



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **DESPERATE WADE MARK TRIES TO WHIP UP HYSTERIA OVER AMENDMENTS TO THE IMMIGRATION (CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY SKILLED NATIONALS) ACT**

**PORT OF SPAIN: 11<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2022**

Today the Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs refuted what he said were “false claims” made by Wade Mark that amendments to the Immigration Act would open the flood gates for regional “Migrants”. In response to an article that appeared in Loop TT News on 10 March 2022, Senator the Hon. Dr Amery Browne, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, condemned Mark’s “irresponsible, inflammatory, and untruthful remarks which jeopardize Trinidad and Tobago’s standing in the Caribbean Community, and which do grave disservice to our private sector which in fact holds the largest market share of intra-regional trade.”

Minister Browne stated that Mark has once again missed the mark by failing to recognize that skilled Trinidad and Tobago nationals have been seeking to offer more of their skills and talents across the region. The Minister went on to explain that the expansion of the skills categories for free movement being put into legislation will further expand opportunities for Trinidad and Tobago nationals and nationals of other CARICOM states to work in participating Member States in the region, and for skills within the regional marketplace to flow where they are needed in support of CARICOM's economic recovery and resilience. The Minister said that currently Trinidad and Tobago nationals are using the available skills certificates to access opportunities in the petro-chemical industries of Guyana and Suriname and in many other sectors throughout our region, for the benefit of the region. He chided Senator Mark as an apostle of myopia who has an agenda to see Trinidad and Tobago lag behind Member States like Barbados, Jamaica, Guyana, Belize, Grenada, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname – all of whom have enacted into legislation more categories than Trinidad and Tobago. Mark’s narrative, the Minister said, “seeks to place Trinidad and Tobago nationals at a disadvantage because they would not be able apply locally for a skills certificate in the additional categories which have all been approved by CARICOM

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**Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs**

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Heads of Government.” The Minister said that “holders of skills certificates in any of the 10 categories have been able to live and seek work across participating Member States to build our regional economy, but Senator Mark prefers to use his energy to conjure imaginary hordes of Migrant Caravans from within CARICOM that are crossing borders”. The Minister reiterated that the Free Movement Regime was a system of Orderly Migration and that the Government would continue to advocate for the expansion of opportunities throughout the region for Trinidad and Tobago nationals including the youth, creatives, entrepreneurs and the businesses community, as Member States work together toward a CARICOM Single Market and Economy.

Minister Browne underscored that Mark’s comments are a stark reminder that the current UNC leaders are not just unsupportive of the jurisdiction of the Caribbean Court of Justice, but they also are fundamentally opposed to the implementation of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas.

**Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs**