



**Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago**  
**Ministry of Trade and Industry**

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# ***National Multi-stakeholder Consultations for the National E-Commerce Strategy***

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**PRE-RECORDED REMARKS**

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MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY**

MARCH 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2024

Good morning and welcome to all. I am pleased to deliver remarks at these consultations for the development of Trinidad and Tobago's National E-commerce Strategy 2024-2029. A special welcome to the team from UNCTAD. I am currently in Ghana on a Trade Mission. However, I want to express my full support to this Project.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry signed a Contribution and Technical Assistance Agreement with UNCTAD to develop the National E-Commerce Strategy on December 5, 2023. This marked the formal commencement of this Project, which we hope to have completed by September of this year.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has positioned digital transformation as one of the key elements of the country's National Development Plan - Vision 2030. Instrumental in this, was the establishment of the Ministry of Digital Transformation to lead the development of a Digital Nation through the implementation of three pillars, a Digital Society, a Digital Economy and a Digital Government. This National E-Commerce Strategy will be a key component to the development of a Digital Economy in Trinidad and Tobago.

The Government views e-commerce as a key driver of economic growth, as it not only enhances the competitiveness and efficiency of firms, but also gives rise to new economic opportunities by allowing companies to reach customers globally thereby providing opportunities for small businesses to flourish.

These consultations will inform the development of the country's e-Trade Readiness Assessment, which will identify the key barriers and opportunities for e-commerce development in Trinidad and Tobago. It will cover seven (7) thematic areas and I understand that we have a number of expert speakers and panelists who will discuss the existing local e-commerce landscape in the areas of:

- i. E-Commerce Strategy Formulation;
- ii. Legal and Regulatory Frameworks
- iii. ICT Infrastructure and Services;
- iv. Trade Logistics and Trade Facilitation
- v. E-Commerce Skills Development and Inclusion
- vi. Payment solutions; and
- vii. Access to Financing.

The results of this Assessment will then inform the development of the National E-Commerce Strategy.

With this in mind, I want to stress the importance of the contribution of each person in this room. As key stakeholders in the e-commerce landscape, I encourage you to share information openly on the gaps, opportunities and challenges that exist, as well as recommendations that you may have. This will ensure that our eTrade Readiness Assessment accurately captures the local e-commerce environment and the development of a Strategy that meets the specific needs of Trinidad and Tobago.

I thank you for your support and we look forward to the development of an E-commerce Strategy that is relevant, contains targeted objectives and impactful measures that all stakeholders can rally behind to build an enhanced and sustainable digital ecosystem in Trinidad and Tobago.

I wish you a productive session. Thank you.