Statement to be delivered by
the Honourable Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs
at the Turkish National Day Reception

October 30th, 2026

Your Excellency Ayşe Selcan Şanli **(I-ay-shay Sel-Jun shun-lee)**, Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye;

Your Excellencies, Heads of Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations accredited to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and other Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Staff Members of the Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye and Members of the Turkish community resident in Trinidad and Tobago;

Other Distinguished Guests;

Members of the Media;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good evening…

On behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, I extend heartfelt congratulations to the Government and people of Türkiye, as you celebrate the 103rd anniversary of the Proclamation of the Republic of Türkiye.

This historic occasion commemorates the founding of the Republic under the visionary and courageous leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, whose enduring legacy laid the foundations of the modern Turkish state.

Over the past century, Türkiye has made significant strides in its national development, while strengthening its presence on the international stage while deepening its engagement with the global community.

At a time when the world faces increasingly complex and interconnected challenges, international cooperation is more important than ever a pivotal means of establishing and keeping partners who are of even mind. Against this backdrop, Türkiye's hosting of the *31st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (**COP31**)* in Antalya next month provides an important opportunity to advance international dialogue and collective action on climate change.

Your Excellency, climate change remains one of the most pressing challenges of our time, with profound implications for small island developing States such as Trinidad and Tobago. For us, building climate resilience is not merely an environmental imperative, but a fundamental development priority. We therefore look forward to working closely with Türkiye and other international partners to advance meaningful climate action and strengthen the resilience of vulnerable countries and communities.

This spirit of cooperation is also reflected in the longstanding friendship between Trinidad and Tobago and Türkiye. Since establishing diplomatic relations in 1972, our countries have maintained a constructive relationship grounded in mutual respect and a shared commitment to dialogue and partnership. An important step in strengthening these ties was cemented this year with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Political Consultations Mechanism, which will provide a structured platform for deepening dialogue and identifying new opportunities for cooperation.

Moreover, our engagement with Türkiye also extends to the wider Caribbean as the *Second CARICOM–Türkiye Consultations,* which was held earlier this month, reaffirmed our shared commitment to expanding cooperation in areas such as trade and investment, energy and climate resilience. We therefore welcome Türkiye's continued engagement with the Caribbean Community and

we look forward to translating this momentum into tangible benefits for our peoples.

Correspondingly, our partnership holds significant promise within the multilateral arena, where cooperation is essential to addressing shared challenges to achieving international peace and security. As Trinidad and Tobago prepares to assume its responsibilities as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, we look forward to engaging constructively with Türkiye in advancing our common goals of a more just and stable world.

Your Excellency, as we celebrate Türkiye's national achievements and reflect on the importance of international friendship and cooperation, it is especially fitting that this occasion coincides with the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs' recent second annual Divali celebration.

Your national day and our celebration of the Festival of Light invite us to reaffirm the values that unite us and remind us of our shared responsibility to foster peace, harmony and progress.

As I congratulate you once more on this auspicious celebration, I am confident that the friendship between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and

the Republic of Türkiye will continue to flourish, to the lasting benefit of our peoples and the wider international community.

Thank you.