

## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO OPENS EMBASSY IN PANAMA



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## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO OPENS EMBASSY IN PANAMA



The Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, cut the ribbon to open a new Trinidad and Tobago Embassy in Panama City, Panama on 12th April, 2015.

In her opening remarks the Prime Minister heralded the moment when Trinidad and Tobago and Panama decided to take their friendship into a lasting, mutually beneficial and cordial relationship. Recognising that both countries have had bilateral relations for over 21 years, the Prime Minister informed the audience which included, the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Panama, Luis Miguel Hincapie, that Panama was the first Central American nation to establish a resident mission in Port of Spain in 1995, and Trinidad and Tobago was now the first English-speaking CARICOM country to establish a resident mission in Panama City.

The Government made the decision to establish the Mission in Panama because of Panama's strategic and geographical significance, the strong commercial relationships between both countries and the possible benefits to trade that will come with the expansion of the Panama Canal.

In anticipation of increased opportunities, Trinidad and Tobago and Panama completed negotiations of the Partial Scope Trade Agreement which was signed in October 2013. This agreement will support economic relations between both countries through the expansion of trade in goods and services. The Trinidad and Tobago Panama Partial Scope Trade Agreement Bill 2014 was passed in the Parliament of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and was assented to by the President on 1st April, 2015.

## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO ELECTED TO THE PEACE BUILDING COMMISSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Minister of Foreign Affairs the Honourable Winston Dookeran thanked the international community for yet another show of confidence in Trinidad and Tobago, as this country was successfully elected to the Peace Building Commission of the United Nations, New York on 4th March, 2015.

The Peace Building Commission was established in 2006 with the clear mandate to propose integrated strategies for post conflict peace building and recovery and to design reconstruction efforts and institutions that facilitate the sustained resolution of conflict.

*Continues on page 4*

## VII SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS



*Leaders at the VII Summit of the Americas, Panama City, Panama*

**T**rinidad and Tobago participated in the VII Summit of the Americas in Panama City, Panama during the period 10th – 11th April, 2015. This country's delegation was led by Prime Minister, the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar. The theme of the Summit was "Prosperity with Equality: The Challenge of Cooperation in the Americas".

During the opening ceremony His Excellency Jose Miguel Insulza and His Excellency Ban Ki Moon were both in high praise for the cordial discussions which took place between the United States of America and Cuba resulting in the warming of relations between both countries.

Trinidad and Tobago took part in the Plenary Session and the II CEO Summit of the Americas among other events. In her statement at the Plenary Session, the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime

Minister urged nations who had not signed the Arms Trade Treaty to do so as she reiterated that the "Treaty is a victory for the international community because while weapons of mass destruction may be key weapons in war, for our countries small arms cause the most deaths in the region".

At the II CEO Summit of the Americas, the Prime Minister in her contribution showcased the leading role Trinidad and Tobago played in the energy sector, underscoring that this country was the world's largest exporter of ammonia and methanol, as well as the world's sixth largest exporter of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG).

At the closing ceremony of the Seventh Summit of the Americas, the President of Panama Juan Carlos Varela Rodriguez, issued a statement recognising that Panama, as host country, had proposed a document setting out Mandates for Action that would address the various core areas that underpin Prosperity with Equity: health, education, energy, the environment, migration, security, citizen participation, and democratic governance. Following negotiations agreement was reached on only 42 out of the 48 mandates put forward. Areas where agreement was reached included the right to education, universal access to health as a basic human right, energy as a central pillar of sustainable development, climate change and the environment, migration and development, and democratic governance.

The President of Panama also expressed the view that the vast number of mandates on which agreement was reached should be overseen by the institutions of the inter-American system and other international agencies. In this regard, Panama committed to conveying the mandates agreed on to the directors of the OAS, ECLAC, and PAHO, as well as the IDB, the World Bank, CAF, and other multilateral financial institutions, so funding and technical assistance can be provided.

## CALL FOR CELAC LEADERS TO WORK TOGETHER TOWARDS REDUCING POVERTY

**P**rime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar urged Latin American and Caribbean leaders to continue to work together towards reducing poverty in the region stating that, as leaders "we have an opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of millions of people throughout Latin America and the Caribbean through the CELAC action plan for 2015." The Prime Minister made the statement during her speech at the III Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) Summit in San Jose, Costa Rica.

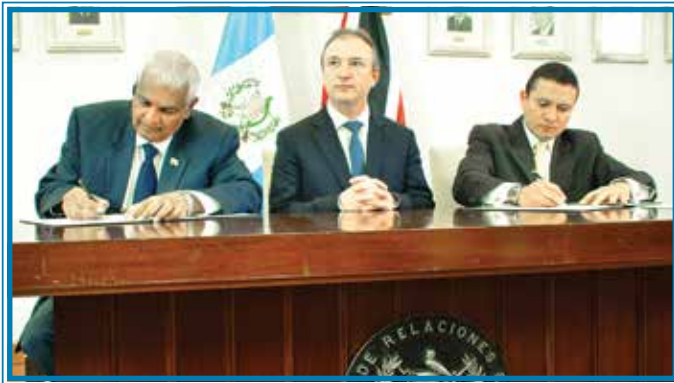
Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar also highlighted Trinidad and Tobago's achievements in addressing poverty while reiterating the critical role education plays in the reduction of poverty. Additionally, the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar stated that Trinidad and Tobago has achieved universal free primary school education ahead of

its set target in 2015. The Prime Minister also took the opportunity to reiterate Trinidad and Tobago's bid to host the Secretariat of the Arms Trade Treaty.

The theme of the III Summit of Latin American and Caribbean States was "Building Together" and focused on the fight against poverty with an emphasis on transparency, accountability and the fight against corruption. The Summit took place during the period 28th – 29th January, 2015 in San Jose, Costa Rica.

CELAC unites 33 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. It was launched in Venezuela in 2011 when representatives of each country signed the Declaration of Caracas.

## SIGNING OF THE PARTIAL SCOPE TRADE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND THE REPUBLIC OF GUATEMALA



*The Honourable Winston Dookeran, Minister of Foreign Affairs and H.E. Carlos Raúl Morales Moscoso, Minister of External Relations, Guatemala signing the Partial Scope Trade Agreement between Trinidad and Tobago and Guatemala*

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Republic of Guatemala signed a Partial Scope Trade Agreement on 6th February, 2015 at the Ministry of External Relations of the Republic of Guatemala in Guatemala City.

Signing the Agreement on behalf of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago was the Honourable Winston Dookeran, Minister of Foreign Affairs while H.E. Carlos Raúl Morales Moscoso, Minister of External Relations of Guatemala signed on behalf of the Republic of Guatemala.

The Agreement seeks to promote the harmonious development of the economic relations between both countries through the expansion of trade in goods and services. It is anticipated that this will contribute to the removal of barriers to trade, enhance the development and

expansion of trade and result in increased employment and foreign exchange earnings that will contribute to the economic well-being of Trinidad and Tobago.

During the four rounds of negotiations, Trinidad and Tobago adopted a collaborative approach which involved extensive consultations with representatives from the public and private sectors. His Excellency Mervyn Assam, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary with responsibility for Trade and Industry was the lead negotiator for Trinidad and Tobago while Ms. Sonia Lainfiesta, Director of Trade Negotiations, Ministry of the Economy led the negotiations for the Republic of Guatemala.



*The Honourable Winston Dookeran, Minister of Foreign Affairs and H.E. Carlos Raúl Morales Moscoso, Minister of External Relations of Guatemala exchanging signed copies of the Partial Scope Trade Agreement between Trinidad and Tobago and Guatemala.*

## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO ELECTED TO THE PEACE BUILDING COMMISSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS *Continues from pg 2*

Trinidad and Tobago was among six new members elected to the 31-member Commission for the period 2015 to 2017. The members of the Commission are as follows: Bosnia Herzegovina, Colombia, Egypt, Guatemala, Kenya, Malaysia, Morocco, Colombia, Egypt, Guatemala, Kenya, Malaysia, Morocco, Brazil, Croatia, Italy, Nepal, Republic of Korea, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Canada, Germany, Japan, The Netherlands, and Sweden.

In thanking the international community for their support on Trinidad and Tobago's election, Minister Dookeran observed that this country has a highly regarded record of promoting the rule of law within the Councils of the United Nations. This is manifested for example, by its pioneering role in the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC), as well as the piloting of United Nations General

Assembly Resolution on Women, Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Arms Control and as such Trinidad and Tobago is particularly well-placed to make a meaningful contribution to the work of the Commission.

The Honourable Minister further explained that the role of the Commission is critical to ensuring that countries which have experienced conflict do not suffer reversals that could not only undermine efforts at peace -building, but also have a deleterious effect on the long term sustainable development of the affected States. He emphasized therefore that rightly, the global community is ascribing increasing importance to the role of peace -building, as an indispensable adjunct to peace -keeping, in order to lay the necessary foundation for political stability and sustainable economic and social development.

## A PROMINENT SPACE FOR TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO HIGH COMMISSION TO JAMAICA

Over 8,000 Trinidad and Tobago nationals resident in Jamaica will now be served from the recently commissioned Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in Jamaica located at 25 Windsor Avenue, Kingston.

On 8th April, 2015 the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago unveiled a commemorative plaque in celebration of the acquisition of the property. In her brief remarks, Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar stated that “these offices must not only be the entry point for administrative functions, but should stand as testimony to turning words into action. They should support our mission to enhance trade, enhance political relations and share information that can support our development programmes. They must be that one-stop-shop for our people to learn about each other, establish contact and build stronger individual relationships through knowledge and culture.”



*Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar and H.E. Rev. Dr. Iva Gloudon unveils the commemorative plaque at the recommissioning of the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission to Jamaica*

Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar commended Her Excellency Rev. Dr. Iva Gloudon, High Commissioner of Trinidad and Tobago to Jamaica and the staff at the Mission for their dedication and hard work. She paid special tribute to Mr. Osbourne Witter, driver of the High Commission for his 27 years of service at the Mission.

Recognising the strong bond between Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica, Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar reminded guests of how important it was to remember “the

giants who came before us, the men and women who fought to create the nations that inspire pride in us today. The likes of Bustamante, Manley, Seaga, Patterson and Garvey must be celebrated alongside the likes of Williams, Chambers, Panday, Manning and CLR James.”

Diplomatic relations between Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica was established in 1962. The new office provides a prominent space where the national flag of Trinidad and Tobago can be proudly flown.

## TREASURES OF PORT OF SPAIN LAUNCHED BY TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO HIGH COMMISSION TO JAMAICA

While Kingston was in the throes of its Trini-esque Carnival celebrations, Montego Bay was treated to an infusion of Trinbagonian culture of another kind on 29th March, 2015. The exhibition entitled, “Treasures of Port of Spain 2015” was hosted by Her Excellency Rev. Dr. Iva Gloudon, High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to Jamaica at the Montego Bay Cultural Center. In her message, High Commissioner Gloudon recounted the story of the discovery of the collection which underscored the events title. “I have a collection of paintings that would be sure to interest the Trinidad and Tobago High Commissioner,” stated the voice on the other end of the phone. I was a bit sceptical but nevertheless I went to view the paintings and the moment I saw them I knew the value of what I was looking at and I was intent on acquiring the collection.”



The Treasures of Port of Spain 2015 features works done by the late Dr. Leslie Toby, medical doctor, artist and writer. A self-taught artist, who dedicated himself to developing his skills in inks and collages on mixed media were used in his more abstract pieces. His architectural representations reflect Trinbagonian architecture of a bygone era. One of the pieces, for example, captured the famous Pelican Bar, which is no longer in existence, making the 21 piece collection a veritable piece of history.

Senator Noel Solely who was among the 100 plus attendees at the launch of the Treasures of Port of Spain exhibition, shared that he was heartened that the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission thought it fit to host an event of such cultural import at the location. As such cultural exchanges were part of the impetus for the creation of the Cultural Center.

Dr. Toby’s Widow, Rosalie Feurtado-Toby in her brief remarks stated that she was happy that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago through the High Commission had recognised the body of work and that as a result many will be able to enjoy the art. Dr. Leslie Toby died in 2010.

## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO BIDS FOR THE SEAT OF THE ARMS TRADE TREATY SECRETARIAT

Trinidad and Tobago continued to demonstrate its commitment to the regulation of the global trade in conventional arms, including small arms and light weapons, with the hosting in Port of Spain of the First Preparatory Meeting towards the First Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which was held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel from 23rd – 24th February, 2015.

The Meeting brought together over 200 participants representing States Parties to the ATT, States which have signed the ATT, Observer States, representatives of intergovernmental organisations, industry and Non-Governmental Organisations. The Meeting was hosted by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and was organised by Trinidad and Tobago and Mexico in its capacity as provisional secretariat of the ATT.

In opening the Meeting, the Honourable Winston Dookeran, Minister of Foreign Affairs underscored that the hosting of the Meeting was yet another manifestation of Trinidad and Tobago's commitment to provide the necessary resources to enable the ATT to become the accepted universal instrument to regulate the trade in conventional arms, thereby contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security. He advanced further that Trinidad and Tobago has stoutly supported all matters related to the ATT, and has done so together with, and on behalf of, the other Members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), many of which, like Trinidad and Tobago have witnessed the debilitating effects of the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons and its link to other trans-boundary crimes, including the illegal drug trade.

Minister Dookeran also used the opportunity to remind the audience of the candidature of Trinidad and Tobago to be the site of the ATT Secretariat. The candidacy has received the endorsement of CARICOM, the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, as well as the support of other members of the international community.

He also indicated that as the international community continued to grapple with the plague of violence, as a result of the misuse of conventional arms, participants must seize the opportunity presented by their attendance at the historic meeting in Port of Spain to renew their commitment to engage in outreach geared towards achieving the universality of the Arms Trade Treaty as part of the armory to promote not only peace keeping, or peace building, but the sustainable development of the peoples of the world.

The Meeting was co-chaired by Ambassador Jorge Lomonaco, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations, Geneva.

Over two days, delegates deliberated on an agenda composed of the following elements which are germane to the full and effective implementation of the ATT: the draft Rules of Procedure for the Conference of Parties, mechanisms for its financing, the reporting template for the provision of reports to demonstrate States Parties compliance with the object and purpose of the ATT, and matters related to the permanent secretariat established under Article 18 of the ATT.

Trinidad and Tobago on behalf of CARICOM also used the occasion to introduce other documents which it had promised at the informal consultations on the ATT which was held in Berlin, Germany in November 2014, namely, Draft Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the ATT; Draft Relationship Agreement between the United Nations and the ATT Secretariat; Draft UN General Assembly

Resolution on the Conclusion of a Relationship Agreement between the UN and the ATT Secretariat; Draft Transitional Measure on Participation by a Contracting State in the First Conference of States Parties. These documents were presented by Ambassador Gerald Thompson, Director of Treaties, International Agreements and Legal Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago and Co-Chair.

In addressing several issues on the agenda, Ambassador Eden Charles, Lead Negotiator for CARICOM on the ATT, emphasised, among other

things, that the region was of the view that the First Conference of States Parties to the ATT should seek to adopt rules of procedure which should seek to ensure that the ATT, would be treated no dissimilar from other treaties and that it was also important to recognise the provisions of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties when interpreting the ATT.

Delegations concluded that despite the very productive nature of the First Preparatory Meeting in Port of Spain, which had advanced discourse on the agenda items of the previous informal consultations that were held in Mexico and Germany in September and November 2014, respectively, more work had to be done on a number of issues to enable success at the First Conference of Parties and as such agreed on key items to take the process forward which include, among others:

- to hold a second Preparatory Meeting in Geneva, 6th -8th July, 2015 as well as an informal meeting in Vienna, 20-21 April 2015, in preparation for the First Conference of the States Parties.
- to retain an inclusive approach in the preparatory process, enabling NGOs, as well as industry representatives and representatives of regional and international organisations to attend meetings of formal preparatory process.



*The Honourable Winston Dookeran addresses the First Preparatory Meeting towards the First Conference of States Parties to the ATT in Port of Spain*

## FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING TOWARDS THE FIRST CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES TO THE ARMS TRADE TREATY



## IMPROVING CSME FOR YOU



Over the years the CARICOM Secretariat has undertaken various interventions in Member States to determine what additional measures are required to further the implementation of the CARICOM Single Market (CSM). One of these interventions is the CARICOM Trade and Competitiveness Project (CTCP) which is funded by Canada and which is expected to address critical areas for the full and effective functioning of the CSM.

Component 100 of the CTCP seeks to create improved harmonised regulatory and administrative systems that would enable beneficiaries of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) to access their rights and thus use the various CSME arrangements that have been established for the Free Movement of Goods, Services, Skills, Capital and the Right of Establishment.

Consultants, A-Z Information Jamaica Limited, who have been contracted by the CARICOM Secretariat to develop Best Practice models for the harmonisation and standardisation of core administrative practices and procedures for each of the various CSME regimes held training sessions on Component 100 in Trinidad and Tobago on 9th and 10th February 2015. Approximately 30 public officials from the Free Movement Committee which assesses Skills Certificate applications and the Inter-Ministerial Committee which assesses applications under the Right of Establishment and the Right to Provide a Service were trained in a new Document Workflow Management System (DWMS) that will make application processes under the CSME much smoother. The DWMS seeks to harmonise and standardise administrative processes across Member States as well as capture useful data on the use of the CSME regimes by nationals and commercial entities. The new system is aimed at allowing CARICOM citizens to apply online as skilled nationals, service providers or entrepreneurs and for administrators to process these applications, all in a virtual environment.

When successfully implemented, the DWMS is expected to promote both the standard reformation of administrative practices for the CSM regimes and the improved accessibility and efficiency of rights offered under the CSM through the digitisation of the application process.

## FIFTH CARICOM-CUBA SUMMIT



*CARICOM leaders and Foreign Ministers with Cuba's President Raúl Castro at the V CARICOM-Cuba Summit*

The CARICOM-Cuba Summit is held every three years with the purpose of strengthening relations and reviewing cooperation agreements between the member states of the Caribbean Community and Cuba.

In December 2014, the Honourable Winston Dookeran, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago led this country's delegation at the Fifth CARICOM-Cuba Summit in Santiago de Cuba, Cuba. The meeting which took place on 8th December was attended by Heads of State and Government, as well as representatives and special guests from throughout the Caribbean Community and Cuba.

At the Summit the leaders adopted the Declaration of Havana in which they called for unity and integration in the region as the only way to face the shared challenges of the 21st century. They also:

- Promoted the strengthening of South-South cooperation as an expression of solidarity between the countries, for the promotion of bilateral and regional programmes as well as triangular cooperation for development, taking into account the development priorities of the countries;
- Recognised that cooperation between Cuba and countries of the Caribbean community in areas such as health, the development of human resources, construction and sports, has effectively contributed to the growth of well-being of their peoples;
- Expressed further appreciation to Cuba for the increase in undergraduate scholarships as well as post-graduate scholarships for specialization in medicine, the increase in patient intake from CARICOM states for free medical care, as well as training in disaster risk reduction and response to natural disasters;
- The leaders pledged to develop cooperation in the area of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in full conformity with the principles of international law, with the aim of promotion contributions to the sustainable development of

the member states of CARICOM and Cuba, particularly in the fields of education, health care, science and technology, innovation, agriculture and any other sector where it may be required; and

- Demanded an immediate end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the government of the United States against Cuba and, especially, to its extraterritorial nature and the financial persecution of Cuban transactions, whose severity increases daily; the inclusion of Cuba on the List of States Sponsoring Terrorism, prepared and published unilaterally by the US State Department, and all undercover actions that the US government is carrying out to subvert domestic law and order in Cuba, including those that involve the illegal use of information and communications technologies, that constitute violations of Cuban sovereignty and its people's right to self-determination.

In his contribution at the Summit, Minister Dookeran reiterated the call of the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, for Cuba's full integration into the region. He further highlighted that Cuba's development model taught patience, growth and resilience and expressed his support for the view that the integration process was in need of new thinking and new approaches to ensure that the region could take advantage of the international trend towards convergence.

Additionally, in light of the deadline for the establishment of a new universal, legally-binding Climate Change Agreement by December 2015, the Minister of Foreign Affairs also indicated that a common, united, strong voice in the international fora was required by the region, to mitigate the current climate change and sustainable development challenges.

It was agreed, in the closing session of the Summit, that the Sixth CARICOM-Cuba Summit would be held in Antigua and Barbuda on 8th December, 2017.



## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO PARTICIPATES IN THE CHINA-LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN BUSINESS COUNCIL MEETING



Third from left. The Honourable Winston Dookeran, Minister of Foreign Affairs with other participants during the China-LAC Business Council

Chinese business interests in Trinidad and Tobago have made significant headway in the areas of infrastructural development, public sector financing, information communication technologies (ICTs), and energy exploration and production. This view was expressed by the Honourable Winston Dookeran, Minister of Foreign Affairs, during his presentation on “China’s Investment in LAC countries and LAC countries Industrial Upgrading” at the China-Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) Business Council Meeting in Beijing on 7th January, 2015.

The meeting was organised by the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) on the margins of the First Ministerial Meeting of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) – China Forum. The meeting which sought to foster greater dialogue between the CELAC countries and China on the theme “Innovation Drives Pragmatic Cooperation” was attended by His Excellency Luis Guillermo, President of the Republic of Costa Rica, Mr.

Jiang Zengwei, Chairman of the CCPIT, the Honourable Alexander Mora, Minister of Foreign Trade of Costa Rica, the Honourable Luis Almagro, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, the Honourable Viviano Caro, Minister of Planning and Development of the Republic of Bolivia, and various members of the Chinese business community.

During his presentation, Minister Dookeran also made special mention of the cooperation currently underway between the University of the West Indies (UWI) and the China Agricultural University (CAU) for the development of an Agricultural Innovation Park in Trincity. He further noted that Trinidad and Tobago had sought to develop the right policy framework to further promote investment from Chinese business interests in the country.

In addition, the Minister of Foreign Affairs indicated that LAC countries and China were currently major drivers of the global economy as they continue to experience positive economic growth in spite of the slowdown of the global economy, and expressed the view that convergence between the region and China would create many beneficial economic opportunities for both sides. In this trans-regional convergence, he noted that the Caribbean must concretize its place. In this regard, he recommended three (3) focal areas for further action: facilitating the ease of movement of people across the LAC region and China; improving the flow of capital between the LAC region and China, with specific mention of the role to be played by recently established BRICS Bank; and collaboration between the LAC region and China in redefining the rule-making architecture of the international financial system.

In closing, Minister Dookeran emphasized the importance of taking advantage of the synergies that exist between the LAC region and China, and the critical role that commercial activity would play in strengthening these synergies.

## TOURISM COOPERATION AGREEMENT SIGNED BY TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND CUBA

On 31st March, 2015 a Tourism Cooperation Agreement was signed by Senator the Honourable Gerald Hadeed, Minister of Tourism and the Honourable Manuel Marrero Cruz, Minister of Tourism of Cuba, in Havana, Cuba. The expansion of the Tourism Industry under this Agreement will redound to the benefit of the country through opportunities to participate in training programmes and student exchanges, increased employment, multi-sectorial linkages, multi-destination tourism and foreign exchange earnings, which will assist in the diversification of the economy.

Her Excellency Jennifer Jones-Kernahan, Trinidad and Tobago’s Ambassador to Cuba initiated discussions which led to the negotiation of the Agreement in May 2014 with a team of officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Tourism, Attorney General, Tobago House of Assembly and the Tourism Development Company Limited.

Ambassador Jennifer Jones-Kernahan and His Excellency Mervyn Assam, Ambassador for Trade and Industry were both present at the signing ceremony, which took place at the historic Hotel Nacional in Havana, Cuba.

## BILATERAL POLITICAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND THE EUROPEAN UNION



*Minister Winston Dookeran, Minister of Foreign Affairs (centre) with participants of the Bilateral Political Dialogue between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the European Union*

The Honourable Winston Dookeran, Minister of Foreign Affairs, held a Bilateral Political Dialogue with the European Union on Monday 12th January, 2015 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Dialogue was held in the context of Article 8 (1) of the ACP-EU Cotonou Partnership Agreement, which calls for the Parties to "...regularly engage in a comprehensive, balanced and deep political dialogue, leading to commitments on both sides". Also participating in the Bilateral Political Dialogue were Senator the Honourable Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie, Minister of Planning and Sustainable Development, Senator the Honourable Vasant Bharath, Minister of Trade, Industry and Investment and Communications, and former Senator the Honourable Gary Griffith, Minister of National Security, who met with representatives of the European Union (EU) for discussions. The EU was represented by Ms. Daniela Tramacere, Chargé d'Affaires of the European Union Delegation to Trinidad and Tobago, along with the Heads of Mission of EU Member States resident in Trinidad and Tobago: Spain, The

Netherlands, Germany, the United Kingdom and France.

The fruitful discussions focussed on a comprehensive range of issues including recent political and economic developments in Trinidad and Tobago and the EU, trade and investment, development cooperation and the environment. The critical issue of crime and security in Trinidad and Tobago and the region was highlighted. Human Rights protection and good governance issues were discussed as well.

Participants also discussed collaboration in multilateral Fora including the upcoming CELAC-EU Summit to be held in June 2015. The EU in turn underscored Trinidad and Tobago as one of its most important partners in the Caribbean, stating that it looked forward to a strengthened partnership based on mutual interests and values.

Minister Dookeran highlighted the great strides made regarding the conclusion of a Short-stay Visa Waiver Agreement with the Schengen countries of Europe, with both sides envisaging the finalisation of the Agreement in 2015.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs recalled the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) on 24th December, 2014 and expressed appreciation for support lent on that issue which was one of utmost importance to Trinidad and Tobago. He expressed his anticipation of support for the country's bid to host the Secretariat of the ATT, and informed of the upcoming First Preparatory Meeting towards the First Conference of States Parties to the UNATT, to be held from 23rd to 24th February in Port of Spain.

Both parties agreed to pursue ongoing dialogue on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues and to hold another Political Dialogue in the near future.

## MINISTER DOOKERAN CHALLENGES THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO SPEED UP ACTION TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE

The Honourable Winston Dookeran, Minister of Foreign Affairs, speaking immediately after the Presidents of Peru, Colombia, Chile and Argentina called on the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to work with speed and urgency to agree on the basic text outlining the elements necessary to conclude a new Climate Change Agreement in Paris 2015.

This call was made in December 2014, before the Twentieth Assembly comprising 194 countries, and specifically supported contributions by all countries to the Green Climate Fund which now stands at US\$10 billion. The Minister stated that while the contribution of

Trinidad and Tobago as a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) to global greenhouse gas emissions is miniscule, it is prepared to do its part to ensure adequate capitalisation of the Fund. This comes out of the need to protect and promote the welfare and well-being of its people through protecting the environment.

The Minister ended his contribution by reiterating Trinidad and Tobago's commitment to the elaboration of a new legally binding climate framework by 2015. The Minister further called on the COP to continue in the advancement towards the formulation of an ambitious and effective response in furthering sustainable development in the interest of securing our common future.

## 5TH FUTURE DIPLOMATS ESSAY COMPETITION WINNERS



MINISTRY OF  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

### Congratulations to the Winning Students and Schools of the 5th Future Diplomats Essay Competition



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago honoured the winners of the 5th Future Diplomats Essay Competition on Friday 16th January, 2015. The competition was conducted during the period 15th September, 2014 to 24th October, 2014 in all secondary schools throughout Trinidad and Tobago on the theme “Climate Change and Sustainable Development”. Over 235 entries were received from 53 secondary schools.



Dr. the Honourable Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister of Works and Infrastructure and Ag. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ms. Frances Seignoret, Permanent Secretary (Ag.), Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the winners of the 5th Future Diplomats Essay Competition

### SPECIAL PRIZE WINNERS

- Shannon Lue Chee Lip** ..... St. Joseph's Convent, San Fernando  
*(Best Understanding of the Causes of Climate Change)*
- Kristianne Austin** ..... St. Joseph's Convent, San Fernando
- Abigail Coldero** ..... Shiva Boys' Hindu College
- Rendell Ryan Ramdath** ..... ASJA Boys' College, San Fernando
- Venessa David-Sayers** ..... St. François Girls' College
- Nadia Ali** ..... Naparima Girls' High School
- Danté Frett** ..... La Romaine Secondary School
- Farhaana Dan** ..... Naparima Girls' High School
- Wayne Fairman** ..... Miracle Ministries Pentecostal High School
- Shawnae Ramjattan** ..... St. Stephen's College
- Yann Quash** ..... Bishop Anstey & Trinity College East 6th Form
- Andrina Joseph** ..... Miracle Ministries Pentecostal High School
- Vandana Meenauali Ramadhar** ..... Naparima Girls' High School
- Vishnu Narine** ..... Miracle Ministries Pentecostal High School
- Christin J. Mohammed** ..... Naparima Girls' High School
- Charisse Alexander** ..... Naparima Girls' High School
- Ryan Kyle Singh** ..... Barataria South Secondary School

### WINNERS LIST

- 1ST PLACE**     **Gabrielle A.M. Samuel**     Naparima Girls' High School  
*(Best Researched Essay)*
- 2ND PLACE**     **Janeil Chuck**     St. George's College  
*(Most Innovative Essay)*
- 3RD PLACE**     **Keshan V. Ramnarace**     Presentation College,  
San Fernando

School with highest number of entries that attained B+ and above - **Naparima Girls' High School**  
Class teacher whose class attained the highest number of B+ and above - **Ms. Fariah Hyatali - Naparima Girls' High School**

## FIRST ANNUAL DIPLOMATIC DINNER AND BALL - KAMPALA, UGANDA



country's first Diplomatic Dinner and Ball. 50% of the proceeds from the dinner were donated to supporting the work of Ugandan Police Force in combating gender-based violence and promoting gender related activities.

The inaugural feature address was delivered by His Excellency Joaquim Alberto Chissano, Former President of the Republic of Mozambique. The esteemed African son is credited with transforming his country from a war-torn state to a thriving African democracy. Former President Chissano spoke on the topic of “Philanthropy and Development Diplomacy: A new tool for the promotion of friendly relations between States” as he complimented the work of the Diplomatic Community in Uganda for hosting such

an event as a way of raising funds for the development of their host state. He encouraged the Community, to continue this effort and remarked that the initiative should be replicated throughout Africa.

**O**n Saturday 22nd November, 2014, Trinidad and Tobago created waves in the diplomatic community as His Excellency Patrick Edwards, High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the Republic of Uganda, hosted that

## FORUM ON THE FUTURE OF THE CARIBBEAN



Regional and international leaders will gather in Port of Spain from 5th to 7th May 2015 to tackle challenges to Caribbean development and identify strategies for securing a sustainable future. The Forum on the Future of the Caribbean is a collaborative effort involving The University of the West Indies (UWI), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago, the United Nations System and regional inter-governmental partners, and The Commonwealth.

Forum participants - including Caribbean heads of government and policy-makers, civil society and business leaders, and academic experts - will confront existing development paradigms through innovative, disruptive thought. This is aimed at producing models for research, policy development and transformative action to support

an equitable, sustainable Caribbean society in the post-2015 period and for generations beyond.

They will challenge each other to consider persistent development problems in new ways and identify approaches directed at widening opportunities and improving living conditions for all Caribbean citizens. Agenda areas of focus include all dimensions of poverty, inequality, and resource mobilization, as well as the specific vulnerabilities of small - often high and middle income - Caribbean States.

The Honourable Winston Dookeran, Minister of Foreign Affairs, in his welcome announcement on the Forum, said:

“Business as usual cannot possibly meet the complex challenges of poverty, inequality and funding we now face in the region. We need disruptive thinking and bold action if we are to create a resilient and international Caribbean future. I believe we need to accelerate regional convergence and new models of diplomacy in a global setting and the Forum provides us a real opportunity to do just that.”

Sessions for the Forum on the Future of the Caribbean will convene at both The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus, and the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Port of Spain.

Further information is available at <http://caribbeanfutureforum.com>

## JAMAICA'S GOVERNOR GENERAL EXTENDS CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF HER EXCELLENCY YVONNE GITTENS-JOSEPH



His Excellency the Most Honourable Sir Patrick L. Allen, ON, GCMG, CD, Governor General of Jamaica visited the High Commission for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on 5th March, 2015 to sign the condolence book for the late Mrs.

Yvonne Gittens-Joseph who passed away on 23rd February, 2015. Mrs. Gittens-Joseph served as High Commissioner of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to Jamaica from 2006 - 2010.

The Governor General stated that the people of Jamaica were pleased and thankful for the service of the late former High Commissioner. He noted that she served her country well and was very gracious and kind in the relationship that she had established during her posting in Jamaica.

The Honourable Arnaldo Brown, MP, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Sir Kenneth Hall, former Governor General of Jamaica and Mr. Bruce Golding, former Prime Minister of Jamaica were among those who signed the condolence book on the first day of its opening at the High Commission.

Family and friends paid tribute to Mrs Yvonne Gittens-Joseph on 5th March, 2015 at the St. Jude's Anglican Church, Arima, Trinidad.