



Media Release

INTERNATIONAL TRADE PROFESSIONALS TO PLAY A KEY ROLE IN BUILDING T&T'S EXPORT CAPACITY

January 31, 2017:- Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry delivered the Feature Address at the graduation ceremony of the International Trade Specialist Accreditation Programme hosted by expoTT Limited held on Friday 27 January, 2017 at the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Commerce. The programme which is a nine (9) month e-learning programme, is accredited by the Institute of Export and delivered by eBSI Export Academy. The graduates included persons from exporting firms and also staff members of expoTT Limited.

In her Address, Minister Gopee-Scoon told the graduates that ***'the understanding and appreciation gained about international trade will inevitably and ultimately result in more resilient and competitive businesses, and by extension, a stronger economy'***. She added that ***'as newly recognized International Trade Specialists, all of you have a role to play in building our nation. Exporters now have the tools and enhanced knowledge-base to better navigate the global trading system; while those of you attached to expoTT will now have the knowledge to be more effective facilitators, as you treat closely with exporters and importers'***.

Minister Gopee-Scoon indicated that the Ministry of Trade and Industry, guided by Government Policy, continues to focus on pursuing extra regional and non-traditional markets, increasing export capacity and competitiveness of value added goods and services, improving the business and trade-enabling environment and strengthening the Institutional Framework for Trade. She said ***'the Ministry of Trade and Industry is in the process of completing a comprehensive National Export Strategy (NES). The NES is aimed at improving the competitiveness of exporters by strengthening their business knowledge and exporting competencies;***

enhancing administrative efficiency of trade related services, via a reduction in the cost and delivery time of services provided by public trade related institutions; and providing greater support to help exporters penetrate targeted overseas markets, towards increasing and promoting the international profile and desirability of the country's exports'. Minister Gopee-Scoon expressed confidence that the implementation of the NES will have a major and real impact on Trinidad and Tobago's exports and overall trade competitiveness noting that *'this reflects the Government's on-going commitment to foster an open trade environment, appropriate for both budding and already established exporters'*.

Mr. Ashmeer Mohamed, Chairman, exporTT Limited in his address commended exporTT's management for conducting the International Trade Specialist programme. He said ***'this programme will allow exporTT to lay the foundation for the capacity building that would accelerate growth in exports and diversification, thereby achieving our mandate which is to grow and diversify the exports of Trinidad and Tobago away from oil and gas'***. He added that ***'as the international trade environment becomes increasingly competitive and challenging, we are constantly seeking innovative ways to keep in step with international trade "best practice" to creatively overcome perceived obstacles. Never before has the role of exporTT been more crucial in developing the talent to take products internationally, especially to larger, more complex markets like Latin America, EU, Africa, and worldwide'***.