



**Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago**  
Ministry of Trade, Investment and Tourism

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Trinidad and Tobago Deepens Economic and Cultural Ties with West Africa**

**July 31, 2025:** The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago has signaled its intent to strengthen partnerships with West African nations, announcing its openness to collaborating with AFREXIMBANK and other African financial institutions. This strategic move aims to foster deeper trade and investment linkages between Africa and the Caribbean while diversifying and future-proofing Trinidad and Tobago's economy.

Senator the Honourable, Satyakama Maharaj, Minister of Trade, Investment and Tourism, made this assertion today while delivering the feature address at the 23rd Annual Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Symposium. Held under the theme, *'Opportunities for Economic Diversification and Resilience through Expansion of Trade and Investment with West Africa'*, the symposium took place at the Lidj Omowale Emancipation Village, Queens Park Savannah, Port of Spain.

Reaffirming Trinidad and Tobago's unwavering commitment to deepening economic, political and cultural ties with the African continent, particularly West Africa, Minister Maharaj emphasized that diversification is no longer just a long-term strategy, but an urgent national imperative, critical for creating a more diversified, agile, and inclusive economy in today's global landscape.

"This is not about turning away from our traditional strengths; it is about building upon them. It is about expanding our economic landscape to include new sectors, new ideas, and new partnerships that can carry us forward" the Minister stated.

Minister Maharaj outlined several priority sectors that are central to building a more agile and resilient economy. These areas include high-value agriculture, manufacturing and creative industries, tourism and hospitality sector, medical services, pharmaceuticals, and business process outsourcing.

He noted that each of these sectors presents significant potential for innovation, employment, and sustainable growth, particularly when leveraged through partnerships with emerging markets in Africa.

Highlighting Trinidad and Tobago's growing economic relationship with Ghana, Minister Maharaj referenced the Bilateral Investment Treaty between both countries as a cornerstone of trade diplomacy.

"Trinidad and Tobago and Ghana continue to strengthen a promising economic relationship, built on a shared commitment of collaboration and growth," he said. "Our relationship with Ghana

---

#### **COMMUNICATIONS UNIT**

serves as a platform to extend trade and investment linkages through West Africa, opening doors to genuine partnerships and shared progress.”

He pointed to the successful operations of Republic Bank Ghana Limited, a subsidiary of Republic Bank Trinidad and Tobago Limited, as a clear example of meaningful Caribbean investment on the African continent, playing a vital role in financing development and facilitating commerce.

Minister Maharaj also highlighted progress made through bilateral air services agreements with West African countries, notably the recent agreement with the Federal Republic of Nigeria. He emphasized that improved air connectivity is key to enabling trade, cultural exchange, and the movement of people and goods.

“Notably, there is approval for the implementation of agreements with the Republic of Rwanda, expanding connectivity even beyond the West African region,” the Minister said.

In addition to economic initiatives, Minister Maharaj underscored the value of cultural diplomacy as he identified opportunities to showcase Trinidad and Tobago’s cultural expressions through collaborative engagements with West African nations. He pointed to Carnival and the steelpan as powerful tools for diplomacy, tourism and global branding.

“Investing in culture is investing in people, in innovation, and in a new kind of economic connectivity, one that speaks directly to the heart of our history and the promise of our future,” he affirmed.

The Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Symposium continues as a major event on the Emancipation calendar in Trinidad and Tobago, fostering meaningful partnerships with Africa while celebrating the bonds of history, culture and opportunity.

**-END-**



**Photo Caption:** Minister of Trade, Investment and Tourism, Senator the Honourable Satyakama Maharaj (centre left); Dr. Colin Neil Gosine MP, Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Trade Investment and Tourism (2<sup>nd</sup> from right); and Ms. Michelle Anne Thomas, Permanent Secretary (Ag.) in the Ministry (3<sup>rd</sup> from right); with Mr. Michael Sudarkasa, Chairman of the Africa Business Group, South Africa (1<sup>st</sup> from left); Ms. Zakiya Uzoma-Wadada, Executive Director of the Emancipation Support Committee of Trinidad and Tobago (centre right) and other members.