



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

Media Release

THE SHETRADES T&T MOVEMENT IS HERE

28 October, 2020: Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry, made a call for all female entrepreneurs in Trinidad and Tobago to join the SheTrades initiative, which was launched on Wednesday 28 October 2020. While addressing over three hundred (300) female entrepreneurs at the virtual launch of Trinidad and Tobago's SheTrades online platform, held in collaboration with the International Trade Centre (ITC), Minister Gopee-Scoon said ***"Trinidad and Tobago is honoured to be the first country in the Caribbean to officially launch a SheTrades Hub. We are now part of a community of over 25 countries working towards connecting over 3 million women entrepreneurs to global markets by 2021"***.

Highlighting the benefits of the SheTrades Hub, Minister Gopee-Scoon stated, ***"This transformative platform offers invaluable opportunities for Trinidad and Tobago's female-owned Micro Small and Medium Enterprises, as it promotes their inclusion into global supply chains, facilitates Business-to-Business (B2B) and Business-to-Consumer (B2C) linkages and provides an income-earning avenue for our enterprising women. It provides a pathway for business expansion, enabling female entrepreneurs to receive technical training, professional mentorship, compete in international tender and procurement processes and attend international trade and business events and workshops."*** Minister Gopee-Scoon noted that the initiative, which has already been garnering high interest with over 267 female entrepreneurs already registered on the SheTrades platform, is a clear testimony of the Government's focus on developing and growing a digital economy.

She emphasized that the initiative is not a one size fits all endeavour, and the projects and policies which will be implemented will be in response to the needs and challenges identified by female entrepreneurs. She said, ***"the team is currently in the Needs Assessment phase, which will identify the gaps and challenges faced by you, our local female-owned businesses."*** She urged female entrepreneurs to register on www.shetrades.com and complete the needs assessment, which is an instrumental part of the process as this information will be used to develop and tailor T&T's work programme to best suit the needs of the country's entrepreneurs.

Ms. Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Executive Director, International Trade Centre (ITC), in her remarks, expressed no surprise that Trinidad and Tobago is the first in the region to launch a SheTrades Hub. She said, ***“Trinidad and Tobago outperforms the region in several gender-specific indicators of progress under the Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). You were also among the first 25 countries to build the data-set for the ITC’s recently launched SheTrades Outlook policy tool, which captures new trade and gender data to better inform policy and programme formulation to support women in business. It was through SheTrades Outlook that we confirmed that the legal and regulatory framework; and trade policies are areas where Trinidad and Tobago is performing well in terms of promoting women’s rights and women’s entry into the labour force.”***

Ms. Coke-Hamilton underscored the ITC’s continued support to exporTT and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to ensure that Trinidadian women entrepreneurs have ready access to and are equipped with the skills and knowledge they need emerge and recover from the covid-19 crisis.

Mr. Ashmeer Mohamed, Chairman, exporTT, shared the alignment of the SheTrades initiative with ***“exporTT’s Client Management System, which he said seeks to assess their clients and develop unique support plans based on their specific needs. He said, “These plans are designed to take them through a process of improvement in production, meeting international standards and eventually entry into foreign markets. Our Customer Relationship Management software allows us to tag our female entrepreneurs to follow their progress and lend support where required.”***

The launch also included a panel discussion themed *“The Role of the female entrepreneur in Covid-19 recovery”* with insightful contributions from Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry; The Honourable Ayanna Webster-Roy, Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister-Gender and Child Affairs; Ms. Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Executive Director, International Trade Centre; Ms. Franka Costelloe, President, Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers’ Association; and Ms. Joanne Salazar, President, International Women’s Forum-Trinidad and Tobago.

END
