



# Media Release

## NATIONAL QUALITY POLICY

**August 16, 2016:-** A key role of the Ministry of Trade and Industry is to grow our non-energy manufacturing base. In this context, the role of quality and standards is critical.

In this regard, the development of a National Quality Policy (NQP) is a step in the right direction. It is an important element in the framework required to build a more diversified economy and improve the economic outlook for the nation. The objective of the NQP is to establish an appropriate framework for the development of a National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) in Trinidad and Tobago. Internationally, the quality infrastructure is recognized as a critical support mechanism for social progress and economic development, enabling the participation of developing countries in international trade. This requirement has been recognised in the past by businesses faced with challenges in meeting stringent quality standards abroad and in competing with poor-quality imported products on the local market.

Good Regulatory Practice also includes the establishment of Laws and regulations, ensuring more relevance, compliance and effectiveness. The NQI institutional framework (public or private) is required to establish and implement standardization, metrology (scientific, industrial and legal), accreditation and conformity assessment services including inspection, testing and product and system certification necessary to provide acceptable evidence and verification that products and services meet defined requirements.

As authorities are demanding increased compliance with technical regulations and sanitary and phytosanitary measures, Trinidad and Tobago's reputation as a provider of quality products and services in the national and international markets must be assured.

The Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS) is the recognized quality institution in Trinidad and Tobago responsible for regulating the quality of all items except food and beverage products. TTBS, as a major player in the quality arena, has the responsibility to develop, promote and enforce standards in order to improve the quality and performance of goods produced or used in Trinidad and Tobago; improve industrial efficiency and

development; promote public and industrial welfare, health and safety; and protect the environment. The Standards Act 1997 mandates the TTBS to establish a National Quality System; and the NQP is a mechanism that can assist in creating greater cohesion in the quality infrastructure for greater overall effectiveness for the benefit of the country.

The National Quality Policy (NQP) is expected to enhance trade facilitation and market access thereby creating and sustaining a more enabling environment to facilitate increased global competitiveness Trinidad and Tobago.

This commitment to quality and standards is what informed the visit of Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry, on Wednesday 10 August, 2016, to CARIRI, where she toured the food-based laboratories, inclusive of the Chemistry, Toxicology, Organic Chemistry & Petroleum, Micro-B and Biotech laboratories. At the end of the tour, Minister Gopee-Scoon stated that **'food safety is a special concern for us'** in Trinidad and Tobago. And more importantly, at the Ministry of Trade and Industry **'our main areas of focus at MTI are improving our competitiveness, increasing exports and contributing to GDP'**.