



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

**Ministry of Trade and Industry**

***MOU Signing between  
Mic Institute of Technology and  
Caribbean Fisheries Training and  
Development Institute on the  
Yachting Marine Apprenticeship  
Programme (YMAP)***

SPEAKING NOTES

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

OCTOBER 4TH, 2023

Salutations:

- Ms. Ava Mahabir-Dass - Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag.), Ministry of Trade and Industry
- Professor Emeritus Clément Imbert – Chairman, MIC Institute of Technology (MIC-IT)
- Ms. Nerissa Lucky – Chairman, Caribbean Fisheries Training and Development Institute (CFTDI)
- Mr. Peter Peake – President, Yacht Services Association of Trinidad and Tobago (YSATT)
- Members of the Media
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good evening.

It is indeed a pleasure for me to deliver remarks at the signing of this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the MIC-Institute of Technology (MIC-IT) and the Caribbean Fisheries Training and Development Institute (CFTDI). Today's ceremony represents another milestone in Government's agenda to build human resource in targeted sectors of economic activity.

The Government has identified yachting as a priority area for the development and expansion of the non-energy sector, as well as the diversification of the economy on account of its potential for foreign exchange generation and employment creation. Additionally, Trinidad and Tobago's strategic geographical location provides a safe haven for yacht owners during hurricane season. This country is also renowned for the provision of world-class yacht repair and maintenance services.

To optimize the economic contribution of the yachting sector and to assist in the aftermath of the Covid pandemic, the Government implemented a suite of initiatives to revitalize the sector.

One such measure was the Grant Facility for MSEs in the Yachting sector. Since the launch of this Facility in 2022, the Ministry has approved 93 applications with an accumulated payment of **TT\$2,281,349.85**.

Anchored on the success of this, and other initiatives to support the sector, today's Ceremony is indicative of Government's ongoing support to yachting. However, it has been recognized that in order to establish Trinidad and Tobago as a preferred destination for yacht repair and maintenance services there is a need to further develop our human resources.

Predicated on this need, Cabinet approved a Yachting Marine Apprenticeship Programme in September 2023 to develop a pool of talented workers who can be employed by local businesses based on existing skill shortages. The Programme is being implemented in collaboration with MIC-IT and will involve use of the facilities of the CFTDI.

In the first instance, the Programme will matriculate 1 cohort of 150 trainees; with 15 trainees placed into one of 10 areas of specialization. The areas of specialization include *inter alia*,; *Sail Repair*; *Marine Air-conditioning and refrigeration*; *Marine Plumbing*; *Renewable Energy Systems for the Boating Industry*; *Marine Electrical and Electronics*; *Wood working for the Marine Industry*; and *Marine Welding and Fabrication*. The Programme will also involve industrial attachment, whereby trainees will be allowed to undertake practical training at an established company within the sector. Trainees will also benefit from a stipend of TT \$1,500 per month.

In closing, I wish to recognize MIC-IT and the CFTDI for creating the foundation for the implementation of this transformative Programme via this MoU. Today's engagement is a tangible demonstration of the ongoing commitment of both organizations to support the sector and I look forward to the matriculation of the first cohort to the Programme.

