

**Statement for Jamaica's 64th "Emancipendence" Reception delivered
by the Honourable Nicholas Morris, Minister in the Office of the Prime
Minister, on behalf of the Honourable Sean Sobers, Minister of
Foreign and CARICOM Affairs**

August 6th 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

Thank you very much, Your Excellency.

This evening, I will not be long. On behalf of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, on behalf of the Prime Minister, the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar S.C. and on behalf of Minister Sobers, it is my pleasure to bring greetings this evening.

It is my pleasure to join you for this very meaningful observance of *Emancipendence*, as Jamaica marks sixty-four years of Independence, while also paying tribute to the enduring legacy of Emancipation.

On behalf of the Government and the People of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, and on my behalf, I extend warmest congratulations and best wishes to the Government and People of Jamaica on this national milestone.

For Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, the journeys to Emancipation and Independence were closely intertwined. As you would be aware, at the end

of this month, Trinidad and Tobago will proudly celebrate our 64th Anniversary of Independence.

Both nations were shaped by the shared experience of colonialism and slavery, and in both societies, Emancipation ignited an enduring quest for dignity, equality and self-determination.

While Emancipation broke the physical chains of bondage, it also awakened the aspiration for political freedom, an aspiration that ultimately culminated in Independence and the sovereign right of our peoples to direct our own development.

And today, as a region, a proud CARICOM region, where we met only last month, it has been a significant journey. Today the Government of Trinidad and Tobago is a proud member of CARICOM. Today, we are all in this room as proud members of the Caribbean brought together by this journey.

As we celebrate these defining moments in our national histories, it is fitting to acknowledge the brave contributions of our ancestors for their unyielding struggle against colonial oppression and the triumph of freedom over bondage. The challenges we face today may differ from those of previous generations, but they require the same resolve, unity and commitment.

The Honourable Prime Minister, the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, recently reminded us, *"the enduring lesson of Emancipation is that freedom is never merely inherited. It must be cherished, protected and strengthened by every generation."* So too, the Prime Minister of Jamaica, the Honourable Holness said, *"Independence is both an inheritance and an instruction."*

So today we celebrate a great day. A day where we celebrate unity, strength and determination.

Indeed, for Trinidad and Tobago, the observance of Emancipation has always been of particular significance, and we have seen that this week. So today, it is a pleasure to join you on this great day.

Today I would also like to acknowledge the strength of the Jamaican people as they recover from Hurricane Melissa.

I will not use the rest of my speech; I will speak from the heart. When my government, led by the Prime Minister, came into office one year ago, one of the very first challenges we were faced with was Hurricane Melissa, and as a government, led by the Prime Minister, together with the private sector, and all those in Trinidad and Tobago, we activated quickly to support Jamaica.

Why? Because Jamaica has always been a friend. Jamaica shares a common bond with us. Jamaica shares a common love with us. Today, we remain inspired by Jamaica because, as you recover from Hurricane Melissa, you showed the world what Chris Gayle himself showed the world for many years on the field: what it is to be strong and resilient.

Today, on behalf of Minister Sobers and on behalf of the Government, we also thank Jamaica for their friendship on the global level and for your support in our election to the UN Security Council. Together, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago have always played a defining role in the Caribbean region, and today, Trinidad and Jamaica, together with the work of Your Excellency and all of her team, have played a defining role in shaping our development here and our development in the region.

I wish you all a very happy Independence. Let us also cherish and protect our heritage. Thank you very much.