



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

# Media Release

## MENTORING AND SERVING ARE ACTIVE WAYS OF ENSURING PARITY

**March 12, 2016:-** Speaking at the Association of Female Executives of Trinidad and Tobago's International Women's Day 'Women of Influence' Awards and Luncheon, held on Friday 11th March, 2016 at the Hyatt Regency, Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry said to the two hundred plus in attendance ***'I call on you professional and experienced women to get involved in public life to serve your country. We can do so in our communities, through our community groups, serve on Boards, get active with NGOs and sporting groups, get involved in the schools, get involved in politics. We need more women leaders in all spheres of management and governing!'***

Moreso, the Trade Minister noted that ***'mentoring and serving are active ways of ensuring parity, diminishing the unjust circumstances brought against our mothers and daughters. It certainly adds more value that just raising a voice. Now is an opportune time in our nation's development, as the Government seeks to re-build the economy and get us back on a path of sustainable development and growth of our people, including our women.'*** The Minister's Address was focused on the key issues of women of substance, mentorship, service in public office, and gender equality.

She made the unequivocal statement that ***'we in Government attach significant importance to women and gender affairs thus it is no surprise that this Unit sits within the Office of the Prime Minister. Its mandate is to spearhead the national portfolio on gender equality and empowerment.'***



The Minister applauded AFETT's REACH Mentorship Programme, and commended the Executive for recognizing and encouraging young female University students with the bursaries issued through its Women's Development Fund. At the Luncheon, four women were honoured in the categories of Social Entrepreneur; Business Pioneer, and National Spirit.

The event opened with welcome words by AFETT President, Mrs. Cavelle Joseph; and featured motivational guest speaker, Ms. Akosua Dardaine-Edwards, Founder, Enabling Enterprise Project.

The Women of Influence Awards and Luncheon was hosted in celebration of International Women's Day 2016, with the theme '**Pledge for Parity – 117 years to gender parity**'. Among the specially invited guests were female students of fourteen (14) Secondary Schools.