



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Trade and Industry

MEDIA RELEASE

Trade Minister welcomes newly-appointed Japanese Ambassador

March 10, 2025: Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry, today (March 10) received a courtesy call from newly-appointed Japanese Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago, His Excellency Dr. Akima Umezawa.

Trinidad and Tobago and Japan established diplomatic relations on May 22, 1964, making this year the 61st anniversary. Welcoming the Ambassador, Minister Gopee-Scoon, acknowledged the substantial and long-standing relations between the two countries.

During the meeting, both parties discussed developing further collaboration and investment opportunities. The Minister emphasised Trinidad and Tobago's thrust toward diversification and the attractiveness of the local market to investors due to the country's trade agreements in the region, which offer easy market access.

Trinidad and Tobago's diversification efforts, she noted, includes its emphasis on investment opportunities in business process outsourcing/ICT, nearshore manufacturing, agriculture and agro-processing, logistics and distribution, commercial maritime, film production and renewable energy.

His Excellency Dr. Akima Umezawa expressed great interest in Trinidad and Tobago's national instrument, the steelpan, marvelling that "hitting metal with a stick could make such melodious music." He also shared that many Japanese businesses may not know of the many opportunities offered in the region, particularly through Trinidad and Tobago's new special economic zone regime.

Over the period 2019 to 2023, Trinidad and Tobago's exports to Japan steadily exhibited an upward trend with exports increasing by 1327% over the period, going from TT\$ 15 million in 2019 to TT\$ 216 million in 2023. Trinidad and Tobago's top exports to Japan in 2023 included both energy and non-energy products such as methanol, liquified natural gas, x-ray tubes and natural asphalt. That same year, Trinidad and Tobago's imports from Japan amounted to TT\$ 1.6 billion and included non-energy products such as, motor car spark plugs, seamless gas line pipe, diesel goods vehicles, drill pipe for oil and piston engines.

Trinidad and Tobago will this year participate in the World Exposition 2025 (Expo 2025), which will be held in Osaka, Kansai, Japan from April 13, 2025 to October 13, 2025 and is organized by the Japan Association for the 2025 World Exposition.

The Ambassador presented his credentials to Her Excellency Christine Carla Kangaloo O.R.T.T., President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on January 28, 2025.

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