

Remarks by Senator the Honourable Dr. Amery Browne, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs on the launch of the United Nations Network on Migration, the BRIX Hotel , Port of Spain Monday 17th October 2022

Mr. Dennis Zulu, United Nations Resident Coordinator *ad interim*,

Ms. Jewel Ali, Head of the International Organization for Migration, Port of Spain,

The Honourable Pennelope Beckles-Robinson, Minister of Planning and Development,

Senator the Honourable Donna Cox, Minister of Social Development and Family Services,

The Honourable Stephen Mc Clashie, Minister of Labour

Your Excellencies, Heads of Diplomatic Missions,

Other Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Representatives of International Organizations;

Representatives of Government Agencies,

Representatives of Civil Society Groups;

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning.

Migration has been part of the human experience since the pre-historic era, and continues to engage the attention of citizens and Government authorities around the world. And rightly so. The number of migrants continues to rise at an unprecedented rate as people flee persecution, famine, poverty, war and political turmoil in their home countries, or merely seek improved circumstances for themselves and their families. In commensurate fashion, as the countries that become migrant destinations expand, the need for coordinated and collaborative effort among countries and organisations becomes more urgent than ever before.

The phenomenon of migration has also been significant for Trinidad and Tobago. For centuries, there has been the flow inward of people from many different countries, resulting in an amazing and beautiful eclectic mix of cultures. While the flow of our people outward has resulted in the enrichment of and influence on the societies they now call home.

I am therefore enthusiastic about this morning's launch of the United Nations Network on Migration. No one entity could manage migration alone if the ultimate aim is to ensure the safety of migrant populations, the manageable accommodation, integration and facilitation of new beginnings for those who have had to leave their homelands and support for the systems in the countries they transit and those that receive them.

Historical migratory flows are responsible for the configuration of the world's current demographic complexity and it is undeniable that migration remains a significant influence on the internal governance of individual countries and the relations among them.

I therefore consider the work of the International Organization for Migration in safeguarding the rights of migrants and providing assistance to source, transit and destination countries, to be crucial at this time.

Collaboration between the IOM in Port of Spain and the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs is therefore a matter of tremendous importance. Constituting part of our commitments to regional integration efforts, such as CARICOM and to international instruments, such as the Global Compact for Migration, facilitation of the movement of people is an ineluctable imperative for Trinidad and Tobago. Of course, unregulated flows are impractical and have negative social, economic and security impact. In this regard, as we seek to engage with partners to ensure that the delicate and problematic balance between managing the well-being of migrants and the perhaps unavoidable domestic concerns as a destination country is developed and maintained. The concerns of *all* constituents within the frame of migration matter.

Trinidad and Tobago, welcomes the inception of the United Nations Network on Migration and eagerly anticipates the support that this partnership will bring with respect to capacity building, knowledge sharing and information, collection of data and analysis, and the development of National Action Plans. As we recognize, migration is a multi-dimensional issue, and strategic partnerships such as those that will be developed through this Network will

serve to assist all participating Governments to address effectively and navigate through the issues that arise out of the phenomenon of people moving in search of better lives. I am therefore very appreciative of this initiative.

Ladies and Gentlemen, before I close, I take this opportunity to commend to Ms. Jewel Ali and her staff at the IOM for the work they have done and will undoubtedly continue to do in the sphere of migration. I also reaffirm the commitment of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to productive collaboration with the IOM office in Port of Spain, which will redound to the benefit of all persons touched by migration, and the society as a whole.

Thank you.