



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

## Ministry of Trade and Industry

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# *THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO BUREAU OF STANDARDS SYMPOSIUM ON TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S 1ST CALIBRATION AND MEASUREMENT CAPABILITIES (CMCs) FOR MASS AND RELATED QUANTITIES.*

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### ADDRESS

SENATOR THE HONOURABLE PAULA GOPEE-SCOON,  
MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

FEBRUARY 23<sup>RD</sup>, 2021

## SALUTATIONS

- Mr. Glenn Wilson – Director, Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS)
- Mr. Derek Luk Pat – Executive Director, TTBS
- Mrs Erica Caruth – Manager, Metrology Division and Chairperson of the Symposium
- Mr. Theodore Reddock – Retired, former Head of the Metrology Division
- Dr. Claire Saundry President – Inter- American Metrology System (SIM)
- Dr. Susanne Picard – KCDB Coordinator, International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM)
- International and Regional Participants from the CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ), the Caribbean Metrology Institutes (CARIMET), the German Metrology Institute (PTB), SIM Assessors
- Local Participants and stakeholders
- Management and Staff of TTBS

Good Morning to you all,

It gives me great pleasure to address you today on behalf of Senator the Honourable Paula- Gopee-Scoon who is at Cabinet this morning. As we celebrate this milestone, Trinidad and Tobago's achievement of international recognition of its first Calibration and Measurement Capabilities (CMCs) for Mass and Related Quantities.

Firstly, congratulations are in order for the Board of Directors, Management and Staff of the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS) on this accomplishment which would have required significant work, resources and technical competence to fulfil the established requirements. I must thank the team for their commitment and dedication in moving us through this process.

I would also like to acknowledge the support and presence of the representatives of the International Bureau of Weights and Measures, Inter-American Metrology System (SIM), CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ), and the National Metrology Institutes (NMIs) of the Caribbean and other key stakeholders of Trinidad and Tobago, who were also involved in bringing this process to successful fruition.

In 2005, Trinidad and Tobago along with ten (10) other CARICOM nations through CROSQ, signed on to the International Committee for Weights and Measures - Mutual Recognition Arrangement (CIPM-MRA), as an Associate Economy. This arrangement has placed Trinidad and Tobago in an internationally accepted framework to demonstrate its equivalence of its measurement standards and calibration and measurement capabilities. TTBS has pursued and achieved international recognition for CMC in Mass and Related Quantities by participating in the CIPM-MRA.

This achievement validates the capability of TTBS as the National Metrology Institute (NMI), as it can now declare the national standard for Mass. Furthermore, laboratories supporting trade, health,

environment, regulations and industry can now easily demonstrate traceability to the International System of Units (SI).

One of the frequently used measurements for trade is Mass, therefore having a CMC in Mass and Related Quantities places the country in a favorable position, as demonstrating international measurement equivalence provides a level of transparency and trust to our trading partners. In terms of innovation and diversification, the achievement of the CMC also supports product innovation, process improvement and quality assurance. It also provides the assurance that consumers receive quality products and value for money.

In our everyday life, metrology is hardly visible, but its presence is far reaching, especially during these challenging times brought on by the Coronavirus pandemic. As consumers, we engage in daily activities where measurements are a key element; this includes weighing fruits and vegetables at the market, filling up at the gas station – and we are usually quite confident that these measurements are accurate as we complete our purchase.

At the level of business and trade, Metrology is at the heart of global trade and also plays an integral role for these business sectors, as it ensures that products meet the required standards and regulations, while supporting product innovation and process improvement.

This provides the assurance that the quality of goods and services produced in Trinidad and Tobago can meet the necessary regulatory requirements. Engendering trust and confidence in the country's measurement system is vital to supporting a market driven economy.

Therefore, reliance on measurements for decision making is essential for trade, innovation and technical cooperation. National and international trade increasingly requires demonstrated conformity to standards and specifications.

In keeping with the Government's commitment to creating globally competitiveness businesses, the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) has placed priority on the implementation of the Metrology Act, which was proclaimed in 2015. The Advisory Committee on Metrology (ACM) was established under the MTI to provide guidance on matters relating to the administration and enforcement of the Metrology Act.

In this regard, the acquisition of the CMCs for Mass and Related Quantities marked a significant step in fulfilling one of the mandates of the Act, which is the development of the National Measurement System (NMS) of Trinidad and Tobago. The acquisition of the CMCs links our National Measurement System (NMS) to the international system, and directly assures acceptance of this measurement within the metrology fraternity.

The metrology services provided by the Bureau complements and supports the all the activities that are undertaken by the key players in the National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) and as such, remains an essential component in the NQI framework.

In this regard, support of the country's development agenda, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, through the TTBS, remains committed to the strengthening of the country's NQI, as it creates a strong foundation for industrial development and trade.

In 2018, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) approved the National Quality Policy (NQP) and the supporting Implementation and Communication Plans; with the overarching goal of developing a functional and effective NQI, to support economic diversification and increase competitiveness and productivity.

The development of the NQP is aligned with Trinidad and Tobago's National Development Strategy (Vision 2030), as it is a critical component of the diversification strategy that supports the ability to attain international quality, safety and environmental standards.

The NQP identifies the weaknesses and inconsistencies in the current infrastructure and outlines specific measures to be undertaken by the relevant stakeholders to address such. The Policy strives to support our business sector, by aligning the quality of locally produced goods and services with international requirements and trade regulations.

One week ago, Minister Gopee-Scoon launched an Export Booster Initiative for the manufacturing sector valued at Fifty Million TT Dollars (TT\$50 million). The objective of this strategic and targeted initiative is to promote the exports of manufactured goods. One important component of this initiative is the **Certification Programme to Meet International Standards**. A major challenge to growing exports is the ability of our manufacturers to meet international standards. While the government is actively implementing a National Quality Policy to strengthen the National Quality Infrastructure and improve the availability and reliability of testing and certification services in the long term, it is critical this is addressed in the immediate term. The cost of attaining international certification can be quite high and is dependent on factors such as the size of the firm, type of specialized equipment and infrastructural plant modifications required.

As such, the Government has allocated TT\$20 million to implement a certification programme that will assist exporters in achieving international certification in food/beverage and other product compliance to meet the quality and safety standards of international markets and franchises.

The implementation of the NQP will therefore bolster the competitive advantage of our exporters, as they will be able to differentiate their products and services based on quality, value and innovation. This will stimulate broader market penetration and further endorse Trinidad and Tobago as a provider of quality goods and services, while enhancing our trade competitiveness.

In the assessment of the National Quality Infrastructure for the development of the NQP, it was positively noted, that the legislative framework provided by the Metrology Act, the attendant regulations, and the level of services offered, are indicative of a robust metrology infrastructure in Trinidad and Tobago; however, there is still more work to be done. While the achievement of the CMCs for Mass and Related

Quantities is therefore a worthwhile accomplishment in this regard, there is however still more work to be done.

This CMCs is the first of many for Trinidad and Tobago and the Bureau is assiduously working toward attaining CMCs in the measurement areas of Temperature and Dimension, and we look forward to the TTBS' continued progress in these areas.

As I close, I would like to again extend congratulations to the TTBS on this achievement and reinforce the Ministry's commitment toward the creation of a strong Quality Infrastructure in support of a diversified and competitive economy. I look forward to working with all of you to promote a culture of quality in Trinidad and Tobago and the wider Caribbean.

I thank you.