



Media Release

TRADE MINISTER DISCUSSES OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CARIBBEAN WITH SECRETARY GENERAL H.E. WAMKELE MENE OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA (AFCFTA)

November 11, 2022:- Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry, on Wednesday 9th November 2022, met with His Excellency Wamkele Mene, Secretary General of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) at the Ministry's Head Office, along with Executives from First Citizens Group and InvestTT Limited.

The Secretary General attended the Caribbean Investment Forum (CIF) which took place at the Hyatt Regency Trinidad over the period 8-11 November 2022.

During the Meeting, Secretary General Mene indicated that the African Union has committed US\$950 Million to fund development opportunities in the Caribbean. The Minister indicated that this funding is an excellent opportunity to identify and implement value added projects that are mutually beneficial.

Secretary General Mene elaborated on initiatives of the AfCFTA to fund development projects within the Caribbean, with the creative industry being identified as a possible sector for partnership. Secretary General Mene explained that the AfCFTA was keen on designing programs to support this industry through initiatives similar to the Creative African Nexus (CANEX).

On the issue of connectivity, both parties emphasized the opportunity at hand to establish an airline route from Africa directly to the Caribbean. Establishing such a service would serve to support transport and logistics needs and bolster tourism. The meeting ended with all parties agreeing to continue collaboration in an effort to strengthen and deepen ties.

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