



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs

MEDIA RELEASE

THE CITIES OF PORT OF SPAIN AND SHANGHAI SIGN A LETTER OF INTENT ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SISTER CITY RELATIONSHIP

PORT OF SPAIN: 17TH NOVEMBER, 2022

On 15th November, 2022, a signing ceremony for the Letter of Intent in respect of the establishment of a sister city relationship between the cities of Port of Spain and Shanghai was held at City Hall in Port of Spain and was hosted by His Worship Alderman Joel Martinez, Mayor of the City of Port of Spain. Through the signing of the Letter of Intent, both the cities of Port of Spain and Shanghai decided to pursue exchanges and cooperation in economy, trade, culture, sports, public health and education in order to promote common prosperity and development. The signing of the Letter of Intent was an important step toward the formalisation of a sister city relationship/twinning of Port of Spain and Shanghai. At the ceremony, remarks were delivered by a number of officials including Senator the Honourable Dr. Amery Browne, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs; His Worship Alderman Joel Martinez, Mayor of the City of Port of Spain; and His Excellency Gong Zheng, Mayor of Shanghai.

During his remarks at the event, Senator the Honourable Dr. Amery Browne, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs made reference to the Chinese proverb, “*a bosom friend afar brings distant lands near.*” In this vein, Minister Browne indicated that in spite of the geographical distance, Port of Spain and Shanghai have indeed become closer as they move toward establishing themselves as sister cities. Additionally, the Honourable Minister indicated that it was a pleasure to bear witness to this major milestone in the establishment of a sister city relationship between Port of Spain and Shanghai and reiterated that the ceremony further concretised an already warm and fruitful relationship between both cities and, by extension, Trinidad and Tobago and China. Minister Browne also specified that it was in May 2018, on his Official Visit to China, that Dr. Honourable Keith Rowley, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, vocalised his support for the twinning of Port of Spain and one of China’s largest cities. The Minister emphasized that it was the Prime Minister’s statement of support then, which provided the impetus needed for the advancement of the twinning process.

His Worship Alderman Joel Martinez, Mayor of the City of Port of Spain, noted that the Letter of Intent between Port of Spain and Shanghai signified the intention of both cities to cooperate in several areas of mutual interest, with a view to becoming sister cities in the future. Mayor Martinez

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also expressed the view that the signing would lead to the development of both cities. He recalled the projects undertaken by the Shanghai Construction Group in Port of Spain, commending the company for exhibiting good corporate responsibility in the city over the past seventeen years. Mayor Martinez also made mention of the formal establishment of the China Town in Port of Spain, highlighting that it is the first of its kind in Latin America and the Caribbean.

His Excellency Gong Zheng, Mayor of Shanghai, who attended and delivered remarks at the ceremony via video conference, recognised Trinidad and Tobago as an important partner for China in the Caribbean. In this regard, he noted that Trinidad and Tobago was China's largest trade partner in the region and was the first country in the English-speaking Caribbean to sign onto the Belt and Road Initiative. Mayor Gong also made recommendations for the development of the relationship between Port of Spain and Shanghai such as enhancing the economic and trade cooperation between both cities; enhancing cultural cooperation, through the exchange of cultural troupes; and strengthening cooperation in public health. His Excellency indicated that he looked forward to cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative and the relationship between both cities in contributing to the development of bilateral relations between both countries.

The Signing Ceremony concluded with a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to open a photo exhibition at City Hall, Port of Spain in honour of the relationship between the cities of Port of Spain and Shanghai. Also in attendance at the Signing Ceremony were Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry; the Honourable Stuart Young, Minister of Energy and Energy Industries and Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister; the Honourable Keith Scotland, Member of Parliament for Port of Spain South; and His Excellency Fang Qiu, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China.

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From L-R: Senator the Honourable Dr. Amery Browne, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs; His Worship Alderman Joel Martinez, Mayor of the City of Port of Spain; and His Excellency Fang Qiu, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China at the Signing Ceremony for a Letter of Intent on the establishment of a sister city relationship between Port of Spain and Shanghai.

From L-R: The Honourable Keith Scotland, Member of Parliament for Port of Spain South; the Honourable Paula Gopee Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry; Senator the Honourable Dr. Amery Browne, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs; His Worship Alderman Joel Martinez, Mayor of the City of Port of Spain; His Excellency Fang Qiu, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China and the Honourable Stuart Young, Minister of Energy and Energy Industries and Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister at the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to open a photo exhibition at City Hall, Port of Spain in honour of the relationship between the cities of Port of Spain and Shanghai.

Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs

2 Prada Street
St. Clair
Newtown 190325
Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Tel: (868) 623-6894
Fax: (868) 623-5853
E-mail: communications@foreign.gov.tt
Website: www.foreign.gov.tt