



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

Media Release

TRADE MINISTRY LAUNCHES T&T'S NATIONAL AID FOR TRADE STRATEGY

April 26, 2017:- Trinidad and Tobago's National Aid for Trade Strategy 2016 to 2019 was launched today at the National Academy for Performing Arts, Port-of-Spain. Delivering the Feature Address at the Launch, Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry indicated that **'today's Launch, signifies this Government's commitment towards supporting its exporters and enhancing trade. This Strategy is geared towards matching donor funding with the needs of the country to build the supply side capacity and trade related infrastructure. This means that the Government will now have a structured programme of trade related project interventions which can be used to target specific donor funding. Donors will now be able to use Trinidad and Tobago's Aid for Trade Strategy as a framework for mobilizing resources to address the trade priorities of Trinidad and Tobago and the related projects. For our exporters the Strategy provides a unique opportunity to obtain resources to address critical constraints that hinder their capacity to trade'**

Senator Gopee-Scoon informed the audience that the Aid for Trade Strategy is of primary importance for a country like Trinidad and Tobago, which at this time is seeking to diversify its exports in the non-energy sectors. She said **'Currently, Trinidad and Tobago faces numerous trade-related challenges in its domestic environment. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago is therefore focused on addressing such challenges as, the lack of internationally accredited testing facilities, inadequate financing mechanisms, underdeveloped market intelligence, congestion at the ports, and absence of payment mechanisms to facilitate e-commerce'**. The Strategy covers a three year period from 2016 to 2019 and presents a coherent framework of priority areas, identified by domestic business support organisations, Ministries and agencies, necessary to address the challenges faced in expanding trade in Trinidad and Tobago. The Aid for Trade



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framework consists of three pillars: Export Diversification, Competitiveness and Trade Facilitation. Each Pillar contains, objectives, priority areas and projects that are aligned with Government's Draft National Strategic Development Plan, Vision 2030. Senator Gopee-Scoon urged the private sector to become actively involved in the implementation of this Strategy to ensure that aid also promotes **'investment for trade'**.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry will have general oversight for the implementation of the Aid for Trade Strategy, country ownership at the highest political level and effective intra-governmental co-ordination will ensure successful implementation of the Strategy. Trinidad and Tobago's National Aid for Trade Strategy includes a robust monitoring and evaluation mechanism.

Mr. Norris Herbert, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Trade and Industry stated that **'The Aid for Trade Strategy will be a key tool in diversifying the economy'**. He acknowledged the dedication and commitment of those involved in the development of the National Aid for Trade Strategy and called for continued discussions and collaboration amongst stakeholders.

Ms. Candice Lackhansingh, Programme Coordinator, Ministry of Trade and Industry, delivered a detailed presentation on the strategy. She outlined the Structure of the Aid for Trade Strategy and described the priority areas and projects to which Donors can target their assistance. She further explained how the strategy would be implemented. Ms. Lackhansingh concluded by calling for the continued development of project proposals by the various stakeholders.