

**Statement delivered by Ms. Kiva Clarke, Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
on the occasion of the National Day of the Dominican Republic
Tuesday 10 March 2026
Queen's Hall 6:30 p.m.**

Good evening...

It is my pleasure to address you on this special occasion, and to extend, on behalf of the Honourable Sean Sobers, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs and the Government and People of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, warm congratulations on the occasion of the 182nd Anniversary of Independence of the Dominican Republic, which was commemorated on February 27th.

The annual observance, which recognises the vibrant explosion of national pride and the nation's rich heritage, is particularly meaningful, as it marks the first National Day celebration to be hosted since Ambassador Jacobo Jaar presented her Credentials.

The diplomatic presence of the Dominican Republic in Trinidad and Tobago, since May 1968, has evolved steadily over

the last five decades, whereby, we have seen the continued strengthening of friendship, dialogue and cooperation between our two countries. Our engagement has been characterised by mutual respect and cooperation across several priority areas, including through the Association of Caribbean States, CARIFORUM, the Organisation of American States (OAS), the United Nations (UN) and other regional and multilateral fora.

These regional linkages in trade, energy, security and regional collaboration provide the perfect opportunity for our countries to continue to advocate for the priorities that matter most to our people.

Indeed, last Saturday, the Honourable Wayne Sturge, Minister of Defence, signed on behalf of Trinidad and Tobago, the Americas Counter Cartel Joint Security Declaration. He was joined by among others, Major General Carlos Antonio Fernández Onofre, Minister of Defence of the Dominican Republic.

This landmark declaration, which advances peace and prioritises expanding multilateral and bilateral cooperation to enhance security in the Americas, is a shared commitment among all signatories. It also addresses border security, narco-trafficking, including but not limited to criminal and terrorist gangs and cartels, and illegal mass migration and other critical infrastructure cooperation.

As island states, both our nations remain acutely aware of the challenges posed by climate change and environmental vulnerability. The increasing frequency and intensity of climate-related events continue to shape our development trajectories and underscores the urgency of building adaptive and resilient societies. In this regard, access to climate financing, technology transfer and practical adaptation support remains critical to the sustainable future of Caribbean States.

Beyond formal cooperation, the friendship between our countries is strengthened by the cultural and social connections that continue to unite us as Caribbean people. Our shared heritage, creativity and vibrant traditions as reflected in music,

art, cuisine and community life, as well as initiatives such as cultural exhibitions, film presentations and community gatherings have helped deepen mutual understanding between our societies.

Moreover, engagements such as the involvement of the Dominican Republic in the National Library and Information System Authority's, Latin Nights, has created a diplomatic bridge, which allows us to appreciate the uniqueness of each nation's history, artistic and cultural expressions.

As we celebrate the people of the Dominican Republic's enduring spirit of freedom, I extend sincere congratulations to you Excellency on behalf of the Government and People of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, on the celebration of your country's national day, and trust that the bonds of friendship between our two countries will grow deeper with each passing year.

I thank you.