparima, that this Motion is a waste of time. So I have to regroup to ask myself what am I responding to and I will attempt, as best as I can, to provide in my response some consistency and hopefully some clarity.

The Member for Princes Town seemed to be suggesting that Trinidad and Tobago undertakes some unilateral weapons of mass destruction inspections, but

the reality is that as members of the United Nations, obligated as we are to United Nations security resolutions, it is a fiction to suggest that when we are called on to adhere to our international obligations under united security resolutions we should irresponsibly, whimsically or otherwise, seek to suggest that that which we are doing is not in adherence to our international obligations.

If I can, next as I attempt to respond with some consistency to responses that appeared inconsistent, if I can next move to a point, illuminate it would seem, that the Members on the other side seem not to have sufficiently appreciated. And that is the point that the debate today which is before this House is not consistent with the language of the Economic Sanctions Act and in particular section 4, subsection (4).

[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

So perhaps I should begin my contribution on that by reading section 4, subsection (4), with your leave, Madam Speaker:

“Within fourteen days of the commencement of an Order made under subsection (1), the President shall deliver to the Speaker for presentation to the House of Representatives a statement setting out the specific grounds on which the decision to make the Order was based, and a date shall be fixed for a debate on the statement as soon as practicable but in any event not later than one month from the date of the commencement of the Order.”

When we look at the Order, the Order does not state on its face a date of commencement. The Order, therefore, takes effect on the date of its publication. The date of its publication is the 27th of March. We are today at the 26th of April, and the debate and the Order Paper is therefore within. The language purport and

any reasonable construction on section 4, subsection (4), of the Economic Sanctions Act, Chap. 81:05 of the Laws of Trinidad and Tobago. I hope those who have been less than clear in their understanding of the law and the process by which we are here, are assisted.

And then I turn next to another point that the Member for Siparia seemed to place much significance on having regard to how impressed he is by the time that he spent in the United Nations—Naparima, I beg your pardon. Apologies, the Member for Naparima. Section 4(3) of the Act under reference provides that:

“Subject to subsection (5), an Order made under subsection (1) shall, unless previously revoked, remain in force for three months.”

Legal Notice No 44, dated March 12, 2019, extended the effect of certain clauses.

So clauses 21, 22 and 23 of the Order were extended until the 18th of October, 2020 and then it expired. Clauses 12, 19 and 20 of the Order are declared by that 2019 Order to continue in force until the 18th of October, 2023 and then to expire. Clauses 16 and 17 of the Order shall continue in force until the 18th of October, 2025 and then expire. And clauses 1 to 11, 13 to 15, 18 and 24 to 28 shall continue in force until revoked. So on a rational and reasonable reading of the 2019 Order, whilst it is true that there is a 10-year span that commenced in 2015 and goes to 2025, I beg your pardon, the fact is that aspects of the 2019 Order have expired.

5.00 p.m.

One is due to expire on the 18th of October, 2023. And therefore, we are here today on the Order and the President’s statement, laid in this House on the 26th of March on an Order that commenced on 26th of March, to extend for a further period of

time. I hope that clarifies the obfuscation that has been introduced.

The Member for Naparima dealt with some other things that he is familiar with, so he made much ado about the EU blacklisting on tax. Well, Madam Speaker, this debate and the Order that is before you, on the imprimatur of Her Excellency the President, does not have anything to do with tax. It has to do a United Nations Order to deal with weapons of mass destruction, proliferation of financing, anti-money laundering, counter financing terrorism and proliferation financing. So the suggestion that certain things have expired with reference to taxation in 2017 simply has to no relevance to what we are about today.

The Member for Chaguanas West concerned himself with questions of fairness and rights, and it would be instructive in the concerns that he has that he might take the time after we adjourn today to refresh himself on what the actual Order that we are today asking this House to pass provides for. So very briefly if we look at the Order, under “Freezing of Assets”, section 3(1):

“The Attorney General...”—must—“apply to...the Court...to freeze the property of...”

—listed entities, et cetera. And when we look at section 4(2)(d), you will see that a judge on an application for any such order is entitled to:

“make...provision as is just in the circumstances to preserve the rights of any *bona fide* third party acting in good faith.”

Where you look at the Orders that are made next, under subsection (4):

“Where an order is served on an individual under subclause (3), action shall...”—be taken—“immediately to restrict the availability of the property, subject to the order, in accordance with the terms of the order.”

When you read the Order throughout, Madam Speaker, the thrust and import of that Order which comes under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Judicature of this country, once passed by the House, bestows a statutory jurisdiction on the Supreme Court to ensure that even whilst it protects the citizens of this country from the threat of terrorism, financing proliferation, anti-money laundering, it ensures that the Judiciary takes the care and the time to respect the rights of all of the citizens and all of the third parties who may be touched or otherwise affected by the Order which we are asking this court today to affirm. So I think that takes care of the concern of the Member for Chaguanas West as far as he is concerned about fairness and the protection of rights.

And there is one just final point that I will make, Madam Speaker, because I fear that I will continue to disappoint those on the other side because my style is not to shout, it is not to speak at length in obtuse and obfuscatory terms, to speak nothing to the wind.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Armour SC: I speak relevance and I try as best as I can to be clear in what I say. And I will end by saying, let me make this abundantly clear, on behalf of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government which I have the honour to serve, we are in full support of the United Nations Charter, we are in full support of the principles and pillars of membership of the United Nations. This Parliament, with respect, is not the United Nations Security Council, notwithstanding amateur pretensions on behalf of some to suggest that we should embark on weapons of mass destruction inspection. We fully understand our international obligations. This Parliament is being called upon today to do the

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responsible thing and to avoid ventilating irresponsible statements in a debate to make up time. It is our responsibility and our national obligations are clear. I beg to move. Thank you very much.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved:

That the Statement of Her Excellency the President, pursuant to section 4(4) of the Economic Sanctions Act, Chap. 81:05, setting out the specific grounds on which the decision to make the Economic Sanctions (Implementation of United Nations Resolutions on the Islamic Republic of Iran) Order, 2023 was based, be approved.

LAND ACQUISITION

The Minister of Works and Transport (Sen. The Hon. Rohan Sinanan):

Madam Speaker, I beg to move the following Motion standing in my name:

Be it resolved that this House approve the decision of the President to acquire the lands described in Appendix II for the public purpose specified.

Madam Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak on the Motion before us. Madam Speaker, it is noteworthy that the Government shall continue to be guided by the process of compulsory acquisition as set out in the Land Acquisition Act, Chap. 58:01, which regulates land acquisition and establishes defined procedures for acquisition for lands and resettlement regarding affected persons in Trinidad and Tobago. Madam Speaker, the Act also specifies provisions to provide for fair compensation to those persons whose land is acquired by the State and brings transparency to the entire process and therefore

gives the Commissioner of State Lands the responsibility to acquire land on behalf of the State.

In this Motion, Madam Speaker, this honourable House is being asked, by resolution, to approve an Order made under section 5(1) of the Land Acquisition Act, Chap. 58:01, declaring that the lands under Phase 1, consisting of packages 1A, 1B, 3 and 4, for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension project are required for public purpose.

Madam Speaker, given the varying stages of activities under the Phase 1 package, the Ministry of Works and Transport proposes to vest the lands to be acquired for Phase 1, packages 1A, 1B, 3 and 4 in the State and in so doing, seize the accrual of interest of the properties to be acquired. Madam Speaker, this honourable House is advised that by the publication of section 5(1), Order 53 declaration, the subject lands would be formally vested in the State, thereby allowing the Ministry to facilitate completion of work. Madam Speaker, this project spans from Cumuto Junction to the Toco Main Road.

The Ministry of Works and Transport has led the drive to formally vest the land acquired by the State for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Sangre Grande. This is in line with good corporate governance, principles, accountability and the law as it relates to the Ministry's acquisition of land for road construction.

Madam Speaker, it should be noted that this is the first of its kind for the Ministry to formally vest land in the State prior to the completion of the highway construction project. It is the level of accountability and transparency which I have brought to the Ministry. This construction project started under and during my tenure, and it is reflected in the integrity of this Government. Madam Speaker, the last time land was vested for any project for the Ministry of Works and Transport

was in the 1970s.

Madam Speaker, what does a highway do for communities? It improves the standard of living, creates opportunities and creates a better society for its residents. This Government decided in 2015 to continue the Churchill Roosevelt Highway all the way to Sangre Grande. That project did not just come out of “ah hat”. It is actually a part of the highway improvement for the entire country, coming out of a study in the 1990s and, again, November 2006, which stated that the Churchill Roosevelt Highway should be continued all the way to Sangre Grande.

Madam Speaker, we could remember when the Churchill Roosevelt Highway ended at Barataria. That is where the Churchill Roosevelt Highway actually was, at the Barataria roundabout. Then it went on to Curepe, then it went on to Mausica, and from Mausica, it went all the way up to Wallerfield. Madam Speaker, we could remember when the Uriah Butler Highway ended right by Chaguanas, where Hulsie Bhaggan sat on the road. And we could remember trying to go to San Fernando on that single main road. Could you imagine if those highways were not built and you tried to go to San Fernando now, what would have happened?

I had heard the Opposition repeat several times that we are building a highway to nowhere. Unfortunately, when the highway was being continued all the way to San Fernando, going through Couva, Chaguanas and all those areas, the Government decided—did not take that standard, “this highway is going to nowhere”. The highway ended up in San Fernando and now we are all on the way to Point Fortin. The people of the eastern part of the island deserve a highway. They do suffer the inconvenience of spending hours in traffic jams. Madam Speaker, this highway is long overdue for the people of the eastern end of the

country.

Why do we have to vest under section 5? We know of several examples where land was acquired by the State and never vested. One example that comes to mind is the situation which took us all the way to the Privy Council, the land at Tumpuna Road where the owner of the land took the State to the Privy Council and won that case because the land, although it was state land, was never vested in the State. And up today, there is bar on the corner of Tumpuna Road which is a typical and a very good example as to why when the State pays for land, you are supposed to vest the land into the State. As I said, this is the first time in Trinidad and Tobago the right thing is being done, where even before the highway is completed, the land is being vested in the State.

5.15 p.m.

We at the Ministry intend to continue this new system of vesting the land. Very soon, you will see the land being vested for the Curepe Interchange. We are at the final stages of that, and we will have to actually go retroactive to try to get all the land on the San Fernando to Point Fortin Highway vested in the State. Then we have go back to the lands at the Aranguez Interchange, because there is quite a lot of the land in Trinidad that the State paid for, and as I said, is not vested in the State. I want to congratulate the team at the Ministry of Works, at NIDCO for taking this very proactive measure and securing the land that the State is about to pay for, so that future generations can benefit from it.

Madam Speaker, I also want to take this opportunity to clear up some misinformation that is in the public domain. I do not know where that information came from. I saw it from one of the Members on the opposite side, claim to get it from freedom of information. Madam Speaker, I want to urge the population, do not trust that information. As Minister of Works and Transport, I can assure this

country that no Minister in this Cabinet had to recuse themselves from five pieces of land with any interest on that highway. The lands to be acquired here are lands owned by residents who either live on these properties or own these properties for the last 20 or 25 years. So, I would urge the Member who is brandishing this information to recheck his sources and reconfirm that. Because I can confirm that none of my colleagues had to recuse themselves from this Note for five parcels of land, and I stand behind that. Madam Speaker, I beg to move. Thank you.

Question proposed.

Dr. Roodal Mooninal (*Oropouche East*): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity to speak to this Motion in the name of the Minister of Works and Transport. Madam Speaker, it is my intention to be equally brief as the Minister, since I understand on this side of the House we have a long queue of eager debaters lining up, waiting patiently to contribute on this very significant matter.

Madam Speaker, the Minister was, of course, as I said, very brief on this matter. It is a matter that has engaged the attention of the national community, the courts, including the Privy Council, I believe. And it concerns the acquisition of lands, unless I am mistaken, I believe 35 parcels of land we have before us.

Madam Speaker, one of the challenges for a Parliament—32 pieces, Madam Speaker.— One of challenges for this Parliament, in the process that we undertake for the parliamentary approval is, of course, many, if not all of us, with the possible exclusion of the Minister who himself, I believe is domiciled in that part of the island and has its roots, I believe, somewhere along that highway himself; except for the Minister, I think very few of us would have a good understanding of the geography and the areas; the lands in question. But we did have the opportunity to look at the cadastral sheet that was in the public domain and the drawings that

suggest where each of these parcels of land will be found.

Madam Speaker, I took note from the brief remarks of the Minister on the issues he has raised concerning transparency and accountability, the importance of the activity today, well the importance of highways as a whole, the Minister raised, and, of course, the last issue he raised. And I would like to rebut briefly on some of these matters. I can begin with the last, first.

Madam Speaker, a matter in the public domain in the last few days concerns a statement made indeed by our colleague from Barataria/San Juan suggesting that a Member of the Cabinet and a Member of this House who is with us, indeed, found himself in a position where he had to recuse himself at the Cabinet, when the Cabinet considered, Madam Speaker, this matter.

Madam Speaker, the honourable gentlemen in question has also issued a statement dated today denying that he ever recused himself from the Cabinet. Madam Speaker, we are all honourable in this House, and the gentleman who has indeed issued the statement must be taken at his word. Because no one will suggest that an honourable Member of this House would indeed, at the least, seek to intentionally mislead the national community and the Parliament in this case. The Minister of Works and Transport came out, and the last thing he did before leaving the batting crease was to bat for his colleague.

But Madam Speaker, I just want to put on the record, since the Minister raised the matter, it was on April 07, 2021 that in response to a request for access to official documents, Madam Speaker, concerning recusals at the Cabinet level, an answer was provided and, Madam Speaker, it states in black and white, it states in black and white that the Member of Parliament for St. Joseph recused himself on a matter, the subject of which was, and I quote:

Issuance of Orders under section 4 of the Land Acquisition Act, Chap.

58:01 in respect of five parcels of land to be acquired for the purpose of facilitating the construction of Phase One of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Project.

Now, all I am saying at this stage is that our honourable friend from St. Joseph may want to speedily contact the secretary of the Cabinet and ensure that this matter is resolved, because the public record—and this is pursuant to a request through a legal process through the Freedom of Information Act. And the Member for St. Joseph would want to indicate to the Cabinet Secretariat that they may have defamed him, they may have brought him into public ridicule on this matter, because they note that he recused himself from a Cabinet meeting in 2020, concerning lands, the subject of which is indeed this Motion here today.

As I say, Madam Speaker, I dare not even suggest, insinuate, or hint that the Member is doing anything naughty on this matter, but that the Member is completely innocent and therefore the Cabinet Secretariat and the Cabinet should reflect on this matter, if it is, not if it is, but I want to suggest that they may well be trying to set up the Member for St. Joseph in this matter. If the Member was not being set up, and it appears to be an accurate recollection of the Cabinet, then that is another matter. That is a matter that speaks to something much more dastardly that I do not wish, at this stage, I do not wish to put words to describe what kind of act it could be.

So, Madam Speaker, and just for record, and before I leave this issue, to indicate that the Member for Barataria/San Juan has indeed issued a statement dated this day in which he has laid out for the public. He has laid out all the facts, including the FOI request, the FOI information, and the quotation from the FOI that speaks to the Member for St. Joseph recusing himself on a matter involving lands for the highway. The Member for St. Joseph, incidentally, also recused

himself from other matters, but that is not the matter that we wish to pursue today. So I leave that there to say that something is amiss. There is something not right in these matters, and the Cabinet secretary indeed, in response to a legal request, may have, I do not know why, but they may have put in the public domain information which, if incorrect, is horrible and if correct, is worse.

Madam Speaker, and I said that I in the context of the issue of transparency and accountability raised by the Minister when he came to the Parliament. Now Madam Speaker, the Minister praised himself and his Government, for which he is entitled to, on bringing this Motion to approve the lands in question. Now, the Minister is also aware that in this country we have a checkered history with land acquisition; Trinidad and Tobago.

Quite recently, the Member would be aware that there was a series of events involving the land acquisition across in Tobago, of 133 properties, in which one went to court and the ever-vigilant Member for Diego North/East had cause to crank up his keyboard at the late unsocial hours to correct a newspaper article suggesting that the Minister, under his domain, under his title of “Lord of the Treasury”, something was wrong in how they conveyed a court judgment involving one, I believe it was Willwin or Walwin in Tobago, where, Madam Speaker, the long and short is that they paid, the State paid twice for the same piece of land. The Minister had to explain it away, as only he can. He had to explain it away, that when the senior claimed the money, he claimed on behalf of the junior. And then the senior died, having collected the money. And then the junior went and claimed that the senior never acted as an agent of himself; and he collected money again. And that is the truth. The “Lord of the Treasury” had to account, which he sought to do.

But, Madam Speaker, this is the fundamental issue I raise here in that

example, in that this type of process is fraught with difficulties, administrative difficulties, legal obstacles, political issues, and so on, as the case may. So, do not forget land acquisition in this country led a citizen to, I believe, to go and sit down on the road and starve for, I do not know, 40 days or 30 days, or something. So that it—it is an emotional issue as well. Land acquisition is an emotional issue, because the people you are dealing with here, Madam Speaker, and from my preliminary enquiry, Madam Speaker, I was told that many of the persons whose names are indeed on this Motion, dealing with the parcels of land, Madam Speaker, they have died. So you are not dealing with the persons here now. I do not want to call every name here. But you are not dealing with them. You are dealing with their estate and in many cases, there are ongoing disputes at the court concerning lands.

And the Minister, maybe he did not have enough time as he thought he would have, but could have given us an appraisal of the legal status on these matters, in terms of estates or where the persons are still alive and you can meet and treat. Because this is not a—as the Minister inadvertently suggested that this is so great a day and we are so happy to be here to vest land and acquire land, and so on. This begins negotiations with persons and estates. And if we are to avoid the Tobago issue, where the State paid twice for the same piece of land, if we are to avoid that, care must be taken.

I believe, unless I am mistaken, NIDCO, state enterprise, is also involved in the management of this highway, the project management. They will also play a part in land acquisition, negotiations, ultimately deciding on valuation and price, and so on, and NIDCO has an important role to play in this business.

5. 30 p.m.

And it reminds me, Madam Speaker, that this Government unless I am

mistaken, almost five years ago appointed a commission of enquiry into land acquisition from the highway San Fernando to Point Fortin. That commission has spent according to budget documents \$4.3 million. That commission has not met in public once. In fact, they changed commissioners in the time and nothing has happened from a public point of view. Maybe behind closed doors they are reading books and papers and studying maps and so on, but nothing has happened. And that was to look into, incidentally, issues that the Government felt were issues of the concern, suspicious, they said, about land acquisition for the Point Fortin highway.

But I could tell the Minister, he was so proud today to talk about highways and byways and so on, the importance of highways, we are extremely proud that when we were in office we moved San Fernando to Point Fortin and we would have completed that by 2017—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Dr. R. Moonilal:—had there not be a democratic disaster in 2015. So Madam Speaker, we are proud and we understand the importance of highways to development. The Minister spoke of that, that highways are critical if you are going to have commercial and industrial development, residential development, income generating, income distribution, highways, roadways, transport. These are capital goods and they are very, very important. And I am happy that the Government sees, you know, highways and infrastructure as important today.

I remember when we were building the Biche High School, a Member sitting on the other side said we were building it for “douen and parrot”. That school remained closed for 10 years, they said it would have a gas leak. It opened in 2010 and to this day no gas leak—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Dr. R. Mooninal:—Madam Speaker. So coming back to highway and land acquisition, Madam Speaker, I can see it in your eyes that we need to get back to this land acquisition and the highway.

Hon. Members: [*Laughter*]

Dr. R. Mooninal: Madam Speaker. So the commission of enquiry issue I put on board because that has been an issue that is outstanding, and maybe the Minister on his winding up will tell us something about that, because I find it strange that the same NIDCO that was involved in the acquisition of land for Point Fortin/San Fernando presumably is the same NIDCO with the same staff, the same system, the same everything involved in land acquisition for this project as well, Madam Speaker. This project the Churchill Roosevelt Highway extension to Manzanilla, phase one. Indeed, I wanted to say it is phase one that we are dealing with in this business here.

Madam Speaker, the other matter is that the time, Madam Speaker, in the history of this country. We have had horrible experiences with the time it takes between what we are doing today to settlement, final settlement with landowners, occupiers as the case may be, persons with rights of one kind or another in land acquired for public purposes. And they are very sad stories that persons of course who own lands they die, and years and years after Government has not settled with their beneficiary, with their family, whoever is in legal occupation and so on, or possession of those lands.

And the Minister again may want to reflect on that because while over the years there is a legal process as we are going through here to acquire land, governments over the years and not one, PNM Governments and other governments have also acquired lands by other means, by direct negotiations, private treaty, or a mixture, a mixture. I believe in other highway projects we have

had a mixture between land acquisition and other processes and so on.

So Madam Speaker, the time frame is a critical matter that we want to ask the Minister to reflect on with his technical people and so on, to ensure that these matters even when passed can be done in a manner that persons can bring settlement to their life.

Now, I do not know if anyone in our Chamber here has ever had to give up—which really you are doing, give up your property for public purpose. Whether it is a playground, a highway, whatever it is, bridge in this case. I think there was a bridge—the issue of bridges recently. I do not think people understand that it is something, Madam Speaker, because I had worked before on an oversight committee dealing with land acquisition, I understand the trauma that people who have lived on lands for 40 years, they are born there, their grandmother, grandparents had the land, to give it up for the State.

And yes, as we say in colloquial language, “Yuh navel string bury there” and you have to give that up to the State. And sometimes in conditions where you are not happy with the settlement because there is a process, a legal process, and the State will make an offer, a counter offer and so on and they will agree. But people hurt, people hurt when they have to give up their lands for the State, but that is the law, you have to. That is why it is called compulsory acquisition, you have to. So that, if you have to do this, Mr. Minister, then you try to do it in a smooth and fast-tracked way so that persons find, you know, some comfort that having given up the lands that they are so passionately tied to, they are properly, reasonably compensated in a good speedy time, and that helps with managing projects like this.

Madam Speaker, of course, the Minister told us about the importance of highways, and I would only indicate to him that this particular project that you

acquiring these lands, while there was a court judgment on this matter, I believe 2020 if I am not mistaken, involving the EMA and a group in Trinidad. While that did resolve to a certain extent, the matter, there are still outstanding questions raised by academics, raised by social activists, raised by businessmen, in the area as well I believe, as to the impact of this project not only on the environment per se, but also on matters as flooding.

Now, Madam Speaker, this week you have seen what has happened yesterday. In fact, I understand even now we have some problems around Port of Spain and other areas and so on. This has been a week of flood and blood. And Madam Speaker, we have newspaper reports—I “doh” want to go and read newspaper reports now, you know, the entire report. But where businessmen in that area are suggesting that this highway construction, acquiring these parcels of land for this purpose may well lead to further flooding, and there are cases like this. There is a case in my constituency, Madam Speaker, land acquired for a highway and temporary arrangements were made for drainage but because the work stopped and has not restarted for years, the temporary drainage measure became permanent and led to flooding. And that is one of the risks you have when work starts and work stops and so on, with these matters.

But the Minister of course, I think a native of that area, a son of the soil in that area, that is why we were quite shocked that you had no private interest in this one. But I am sure if you had you would have properly declared. So he would understand and I hope he would understand the concerns of, you know, stakeholders on that corner of the island to suggest that it would have some problems there with the environment, with flooding and so on.

So Madam Speaker, those are just a few items, I trust I did not take too much more time than the Minister in piloting the measure and I can remove the

Land Acquisition
Dr. R. Mooninal (cont'd)

bales there. Thank you very much.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Minister of Works and Transport.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Minister, I did not see—well, you stood up after. Okay, so the Minister has agreed to allow you, Member for Couva—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping and crosstalk*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Couva North.

Mr. Ravi Ratiram (*Couva North*): Thank you most kindly, Madam Speaker, and special thank you to the hon. Minister of Works and Transport for giving me this opportunity to make a contribution towards this evening's debate. Madam Speaker, as I rise I take this opportunity to extend Eid Mubarak to members of our Muslim community, may the blessings of Almighty Allah be showered in abundance upon you, your family, and all the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. As my hon. leader has always taught us, we acknowledge God in front and we walk behind. Today, as I join this—[*Interruption*]

Madam Speaker: Members. Members, I cannot believe such a devout greeting would create all of this response, all right? So let us comply with Standing Order 53.

Hon. Member: [*Inaudible*]—Spanish.

Madam Speaker: Continue, Member.

Hon. Hinds: Madam Speaker, he was just suggesting the Member said it in Spanish so that all—

Madam Speaker: Member, please. Member for Couva North, please continue, thank you.

Mr. R. Ratiram: Thank you most kindly and I will try to ignore the disruption

from the Member for Laventille West. Today however, Madam Speaker, as I join this debate on this Motion, Motion 1, which states:

“Be It Resolved that this House approve the decision of the President to acquire the lands described in Appendix II for the public purpose specified.”

Moved by the hon. Minister of Works and Transport, I ask that it be placed on the record that I am not happy within this Motion, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, in preparing for this debate on this Motion, I visited the communities of Cumuto, Guaico, Sangre Grande. And Madam Speaker, one thing members of these communities shared in common is that they were also not happy with the project that this Motion is associated with. And I will soon share with you, Madam Speaker, why.

Madam Speaker, this Motion relates to the acquisition of 32 parcels of land situated in close proximity to the vicinity of Guaico Trace, Guaico and the Eastern Main Road, Guaico by the State for the purpose of construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway extension to Manzanilla, phase one. The cumulative total area that is being acquired is approximately 26.4743 hectares of land, a major part of which are forested areas.

Madam Speaker, I am not happy because the background surrounding this Motion is filled with a lot of secrecy, it is filled with the lack of accountability, and the lack of transparency, Madam Speaker. It is filled with a lot of questions, in particular, persons questioning the Government’s decision from an environmental perspective, as well as questions on how it relates to this Government’s priority in such significant capital expenditure associated with the project that this Motion is connected to.

Madam Speaker, I refer to a *Guardian* newspaper article entitled:

“Unease by Grande residents, experts over \$1.7B CR Highway extension.”

—by Joshua Seemungal, dated the 18th of December, 2022. In the article, it states and I quote, Madam Speaker:

“Academics, environmental activists and Sangre Grande business owners and residents are all questioning the Government’s decision to move forward with the project, which has already cost hundreds of millions of dollars.”

Madam Speaker, despite the many objections raised by the various stakeholders, one must ask the question: why is the Government insistent on proceeding on this objective with this project? How many persons will this \$1.7 billion taxpayer funded bill serve? Is this another case of jobs for the boys? How many persons beyond the employ of the Government’s contractor friends will this project really benefit? In the article cited, Madam Speaker, it is stated that:

“Traffic engineer Dr Rae Furlonge is a fierce critic of the highway project.

The traffic engineer does not believe the project is necessary, as it serves little purpose.”

Dr. Furlonge states, and I quote:

“I am a firm believer that when money is tight, you have to restructure your priorities. Who will benefit from these five kilometres? I think it’s more than \$200 million on that road and it is not finished yet.”

Across the country, Madam Speaker, citizens are suffering from a lack of basic conveniences such as a regular supply of pipe-borne water, or proper roads to drive on, pothole-ridden roads that are supposed to be maintained by this Ministry, the Ministry of Works and Transport.

Madam Speaker, farmers are being flooded out because of the lack of proper drainage, because of the failure of this Ministry to clean and maintain the watercourses. Farmers are suffering from the lack of infrastructure such as agricultural access roads. And Madam Speaker, \$1.7 billion could have probably

been put towards CCTV cameras on the corner of every street across the entire country, especially where businesses are located so that the killers of businessmen Shiv Ramjattan and Rishad Ali could have been tracked and located by our under-resourced and overwhelmed police service.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

5.45 p.m.

Madam Speaker, 1.7 billion could have been put towards the purchase of fire appliances so that the lives of innocent eight-year-old, Zaya, and her mother, Kemba Morris of Quinam Road, could have been saved and been alive today.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. R. Ratiram: Instead, Madam Speaker, we are here today to debate a Motion to acquire lands in the vicinity of Guaico Trace, Guaico; the Eastern Main Road, Guaico, in close proximity to where Blue Mountain waters is located, to allow this Government to fast track the wastage of taxpayers' money, the squandermania, the distorted priorities and the mismanagement of this failed administration, this failed Government, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, as this Government proceeds with the acquisition of these 32 parcels of land for the construction of the highway to nowhere, as the hon. Minister of Works and Transport said, some persons are saying, it is because the initial package to this project started in the forest and ended in the forest, so that is why it was referred to as "the highway to nowhere". Further deforestation will be executed, as they have already done to the area between 300 metres east of Cumuto Road and 600 metres west of Guaico Trace.

The central issue of deforestation, as it relates to the environmental regression of our natural ecosystem, is an important one. Deforestation or destruction of forest areas has been one of the most unfortunate consequences of

human intervention worldwide. In the case of the forested land in question, these forests would have taken decades and centuries to develop, and contain the associated abundant wildlife and ecosystem. Madam Speaker, I turned to a *Guardian* newspaper article written by Radhica De Silva on the 25th of May, 2020, entitled, “T&T Deforestation, at crisis levels”. And this same article can be found on the website of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries. In the article, Madam Speaker, it has been reported—

Mr. Gonzales: Madam Speaker, a point of order, Standing Order 48(1).

Madam Speaker: Overruled.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. R. Ratiram: Thank you most kindly, Madam Speaker. And it has been reported that:

“...deforestation has now reached crisis levels...”

In the article, Madam Speaker, it has been reported that:

“...deforestation has now reached crisis levels and has escalated even more since the...”—COVID lockdown.

We can get more information if we go to the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, on the website.

So, Madam Speaker, in pursuit of this manmade development goal of this administration, we are going to witness the continued destruction of a significant portion of our natural forest reserves, while deforestation is already reported to be at an alarming level in this country.

Further to the hypocrisy, Madam Speaker, of this administration, it is more than evident if one turns to the Government’s Public Sector Investment Programme. And allow me the opportunity to cite from this at page 253 from the current 2023 PSIP, where it states under the section on “Forestry”, and I quote:

“Government continues to support local forest ecosystems as it provides for several critical services that support extractive and non-extractive uses.”

Madam Speaker, the 2022 PSIP states under the same section at page—

Madam Speaker: So I have allowed you to talk about forests as it relates—you had set a certain foundation saying that the lands are adjacent to forested lands and so. I am going to uphold Standing Order 48(1) if we are going into PSIP and forestry and that sort of thing. Okay? So I will urge you to get back on track, relate what you are doing to this. Okay? I think you have made the point about the environmental aspect and the ecosystems aspect. Please move on.

Mr. R. Ratiram: Thank you most kindly, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, when we go to the ODPM website with respect to deforestation, deforestation is listed as one of the major causes of flooding. The lack of vegetation encourages water to flow over the slopes—

Mr. Gonzales: Madam Speaker, on a point of order—

Mr. R. Ratiram: —rather than the—

Mr. Gonzales: —Standing Order 48(1).

Madam Speaker: All right. So, again, I do not—I agree, this is not a debate about deforestation. Okay? And as I said, you made the point already with respect to how this highway affects forests. All right? So let us go on.

Mr. R. Ratiram: Thank you most kindly, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, as we proceed with the project, with the construction of road network, the establishment of the road network increases the existence of paved surfaces, thereby increasing surface run-off. This occurs since forested surfaces, which would have naturally allowed the process of infiltration to happen, have now been removed. We are already experiencing the impact of deforestation and subsequent

flooding associated with this project, Madam Speaker, and in the *Guardian* newspaper article, dated 2022—the 18th of December, 2022, it is stated that:

“While some academics and activists argue that the project is unnecessary from a developmental standpoint, some business owners and residents are claiming that it is worsening flooding in parts of...Grande.”

Madam Speaker, the issue of flooding is one that is not only raised by academics and activists, but also by Members from this august House. I refer to a *Guardian* newspaper article entitled, “Unscrupulous developers blamed for Grande flooding”, by Otto Carrington”, dated the 9th of November, 2022. The article states:

“Hundreds of homes were underwater and many were counting their losses in Sangre Grande yesterday, as floodwater as high as four feet turned streets into rivers...

“There were reports of flooding in the Sangre Grande town...along the Eastern Main Road, Guaico...”—

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Madam Speaker—

Mr. R. Ratiram:

“...Vega de Oropouche...”—

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: —Standing Order 48(1), please.

Madam Speaker: Okay. So, Member for Couva North, I will just give you a little leeway on that. I think the point you have made already. So this is not flooding in its entirety. I think if you tie this quickly to this acquisition and then press on very quickly. Okay?

Mr. R. Ratiram: Thank you most kindly, Madam Speaker. And, Madam Speaker, the Member for Toco/Sangre Grande, MP Roger Monroe, was out in this area where the flooding took place in the vicinity of Blue Mountain water in Guaico,

around where this parcel of land is, downstream to the wetlands that we are going to now acquire and construct this highway. And it was interesting that MP Monroe, the hon. Member for Toco/Sangre Grande, stated:

“The Railway Road saw some water at some high levels for the first time I would have seen something like that...”

So—

Mr. Gonzales: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, 48(1).

Madam Speaker: Continue, Member.

Mr. R. Ratiram: Thank you most kindly, Madam Speaker. The hon. Member for Toco/Sangre Grande estimated:

“...that hundreds of residents would have been affected...”

And I am quoting here what the article quoted from the hon. Member:

“I understand that some areas have a waist-height water and some have just around chest-height water inside houses in some residential areas...”

Resident, Marsha Alfred, stated that:

“...she has been living in the area since she was eight years old and had never experienced flooding...”—like she did—“yesterday...”—according to this article.

So, Madam Speaker, here we have, after the commencement of this highway project, a Member from the Government Benches acknowledging the increase in flooding in this area and stating that it was the first time that he, the hon. Member for Toco/Sangre Grande, has seen this level of flooding.

Ms. Beckles: Madam Speaker, can I just ask what is the date of the article please, kindly?

Mr. R. Ratiram: The article?

Madam Speaker: Member for—I believe that the Member for Couva North had indicated, in the beginning, the source. But maybe he will oblige and repeat it.

Mr. R. Ratiram: Of course, I referred to a *Guardian* newspaper article entitled, “Unscrupulous developers blamed for Grande flooding”, by Otto Carrington, dated the 9th of November, 2022. That was just last year, Madam Speaker.

So, Madam Speaker, moving on with my contribution this afternoon, we acknowledge that the relevant government agency has received a Certificate of Environmental Clearance for the first package of Phase 1, that is CEC 4552/2016, for the establishment of a 5,000-metre highway, commencing at a point, 300 metres east of Cumuto Main Road and ending at a point, 600 metres west of Guaico Trace, Sangre Grande. However, Madam Speaker, we are currently seeing and experiencing the negative impact of this project. And now approval is being requested by this Motion for the acquisition of an additional 32 parcels of land for the continuation of this said project, which we can only assume will now have additional environmental impacts.

At this point, Madam Speaker, even the issuance of that CEC was in question, and as stated in the *Guardian* article—the *Guardian* newspaper article by Joshua Seemungal:

“There is evidence that the Environmental Management Authority’s... technical team initially warned the EMA that further investigations to determine the possible environmental impacts of this project were required.

The documents suggested that the team objected to the environmental clearance being given for the project, yet a certificate was granted.

The Sunday Guardian reviewed a copy of the CEC unit approval form...

In the document, the technical review team, which is supposed to determine whether the project can have the negative environmental impacts, clearly stated its concerns and objections to the granting of a CEC.”

It was reported in the same article, Madam Speaker, that is:

“...senior manager at the EMA had instructed...”—and I quote here—

“Please complete your review with the officers by Tuesday the 20th Lunchtime and advise me of how you will be addressing the conditions in the CEC...I expect to have a CEC for signature on Thursday 22nd 2017.”

Madam Speaker, you see, under this present Government, we are left to question the credibility of many things. Here we see even the granting of a CEC was done under question and we have had a degree of interference in what should have been an unbiased process focused on the well-being of the environment and to ensure development is conducted in a sustainable manner.

Madam Speaker, when I review all the information before me, whilst preparing for this contribution, I am left with more questions than answers. I want to share with you some of these questions in wrapping up, Madam Speaker. So today I am asking: Were these 32 parcels of land included and assessed in the initial scope of the works for the CEC application submitted by NIDCO for this project? And I am hoping that the hon. Minister of Works and Transport in wrapping up this discussion, he will be able to share this information with us, Madam Speaker. If not, will they be returning to the EMA to request a modification of CEC 4552/2016, given that the scope will now be expanded resulting in increased environmental risks? Will a new CEC application be submitted to approve development of these 32 parcels of land? At what point will the environmental risk be assessed for clearing and establishing road network on these additional 32 parcels of land? Madam Speaker, does NIDCO plan to assess

the cumulative environmental impact for this project, or will they be treating it as an isolated project, ignoring the fact that it is one receiving environment and despite the project being conducted in phases, there will be an overall cumulative impact on this receiving environment? When is NIDCO planning to embark on such a study?

6.00 p.m.

Madam Speaker, this is not just a rubber stamp issue. It is not just about obtaining approvals and rubber stamping documents. These projects pose major physical and socioeconomic risks, which can affect the population at large. It is, therefore, imperative that this Government move away from the rubber stamp mindset and embark on planning for a holistic point of view, and seriously assess the impact of these activities on the receiving environment, and all those that will be affected, Madam Speaker. They must seriously consider, all the physical, biological and socio-economical factors and stop operating in such a sanctimonious manner, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, when we embarked upon the development activities as a Government, as a country, we have to take into consideration how these development work are going to affect the population and the future generation of this country.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. R. Ratiram: My hon. Leader has always told us that this place does not belong to us. We are placed in a position of authority with the thrust that we will take best care, and work towards developing this place, so that we can pass it on to future generation. Madam Speaker, if we just rubber stamp these projects, without going through the necessary scrutiny and ensuring that the development is a people-centred development, like how development would have taken place during

2010 to 2015, under the leadership of the former Prime Minister, the hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar, where we saw development works happening like it has never happened before in Trinidad and Tobago under her leadership, Madam Speaker—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. R. Ratiram:—those development was focused on developing the nation and the people of Trinidad and Tobago. It was people-centred development. And what we are hoping for is, that this Government, if they can just do one thing, take that page from our leader, that page of care and compassion, the compassion that she has shown—

Hon. Members: 48(1). [*Crosstalk*]

Madam Speaker: So, Member, you are finished. You are finished? I have seen you closed the script.

Mr. R. Ratiram: I am just closing off.

Madam Speaker: Okay. All right. So, just remember, this is not overall development. Okay? Apply it to the 32 parcels, please.

Mr. R. Ratiram: Thank you, most kindly, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity. And in concluding, Madam Speaker, I want to say to Members on the other side, if they do not know how to demonstrate a development with compassion for the population of Trinidad and Tobago, they can call the election, and we will return good governance under the leadership of Mrs. Kamla Persad-Bissessar, and show them how it should be done. Thank you.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

The Minister of Health (Hon. Terrence Deyalsingh): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for allowing me a short intervention on Motion No. 1 under “Government Business”:

“*Be it resolved* that this House approve the decision of the President to

acquire the lands described in Appendix II for the public purpose specified.” Madam Speaker, over the past 48 hours, certain information was discussed in the public domain via an FOI request to the Cabinet Secretariat, and mentioned by the Minister of Works and Transport, and also by the Member for Oropouche East, when he rose to contribute. On reflection, Madam Speaker, and for the avoidance of any doubt whatsoever—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: I want to set the *Hansard* straight and the record. Not only must we be transparent, but as the old saying goes, justice must not only be done, but seen to be done. Originally, the information put out would have let someone to believe that my immediate family had an interest in five parcels of land. That is simply not true. However, on looking at the Motion, I have discovered that my second cousin removed, does have an interest, and it is on that basis I recused myself.

Hon. Members: [*Laughter*]

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: My personal integrity demands—

Madam Speaker: One minute please, Member. Now, I do not know what is such a great joke that people will laugh so scandalously. I know from the contrite body language that I am reading from some members to my left, that they appreciate the level of their infraction, and I just hope that we would not have such an outburst again.

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. My personal integrity, as somebody in public life for 13 years, demands the highest standards even it is my second cousin removed. My personal integrity means the world to me. I want to put on the record, again, that my immediate family, that is myself, my wife and my children, have absolutely no interest in these five parcels of land.

It is, in fact, my second cousin removed.

Madam Speaker, as I close, I just want to put on the record that the issue of recusals in the Cabinet should be an honourable one and should not be weaponized, as it has been done to indicate that every recusal has a nefarious outcome or objective. Recusals are a part of the public protection, and as a Cabinet Member, as in this Cabinet, we recuse when we have to. I, again, put on the record, that I did recuse and I offer my sincerest thanks to the Member for Barataria/San Juan, for accepting his explanation. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

The Minister of Works and Transport (Sen. The Hon. Rohan Sinanan):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Ms. Ameen: Madam Speaker.

Hon. Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Madam Speaker: Member for St. Augustine.

Mr. Scotland: You are a cheerleader.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, two things I want to apologize for. I want to apologize for allowing the Member for Couva North to waste 45 minutes.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: And, secondly, I also want to, you know, join Terrence in bringing to the attention, the fact that he did recuse. So, I just also want to clarify that together with Terrence. Madam Speaker, I apologize for letting the Member for Couva North speak, however, I have to rebut a lot of the things—

Mr. Ratiram: Madam Speaker, I rise on Standing Order 48(5). Members must be referred to by their constituency or official portfolio. Who is the Terrence that he is speaking to? He should have some respect for the Member for St. Joseph.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan (cont'd)

Madam Speaker: So, thank you Member for Couva North, for bringing that to my attention.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Sure. And I apologize, again, Member for St. Joseph, my colleague, Minister Terrence Deyalsingh. But, Madam Speaker—

Madam Speaker: Member, I know in the Senate and, you know, you have come from a different place, and it is done a bit differently. It is sufficient to say the Member—

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: The Member for St. Joseph.

Madam Speaker: Yes.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Right. So, let me just go straight into Couva North. Couva North, I gave him some of my time to allow him to speak. However, I just want to clarify what he said. He started off with the expenditure and we are wasting money. Let me remind the Member for Couva North that the San Fernando to Point Fortin Highway being built under the UNC, was costing \$125 million.

Mr. Ratiram: Madam Speaker—

Ms. Ameen: 48(1).

Mr. Ratiram: Madam Speaker, I rise on Standing Order 48(1), the relevance of where this Minister is trying to take this, at this point in time.

Hon. Member: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Okay. So, Member, Minister, please proceed.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Thank you. I was referring to the wasting money. Madam Speaker, between 2010 and 2015, the highway to Point Fortin was being built at \$125 million a kilometre. This highway to Sangre Grande is being built at \$80 million.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan (cont'd)

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: If you check \$45 million by 41 kilometres, we could have built the highway right around Trinidad.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: We could have built the highway right around Trinidad. We could have built a highway for the Member for Mayaro. Right? Madam Speaker, the Member also spoke about, he went and meet with the farmers, and the farmers was upset with me. Madam Speaker that was last week Tuesday. The farmers called me and told me they ran him out of Cumuto.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: He also said—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: He also said—

Mr. Hinds: Misleading.

Mr. Ratiram: Madam Speaker, I stand on Standing Order 44(8). Madam Speaker, at no point in time did I make any mention in my—

Madam Speaker: No, no, no, no. Okay. I am sorry this does not qualify what you are intending to do. Continue.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Madam Speaker, he also said about the business community and some article, but I understand on that Tuesday, he spent the day with a single businessman in Sangre Grande.

Madam Speaker: Just now. Member for Couva North, you—

Mr. Ratiram: Madam Speaker, he is dishonest.

Madam Speaker: Member for Couva North.

Mr. Ratiram: He is dishonest.

Madam Speaker: Member for Couva North, I will ask you to retract that. Okay? You had your opportunity to make your contribution. You may not necessarily

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan (cont'd)

agree with everything that is being said, but I do not think that the way you are going about it is the proper way. All right? And, I am certain, having regard to how I have seen you conduct yourself, you do not really meant this. So, I would ask you to just withdraw it, apologize and let us get on with the business of the people. Okay? Please.

Mr. Ratiram: Madam Speaker, I retract my statement that he is being dishonest and he is lying. .

Madam Speaker: No, no, no. You cannot do that. You just retract you statement.

Mr. Ratiram: I withdraw.

Madam Speaker: All right. Thank you.

Mr. Ratiram: I withdraw.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, very much. Continue Minister.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: And, Madam Speaker, maybe they did not run him, they asked him to leave. I apologize.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Ratiram: Madam Speaker, I rise on Standing Order 48(4). That is offensive and that is insulting, and that is misleading and that is dishonest.

Hon. Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Ratiram: You are being dishonest.

Madam Speaker: Member for Couva North, Member for Couva North, this is going to be the last time that I am going to warn you. All right. You rose on 48(4), I overruled. Continue.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Madam Speaker, okay. I would leave that there. Who he speaks to, he speaks to, and I would leave that right there. Right? Madam Speaker, he spoke about a highway to nowhere, repeated that.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan (cont'd)

Madam Speaker: Member, “the hon. Member spoke”, please.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Sorry, sorry. Madam Speaker, the hon. Member for Couva North, spoke about a highway to nowhere. I want to remind the hon. Member for Couva North that Sangre Grande, Valencia, Manzanilla, Guaico, Balandra, Rampanalgas, Toco, Matelot and Sangre Chiquito, all those areas are somewhere.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: And should in case the UNC continue to spread this rumour that those areas are nowhere, I want to remind you that in 2015, 2020, you got 10,900 votes in Cumuto/Manzanilla; you got 7,300 in Toco/Sangre Grande. Those are people. Those are some of your supporters.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: They are real people living in a real place.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Madam Speaker—

Mr. Ratiram: Madam Speaker, I rise on Standing Order, once more, 44(8). The hon. Minister of Works and Transport—

Madam Speaker: Just one minute, one minute. Member, the way you are trying to use Standing Order 44(8), is not the way it is done. Okay? So, please, let us get on with it.

6.15 p.m.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Madam Speaker, he spoke about jobs for the boys.

Madam Speaker: “Hon. Member”, no “he”.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Sorry. Madam Speaker, the hon. Member for Couva North spoke about jobs for the boys. Madam Speaker, let me just remind this population about land acquisition on the San Fernando to Point Fortin Highway—I

have the documents right here—Madam Speaker, in 2009—2010, the hon. Minister of Works and Transport at the time, Mr. Colm Imbert, had the opportunity to champion that project. That project was estimated at \$4 billion with a land acquisition of \$400 million. Let us talk about jobs for the boys as the Member said. Madam Speaker, by 2011 that project reached close to \$7 billion.

Land acquisition moved from \$400 million to \$800 million. Madam Speaker, to date—and let me give you the exact figures, eh, because I have it here. Just about 50 per cent of the properties were acquired and this is under the UNC; \$541 million spent out of the 800. NIDCO—not this NIDCO, the UNC NIDCO, and we will come to that just now—made arrangement for six owners to pay them \$361 million and that is just about 50 per cent of the land to be acquired.

Hon. Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Madam Speaker: So certain sounds are reaching me. I cannot identify where it is coming from but I just want to advise Members that what I am hearing is unparliamentary and therefore, if it is that Members cannot control their gusto inside of here, I would ask for strict compliance to Standing Order 53. Minister of Works and Transport.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Yes. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, so this was not jobs for the boys on the south highway, this was money; 51 per cent of the land acquired, if this Government did not take charge of that land acquisition, we would have paid out by now, \$902 million for 50 per cent of the land with still an additional 50 per cent to be acquired. So that land acquisition move on the south highway from \$400 million to way over \$1 billion, that is money for the boys. That is money for the boys.

Madam Speaker, you see, I want to go back into this gentleman who spent the whole Tuesday in Grande, you know, looking for my land. Madam Speaker, I

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan (cont'd)

want the people of Sangre Grande to know that those who are saying, “Sangre Grande is a highway to nowhere”, the “Cumuto/Manzanilla Highway is a highway to nowhere”, elections will come around just now, and I want the people of Sangre Grande to send a strong message to them. You see, the people of Sangre Grande deserve a higher standard of living just like everybody else.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: The people of Sangre Grande deserve spending quality time with their family and if we could eliminate at least two hours a day to these people, rather than spending that in traffic to get to their homes, I think that will be welcoming.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: The people in central have a highway, the people in south have a highway, the people in the north have a highway, why the people in the east cannot have a highway?

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Madam Speaker, there was a lot of talk about CEC by the hon. Member for Couva North. Madam Speaker, maybe the hon. Member for Couva North was sleeping for the last four years. This is the first highway ever built in Trinidad where all the approvals were granted before a shovel was placed in the ground.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: And that is why what we are here today to do is another first where the lands to be acquired will be vested in the State even before the highway is completed. This is the first time that is happening.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Madam Speaker, let me not waste too much more

time on the hon. Member for Couva North. Let me deal with the first speaker, the hon. Member for Oropouche East. Let me correct the Member, it is not 35 pieces of land, it is 31, but we would not go into that. That is a simple mistake you made.

Madam Speaker, the Member spoke about the same NIDCO doing the land acquisition. I just told you, the land acquisition under the UNC NIDCO moved from \$400 million to over \$1 billion. This NIDCO managing this project is playing no part in the land acquisition. This land acquisition is done by the Commissioner of Valuations under the Ministry of Finance. This is the way land acquisition is supposed to happen. The \$361 million that I spoke about that is being disputed in the court right now with six landowners, they are claiming that NIDCO promised to pay them that money, and that is why you do not get the state agency involved in fixing price; you have the Commissioner of Valuations for that.

Madam Speaker, the Member for Oropouche East also spoke about, you know, people being paid for their lands, if the hon. Member checks the record he will see people have already started getting payments, and once this land is vested the State will immediately move ahead to pay everyone for their land. I do not understand why it is that the Opposition has a problem with the people from the east getting a fair price for their land.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: We have a commission of enquiry looking at the land for the San Fernando to Point Fortin Highway; as I said, in some cases landowners were paid three and four times the value of their lands. On is this highway people are paid the market value, which is fair to them. But, Madam Speaker, I understand why the Opposition has a problem with land, the purchase of state lands, you know. If I look at the Curepe Interchange—

Hon. Member: Oh! [*Inaudible*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan (cont'd)

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Yes, I know. You see, the Opposition cannot face that Curepe Interchange. I understand whenever they are going to the airport they “does” pass around on the other side.

Hon. Members: [*Laughter*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Yeah, they “does” pass in the back of Caroni.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: You see, that project under the UNC was earmarked for \$513 million. The land acquisition on that project under the UNC was \$120 million. This Government reduced that to \$80million—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan:—and, Madam Speaker, as we speak, close to 90 per cent of the money has been paid out and we have just about \$45 million because we used the Commissioner of Valuations to determine a fair market value. That interchange was about to be awarded by the UNC Government for over \$400million, this Government brought it in at \$220 million.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: So we do not only know how to do land acquisition the right way, we also know how to bring in projects at the right price so that the citizens of this country can benefit.

Madam Speaker, I spoke about the case, the test case where land that was acquired by the State has not been vested, and we spoke about the Privy Council ruling that if someone goes on that land they can claim adverse possession. So in going through the vesting of this land in the State, what we are seeking to do is to protect the State’s asset for generations to come. Madam Speaker, I can go on and give the UNC a couple of lessons in honesty and how to do things the right way—

Hon. Members: [*Laughter*]

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan:—but I would not waste the rest of the evening. All I would say, I beg to move. Thank you.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved:

That this House approve the decision of the President to acquire the lands described in Appendix II for the public purpose specified.

APPENDIX II

DESCRIPTION OF LAND	PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED
<p>1. The parcel of land comprising approximately 0.5202 of a hectare, more or less, situate off Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 6th March, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>

<p>The parcel of land comprising approximately 0.5202 of a hectare, more or less, situate off Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Amy Poon, Beverley Poon, Mathew Poon, Avis Poon and Jannien Poon.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 9/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 6th March, 2019 and referenced as AAA 118 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	
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DESCRIPTION OF LAND	PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED
<p>2.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 1.7318 hectares, more or less, situate off Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 6th March, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road Chainage 6+600 to</p>

<p>Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1— Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>The parcel of land comprising approximately 1.7318 hectares, more or less, situate off Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Amy Poon, Beverley Poon, Mathew Poon, Avis Poon and Jannien Poon.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 9/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 6th March, 2019 and referenced as AAA 118 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	<p>20+400</p>
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DESCRIPTION OF LAND	PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED
<p>3. he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.7310 of a</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill</p>

hectare, more or less, situate off Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 6th March, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.

Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.

SCHEDULE

The parcel of land comprising approximately 0.7310 of a hectare, more or less, situate off Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Malcolm Gerald Davis.

The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 9/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 6th March, 2019 and referenced as AAA 118 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.

<p align="center">DESCRIPTION OF LAND</p>	<p align="center">PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED</p>
<p>4.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.7926 of a hectare, more or less, situate off Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 6th March, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p align="center"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>The parcel of land comprising approximately 0.7926 of a hectare, more or less, situate off Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Robert Kennedy.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 9/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 6th March, 2019 and referenced as AAA 118 in</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p>

<p>the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	
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<p>DESCRIPTION OF LAND</p>	<p>PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED</p>
<p>5. he parcel of land comprising approximately 1.1525 hectares, more or less, known as Lot 20, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>The parcel of land comprising approximately 1.1525 hectares, more or less, known as Lot 20, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St.</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>

<p>Andrew, and said to be leased from the State.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 137 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	
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<p>DESCRIPTION OF LAND</p>	<p>PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED</p>
<p>6.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.2108 of a hectare, more or less, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>

<u>SCHEDULE</u>	
<p>The parcel of land comprising approximately 0.2108 of a hectare, more or less, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Ramroop Ganger.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 137 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	

DESCRIPTION OF LAND	PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED
<p>7. The parcel of land comprising approximately 2.7045 hectares, more or less, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to</p>

<p>Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>The parcel of land comprising approximately 2.7045 hectares, more or less, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to St. Clair Oxley.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 137 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	<p>20+400</p>
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DESCRIPTION OF LAND	PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED
<p>8. he parcel of land comprising approximately 1.1440 hectares, more or less, known as Lot 15, situate at Guaico</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway</p>

<p>Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>The parcel of land comprising approximately 1.1440 hectares, more or less, known as Lot 15, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to be leased from the State now or formerly by Junior Gonzales.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 137 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	<p>Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>
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<p align="center">DESCRIPTION OF LAND</p>	<p align="center">PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED</p>
<p>9.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.7209 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot 14, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p align="center"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>The parcel of land comprising approximately 0.7209 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot 14, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to be leased from the State now or formerly by Sandra Rampersad.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p>

<p>Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 137 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	
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<p>DESCRIPTION OF LAND</p>	<p>PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED</p>
<p>10. he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.4858 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot 13, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>The parcel of land comprising approximately 0.4858 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot 13, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St.</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p>

<p>Andrew, and said to be leased from the State now or formerly by Selwyn Joseph.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 137 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	
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<p>DESCRIPTION OF LAND</p>	<p>PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED</p>
<p>11.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.1610 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot 12, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>

<p><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>The parcel of land comprising approximately 0.1610 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot 12, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to be leased from the State now or formerly by Julian Caton.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 137 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	
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DESCRIPTION OF LAND	PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED
<p>12.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.6953 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot 21, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—</p>

sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.

Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400

SCHEDULE

The parcel of land comprising approximately 0.6953 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot 21, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to be leased from the State now or formerly by Mathew David.

The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 137 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.

<p align="center">DESCRIPTION OF LAND</p>	<p align="center">PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED</p>
<p>13.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.4606 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot 22, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p align="center"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>The parcel of land comprising approximately 0.4606 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot 22, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to be leased from the State now or formerly by Angela Lawrence Williams, Clair Mentz and Selwyn Mentz.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>

<p>under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 137 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	
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DESCRIPTION OF LAND	PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED
<p>14.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.3843 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot 28, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>The parcel of land comprising approximately 0.3843 of a</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>

<p>hectare, more or less, known as Lot 28, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to be leased from the State now or formerly by Samuel Ali.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 137 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	
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DESCRIPTION OF LAND	PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED
<p>15.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.1189 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot C, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1— Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road— Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>

<p>Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>The parcel of land comprising approximately 0.1189 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot C, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Barbara Caesar.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 137 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	
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DESCRIPTION OF LAND	PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED
<p>16.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.2601 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot D, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St.</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to</p>

Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.

Manzanilla Phase 1—
Cumuto Junction to
Toco Main Road-
Chainage 6+600 to
20+400

SCHEDULE

The parcel of land comprising approximately 0.2601 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot D, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Edna Smith.

The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 137 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain

<p align="center">DESCRIPTION OF LAND</p>	<p align="center">PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED</p>
<p>17.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.4371 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot E, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p align="center"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>The parcel of land comprising approximately 0.4371 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot E, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Keith Stephen, Francis Stephen, Victor Stephen, Gerard Stephen and Marion Nobbie.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>

<p>under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 137 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	
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<p>DESCRIPTION OF LAND</p>	<p>PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED</p>
<p>18.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.4634 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot F, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>The parcel of land comprising approximately 0.4634 of a</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>

<p>hectare, more or less, known as Lot F, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Frank Stephen, Arthur Stephen, Cynthia Hermes Stephen and Barbara Caesar.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 137 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	
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DESCRIPTION OF LAND	PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED
<p>19.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 1.3200 hectares, more or less, known as Lot 31, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to</p>

<p>of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>The parcel of land comprising approximately 1.3200 hectares, more or less, known as Lot 31, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to be leased from the State.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 137 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	20+400
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DESCRIPTION OF LAND	PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED
<p>20.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 1.4859 hectares, more or less, known as Lot 30, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to</p>

sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.

Manzanilla Phase 1—
Cumuto Junction to
Toco Main Road-
Chainage 6+600 to
20+400

SCHEDULE

The parcel of land comprising approximately 1.4859 hectares, more or less, known as Lot 30, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to be leased from the State now or formerly by Samuel Ali.

The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 137 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.

<p align="center">DESCRIPTION OF LAND</p>	<p align="center">PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED</p>
<p>21.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 1.7247 hectares, more or less, known as Lot 29, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p align="center"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>A parcel of land comprising approximately 1.7247 hectares, more or less, known as Lot 29, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to be leased from the State now or formerly by Samuel Ali.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>

<p>Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 137 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	
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<p>DESCRIPTION OF LAND</p>	<p>PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED</p>
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<p>22.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.2308 of a hectare, more or less, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>A parcel of land comprising approximately 0.2308 of a hectare, more or less, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>
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<p>Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to John Afoon and Peter Scoon.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 138 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	
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<p>DESCRIPTION OF LAND</p>	<p>PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED</p>
<p>23.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 4.2257 hectares, more or less, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>

SCHEDULE

A parcel of land comprising approximately 4.2257 hectares, more or less, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to John Afoon and Peter Scoon.

The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 138 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.

DESCRIPTION OF LAND	PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED
<p>24.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 2.3622 hectares, more or less, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1— Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road— Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>

<p>Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>A parcel of land comprising approximately 2.3622 hectares, more or less, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Realsons Limited.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 138 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	
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DESCRIPTION OF LAND	PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED
<p>25.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 876.0 square metres, more or less, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-</p>

<p>public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>A parcel of land comprising approximately 876.0 square metres, more or less, situate at Guaico Trace, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Barbara Juteram and Anthony Reginald Juteram.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 138 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	<p>Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>
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DESCRIPTION OF LAND	PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED
<p>26.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.6888 of a hectare, more or less, situate at the Corner of Guaico Trace and Eastern Main Road, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to</p>

the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.

Manzanilla Phase 1—
Cumuto Junction to
Toco Main Road-
Chainage 6+600 to
20+400

SCHEDULE

A parcel of land comprising approximately 0.6888 of a hectare, more or less, situate at the Corner of Guaico Trace and Eastern Main Road, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Premium Products Limited.

The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 138 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.

<p align="center">DESCRIPTION OF LAND</p>	<p align="center">PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED</p>
<p>27.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 583.9 square metres, more or less, known as Lot 8, situate at Eastern Main Road, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p align="center"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>A parcel of land comprising approximately 583.9 square metres, more or less, known as Lot 8, situate at Eastern Main Road, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Kenneth Mastay and Rani McKenzie.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>

<p>Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 138 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	
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<p>DESCRIPTION OF LAND</p>	<p>PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED</p>
<p>28.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 612.5 square metres, more or less, known as Lot 7, situate at Eastern Main Road, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1 — Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>A parcel of land comprising approximately 612.5 square metres, more or less, known as Lot 7, situate at Eastern</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1— Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>

<p>Main Road, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Roopenadder Singh, Dolly Singh and Navindra Singh.</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 138 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	
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<p>DESCRIPTION OF LAND</p>	<p>PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED</p>
<p>29.</p> <p>The parcel of land comprising approximately 0.1820 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot 6, situate at Eastern Main Road, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>

<p>Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>A parcel of land comprising approximately 0.1820 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot 6, situate at Eastern Main Road, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Kenneth Mastay</p> <p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 138 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain</p>	
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DESCRIPTION OF LAND	PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED
<p>30.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.1935 of a hectare, more or less, situate at Eastern Main Road, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to</p>

described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.

Manzanilla Phase 1—
Cumuto Junction to
Toco Main Road-
Chainage 6+600 to
20+400

SCHEDULE

A parcel of land comprising approximately 0.1935 of a hectare, more or less, situate at Eastern Main Road, Guaico, in the Ward of Tamana, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Keith Quamina.

The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 138 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.

<p align="center">DESCRIPTION OF LAND</p>	<p align="center">PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED</p>
<p>31.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.5589 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lots 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, situated at Eastern Main Road, Guaico, in the Ward of Manzanilla, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p align="center"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p> <p>A parcel of land comprising approximately 0.5589 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lots 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, situate at Eastern Main Road, Guaico, in the Ward of Manzanilla, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Michelle Ramdass, Michael James Udit Ramdass, Andrew Surjmal and Danny Guerra.</p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>

<p>The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 138 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.</p>	
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DESCRIPTION OF LAND	PUBLIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO BE ACQUIRED
<p>32.</p> <p>he parcel of land comprising approximately 0.1198 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot 6, situate at Eastern Main Road, Guaico, in the Ward of Manzanilla, in the County of St. Andrew, and described in the Schedule and coloured raw sienna on a plan of survey signed by the Director of Surveys dated 9th September, 2019 and filed in his office, are required for a public purpose, namely: for the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHEDULE</u></p>	<p>For the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway Extension to Manzanilla Phase 1—Cumuto Junction to Toco Main Road-Chainage 6+600 to 20+400</p>

A parcel of land comprising approximately 0.1198 of a hectare, more or less, known as Lot 6, situate at Eastern Main Road, Guaico, in the Ward of Manzanilla, in the County of St. Andrew, and said to belong now or formerly to Martin Aquan.

The parcel is more particularly shown coloured raw sienna under Survey Order 175/2019 and signed by the Director of Surveys on 9th September, 2019 and referenced as AAA 138 in the Vault of the Surveys and Mapping Division at the Office of the Director of Surveys, No. 118, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain.

ADJOURNMENT

Madam Speaker: Leader of the House.

The Minister of Housing and Urban Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very kindly, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn to Friday the 28th day of April, 2023, at 1.30 p.m. That day is Private Members' Day and the Member for Pointe-a-Pierre has indicated that we will be doing what is now Motion No. 5 on the Order Paper. Thank you, Ma'am.

CONDOLENCES

(MR. LEON XAVIER PREVATT)

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, before I put the question, hon. Members will be aware that Mr. Leon Xavier Prevatt, a former Member of Parliament passed away on Wednesday, March 29, 2023. Mr. Prevatt served as the Member of Parliament for Ortoire/Mayaro during the Second Republican Parliament, from

November 27, 1981, to October 29, 1986. I now invite hon. Members to pay their respective tributes to Mr. Prevatt. I now call upon the Member for Diego Martin Central.

Madam Speaker: [*Desk thumping*]

The Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Hon. Symon de Nobriga):

Madam Speaker, despite the unhappy circumstances which bring me here, it is both an honour and a privilege to represent the Government as we pay tribute to a fallen soldier, a man who served both country and party with distinction and whose passing on March 23, 2023, left a void, not only in the lives of his wife, children and grandchildren, but the party he so proudly served and the constituency of Ortoire/Mayaro on whose behalf he fiercely advocated. Madam Speaker and colleagues, the measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and ease but rather where he stands in moments of adversity and strife.

Leon Xavier Prevatt entered the world of representational politics in November 1981 as the Member of Parliament for the constituency of Ortoire/Mayaro, nine months after Trinidad and Tobago had lost its first Prime Minister, and the PNM, its first political leader. It was a time of great economic turmoil, and many a political aspirant would have shied away from entering that most uncertain and challenging environment and yet he answered the call to serve. The shoes of his predecessor, Victor Campbell, were by no means easy shoes to fill for they had walked that constituency for the 25 years of its existence, from 1956 to 1981. Undaunted by the Campbell shadow, Leon Prevatt carved his own path, stamping his own style and authority on the constituency in which he had spent most of his life.

That decision was by no means uncharacteristic of the man that was Leon Prevatt. It was that same indomitable spirit that had led him to rise to the rank of

Flight Sergeant in the British Royal Air Force in the preceding decade. While there he served two tours in Singapore and one active service stint in Borneo before his return to his homeland of Trinidad and Tobago, and more specifically, the languid shores of the Mayaro coastline. Leon came from a family that was born and bred in Mayaro, and notwithstanding his many travels, Mayaro would forever remain dear to his heart.

His migration to Great Britain in 1961 was not unlike the hundreds of thousands of West Indian nationals who formed part of the Windrush generation, seeking greener pastures in a land that hardly accepted them as their own. Notwithstanding an excellent career in Her Majesty's service, and a fairly comfortable life in Bath in South West London, the call of the Mayaro coastline proved irresistible and Leon returned home in 1976, continuing his career in the insurance industry until his entry into representational politics in 1981.

6.30 p.m.

Madam Speaker, there is a lot that young Parliamentarians, like myself, can learn from the life of Leon Prevatt. As a Member of the Second Republican Parliament, Leon Prevatt was never long on words, but equally never short of his generosity. He was never one for a show, but was always prepared to represent his constituents. He was not afraid of a challenge, but gave respect to all, regardless of stature, gender, age or political affiliation.

Though his political career was cut short following the results of the general elections in 1986, Leon Prevatt's personality and love for his hometown saw him remain committed to serving his people in whatever way was possible. Indeed, if there was ever a gentleman who answered the call to put country before all else, it was Leon Prevatt, for even as his yesterdays exceeded his tomorrows, he still gave himself in service as a Deputy Chairman of CEPEP.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, on behalf of the People's National Movement and on behalf of a grateful nation, we offer condolences to his wife, Patsy; his children Sheree, Corinne, Patrick and Petra. Grounded as he was in his Catholic faith, we pray today that the gates of paradise would have been open to welcome him; that the choirs of angels would have announced his arrival into the Holy City, the new and eternal Jerusalem; and that where Lazarus was poor no longer, Leon Xavier Prevatt would have found eternal rest. Thank you.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Rushton Paray (Mayaro): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I rise to pay tribute to the late Mr. Leon Xavier Prevatt, who served in the House of Representatives from 1981 to 1986, who passed away on March 29, 2023.

Mr. Prevatt was the Member of Parliament for what was then called the Ortoire/Mayaro constituency, and a Member of the George Chambers administration. He was one of five children of Walter and Elfreda Prevatt. He was married to the charming Patsy, and they had four children, Sherrie, Corinne, Patrick and Petra, many of them I had the pleasure of meeting on the day of his funeral.

Mr. Prevatt was a man of many parts. He served with the Royal Air Force, and he had two tours in Singapore and one active stint in Borneo. He was a competent cricketer and an insurance underwriter.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Prevatt was elected to Parliament during a very difficult period in this country's history, but his legacy was one of dedication for his constituents. His commitment to improving the quality of life of the people led him to subsequently serve as a director of various state agencies, including as Vice-Chairman of the CEPEP Company Limited during the tenure of the People's

Partnership Government.

Mr. Prevatt will be remembered as much for being patriotic, industrious and reliable, as for his great sense of fun and his caring personality. He was indeed a man of the people.

So on behalf of the parliamentary Opposition and the people of Mayaro, I extend condolences to his family, friends and associates. May he rest in eternal peace. Thank you.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, I too take this opportunity to pay tribute to Mr. Leon Prevatt. Born on November 18, 1935, Mr. Prevatt began his career as a field officer in the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, after which he moved to England in the 1960s. It was at this time that Mr. Prevatt spent approximately a decade serving as a Flight Sergeant in the British Royal Air Force, where he was able to travel the world.

In the 1970s, Mr. Prevatt returned to his home country, Trinidad and Tobago, where he gained employment at WINSURE Life & General Insurance Company Limited, known today as Maritime Insurance. Thereafter, he entered the political arena in which he served his constituents valiantly. During his time at Parliament, from November 1981 to October 29, 1986, he contributed to a number of Bills, including the Appropriation Bill 1986, and the Central Bank (Amdt.) Bill, 1986. He also served on the House Committee, the Privileges Committee, Public Accounts Committee, as well as the Special Select Committee on the Kiwanis Club of Chaguanas (Inc.) Bill, 1986.

I am informed that Mr. Prevatt was a mentor and a humanitarian, a fish broth and wild meat specialist, a staunch Arsenal fan, and a committed family man. I take this opportunity to express my deepest condolences to the Prevatt family on

Land Acquisition
Mr. Paray (cont'd)

2023.04.26

their recent loss. I pray that the Almighty grants them peace and consolation during their time of bereavement. I now ask that we stand and observe a minute of silence as a mark of respect.

[The House of Representatives stood]

May his soul rest in peace.

Members, you may sit. Hon. Members, an appropriate letter will be sent to convey our condolences to the family of the late Leon Xavier Prevatt.

Question put and agreed to.

House adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 6.36 p.m.