



UPDATED MEDIA RELEASE

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO CONDEMNS FALSE STATEMENTS BY ADVISOR TO GUYANA'S MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND THE GEORGETOWN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

PORT OF SPAIN: 18TH JUNE, 2021

The Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs has noted with concern the recent misleading, disrespectful, and potentially damaging comments in the Guyanese media ascribed to Dr. Leslie Ramsammy, Advisor to the Ministry of Health of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, as well as a most reprehensible and slanderous Statement ascribed to the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI), directed against Dr. the Honourable Keith Rowley, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and current Chairman of CARICOM.

The comments and Statement attempt to associate Prime Minister Rowley with views which he does not hold and which he has never expressed. It is noteworthy that in his published commentary Dr. Ramsammy could offer not one single quotation from the Prime Minister to support his false allegations, nor did Dr. Ramsammy offer a shred of evidence to support his misleading claims. At no point in time has Prime Minister ever disparaged the vaccine programme in Guyana, nor has he ever implied that the vaccines in use in Guyana are defective or unsafe; and it is extremely unfortunate that the Advisor to the Ministry of Health of Guyana would use falsehood to publicly attack the Prime Minister of a friendly neighbouring country.

The Statement of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry as published in the Guyanese media also makes references to Prime Minister Rowley that are completely false and appear to simply repeat the fake narrative of Dr. Ramsammy. Further, that Chamber Statement's disgusting slur to the effect that Prime Minister Rowley "fulfils his historical trait of demonstrating scant regard for the lives of Guyanese" must be regarded as a particularly scurrilous attack against the Chairman of CARICOM.

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Ironically that slanderous Statement was issued by the Georgetown Chamber mere days after Prime Minister Rowley instructed the relevant arms of his Government to organise much needed relief supplies and assistance for Guyana, in response to the Government of Guyana's request through CARICOM for help with their response to heavy floods. Further, Dr. Rowley, as Chairman of CARICOM has been well recognized for his robust and consistent advocacy and frequent communication with US and global leadership on behalf of all CARICOM people, including the people of Guyana, in pursuit of greater access to COVID-19 vaccines for our region.

Additionally, Dr. Rowley intervened to help achieve the release of Guyanese fishermen detained in Venezuela earlier this year, he led CARICOM's support for Guyana during a critical period of the border dispute with Venezuela, and he physically went to Guyana during the pandemic to work with fellow Heads to assist in CARICOM's efforts toward ensuring that the outcome of Guyana's most recent general elections was peaceful and reflective of the will of its people.

The Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs strongly condemns the published falsehoods against Prime Minister Rowley by Dr. Ramsammy and the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and calls upon the authorities in Guyana to disassociate themselves from such unwarranted, scurrilous and disrespectful attacks on the sitting Chairman of CARICOM, which incidentally is headquartered in Georgetown, Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs