



Government of the Republic
of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of
Trade and Industry

ANNUAL ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



TWENTY

17

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The MTI is responsible for leading and overseeing the implementation of government policy for business development, trade, investment and consumer empowerment.

To execute its mandate in Fiscal 2017, the MTI assessed the National Development Strategy (NDS) 2016 to 2030 and developed a strategic plan, inclusive of a strategic framework for the period Fiscal 2016-2020. The MTI's five year strategic plan identifies initiatives to create an enabling environment to support economic diversification and international competitiveness; support the growth of exports and investments, as well as, empower consumers.

During Fiscal 2017, the MTI successfully executed a number of initiatives identified within its strategic framework. These initiatives included pursuing reforms to improve the ease of doing business and establishment of an Investment Facilitation Committee to assist investors. To further encourage investments in Trinidad and Tobago, the MTI developed a Special Economic Zone Policy which was approved by Cabinet.

In Fiscal 2017, the MTI Strategic Framework also sought to increase exports through the finalisation and launch of the Aid for Trade Strategy which is aimed at mobilising resources from donor agencies to assist in private sector development. Through exporTT, the MTI continued the implementation of the Food and Safety Modernisation Programme and Export Capacity Building Programme.

To contribute to Trinidad and Tobago's economic diversification, the MTI completed a National Yachting Policy which was approved by Cabinet. The MTI also pursued initiatives in the creative sector through the execution of a Value Chain Investment Programme for fashion designers. Additionally, workshops on managing creative sector business operations were also conducted by CreativeTT.

Other accomplishments of the MTI during Fiscal 2017 are outlined in this Annual Administrative Report 2017.

The MTI Annual Administrative Report for Fiscal 2017 covers the following areas:

1. MTI Vision, Mission and Strategic Objectives;
2. Organisational Structure;
3. Policies and Development Initiatives and the Way Forward;
4. Financial Operations;
5. Human Resource Development Plan;
6. Procurement Public and Community Relations; and
7. Conclusion

2.0 MTI VISION, MISSION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

2.1 Vision of MTI

“A dynamic, client oriented organisation delivering integrated, quality services for business growth, trade and investment expansion and consumer empowerment”

2.2 Mission of MTI

“To work as an innovative team, championing business growth, trade and investment for enhanced global competitiveness and promoting consumer interests for improved wellbeing”

2.3 Strategic Objectives

The MTI’s strategic objectives are guided by the National Development Strategy (NDS) 2016-2030.

The development theme under the NDS relevant to the MTI, is:

“Theme IV: Building Globally Competitive Businesses.”

This theme seeks to create a stable and predictable macroeconomic environment to allow for long-term social and economic prosperity; entrepreneurship; attracting investment, trade; and, producing high value products and services that can compete in export markets.

In order to contribute to Theme IV of the NDS 2016 – 2030, the MTI developed a Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020 to support the growth and expansion of cottage industries; medium to large businesses; investors; exporters; and to create an enabling environment.

The MTI’s Strategic Plan is supported by annual work programmes which prioritise projects and efficiently and effectively allocate resources. For Fiscal 2017, the MTI Work Programme included 113 targets across its strategic framework.

The table below outlines the MTI’s strategic framework for the period. The successful targets are further outlined within the report.

MTI Strategic Framework Fiscal 2017

MTI Goal 1- Diversified and Competitive Business

Strategy

- 1.1 Legislative, Regulatory and Administrative Frameworks revised or developed to create an enabling business environment
- 1.2 Government services utilised by the business community improved to reduce inefficiencies
- 1.3 Technical assistance and infrastructure support provided

MTI Goal 2- Increased Investment

Strategy

- 2.1 Legislative, Regulatory and Administrative Frameworks revised or developed to attract investment
- 2.2 Technical assistance and infrastructure provided to investors

MTI Goal 3- Expanded and Diversified Regional and International Trade

Strategy

- 3.1 Legislative, Regulatory and Administrative Frameworks developed and implemented to grow exports
- 3.2 Trade agreements negotiated
- 3.3 Trade support and facilitation program executed

MTI Goal 4- Enhanced Protection and Empowerment of Consumers

Strategy

- 4.1 Legislation, regulation and administrative frameworks developed to empower consumers and encourage ethical business practices
- 4.2 Research and education programme executed to enhance consumer protection and empowerment

MTI Goal 5- Transformed Ministry Performance and Service Delivery

Strategy

- 5.1 Performance management systems revised and implemented
 - 5.2 Internal and external communications programmes developed and implemented
 - 5.3 Research systems to gather and analyse data on the non-energy sector developed and implemented
-

3.0 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

3.1 Organisational Profile

The MTI is the official public sector agency responsible for leading and overseeing implementation of government policy for business development, trade, investment and consumer empowerment. Its current portfolio responsibilities listed in the Trinidad and Tobago Gazette of September 23, 2015, are as follows:

Incubating Local Industries

Commerce

- Anti-Dumping
- Competition Policy

Consumer Affairs

- Consumer Empowerment
- Consumer Protection
- Consumer Research

e-Commerce

Export Processing Zones

Industry

Industrial Parks

Metrology

Piarco Aero Park

Product Information

Product Quality Development

Technology Park

Trade

- Trade Agreements
- Trade Policy

3.2 Corporate Structure

The MTI structure is designed to allow for strategy delivery, efficient processes and the achievement of planned outcomes. The structure comprises:

1. Minister's Office
2. Office of the Permanent Secretary
3. Directorates
4. Support Units
5. State Agencies

Minister's Office

The Minister of Trade and Industry has overall responsibility for defining the policy for trade, business development, investment and consumer empowerment.

Office of the Permanent Secretary (OPS)

The OPS is responsible for executive management of the MTI and its achievement of defined goals. The Office generally consists of the Permanent Secretary, Deputy Permanent Secretary, supporting staff and other senior managerial personnel. The Permanent Secretary is the most senior office with overall responsibility for the activities of the MTI. A second Acting Permanent Secretary has been temporarily assigned. The Deputy Permanent Secretary provides technical support to the OPS.

Core Directorates/Divisions:

The Directorates are core portfolio areas of the MTI with main responsibility for formulating policy, developing strategies and ensuring execution of the technical mandate of MTI. The MTI has five directorates. They are as follows:

1. **Business Development Directorate (BDD)** - plans and executes the business development portfolio of the MTI in order to contribute to the country's macroeconomic business development performance measures.
2. **Consumer Affairs Division (CAD)** – plans and executes the consumer guidance, protection and empowerment initiatives of the MTI in order to contribute to a fair business environment.
3. **Investment Directorate (ID)** – formulates and implements the investment portfolio of the MTI in order to contribute to the country's macroeconomic investment performance measures.
4. **Policy and Strategy Directorate (PSD)** - provides strategic planning, policy development and co-ordination services to the MTI. Through project management services, the PSD also ensures the efficient mobilisation of resources and execution of strategic projects such as the Single Electronic Window (SEW) for Trade and Business Facilitation.
5. **Trade Directorate (TD)** - formulates and effects trade policy, legislative briefs and strategies for the planning and execution of the MTI's trade portfolio in order to contribute to the country's macroeconomic trade performance measures.

Support Units

The Support Units provide essential services to the core directorates and the overall MTI through the development and management of the corporate-wide activities. The Support Units are as follows:

1. **Accounting Unit (AU)** - oversees and co-ordinates all financial operations of the MTI. The Unit ensures that accurate financial information is reported in a timely manner.
2. **Corporate Communications and Events Management Unit (CC&EMU)** - provides information to key internal and external stakeholders on a timely basis. The unit also enhances the MTI's corporate image, and manages the MTI's relationship with key stakeholders.
3. **Corporate Services Unit (CSU)** – provides office management, procurement and facilities management services.
4. **Legal Unit (LU)** – provides legal advice and support to the MTI.
5. **Fair Trading Unit (FTU)** – ensures that the business environment is fair and free from uncompetitive business practices which hinder growth and development.
6. **Human Resource Unit (HRU)** – manages the selection and development of the human capital of the MTI.
7. **Information Management and Support Unit (IM&SU)** - provides technical and network support services to the MTI. The department is also responsible for transforming the MTI through information and communication technology.
8. **Internal Audit Unit (IAU)** - ensures conformity of the MTI with financial rules and regulations, instructions, policies and contract plans.

- 9. Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (M&EU)** – ensures evidence-based decision making across the MTI and its Agencies
- 10. Trade Licence Unit (TLU)** - administers the import and export of goods in accordance with applicable Laws and Government Policy.

State Agencies

The implementation of the MTI's policies is primarily facilitated through the work of its state agencies. The roles, responsibilities and services provided by these state agencies are outlined below:

1. Statutory Boards and Other Bodies:

- i. Betting Levy Board (BLB)* develops and improve every aspect of horse and dog racing, including the breeding of racehorses and dogs and the provision of benefits for jockeys and stable lad, and monitoring compliance with any rules relating to the operation of pool betting offices and pool betting outlets, including their opening and closing hours. The Betting Levy Board Act No. 35 of 1989 came into force on November 15, 1989, upon proclamation by the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. It has since been amended by Act No. 31 of 1991, and the Finance Act No. 5 of 1995.
- ii. Fair Trading Commission (FTC)* is an independent statutory body responsible for implementing the Fair Trading Act. The main objectives are to promote and maintain effective competition throughout the economy, and to ensure that competition is not distorted, restricted or prevented, either by private business conduct or by public policy.
- iii. Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS)* is a corporate body established on July 8th, 1974 and governed by the authority of the Standards Act No. 18 of 1997. It has a statutory responsibility to promote and encourage the development and maintenance of standards for the improvement of goods produced or used in Trinidad and Tobago (except food, drugs and cosmetics).
- iv. The Trinidad and Tobago Racing Authority (TTRA)* regulates and controls racing and the operation of race courses. As such, the Racing Authority plays a critical role in the administration of Horse Racing, in particular, in ensuring that the integrity of the sport is upheld.

2. Wholly Owned Enterprises:

- i. The Export-Import Bank of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (EXIMBank)* is the premier financial institution facilitating the expansion of regional enterprises, by providing the highest quality services, thereby enabling them to take advantage of global trade opportunities.
- ii. Evolving TecKnologies and Enterprise Development Company Limited (eTecK)* develops and improves the infrastructure and operations of new modern economic zones through, *inter-alia*, public private partnerships that can expand and diversify Trinidad and Tobago's economic base. The company also optimises the use of its existing industrial parks on a commercial basis and manages the assets of the Hilton Trinidad and Conference Centre and Magdalena Grand Beach Resort.
- iii. invesTT Limited (invesTT)* acts as a "one-stop-shop" for investors ensuring that they are provided with all the knowledge, tools, linkages and facilitation needed to efficiently navigate the way to new business opportunities in Trinidad and Tobago.

- iv. *The Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited (CreativeTT)* stimulates and facilitates the business development and export activities of the creative industries in Trinidad and Tobago in order to generate national wealth. The company is responsible for the strategic development of the three niche subsectors under its purview, namely, music, film and fashion.
- v. *Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Company Limited (TTFZ)* is governed by the Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Act Chapter 81:07 and is responsible for the operation of Free Zones in Trinidad and Tobago.

3. Majority Owned Enterprises:

- i. *exporTT Limited* is designated the sole National Export Facilitation Organisation of Trinidad and Tobago. Its mandate is to generate export growth and diversification in the goods and services sectors.

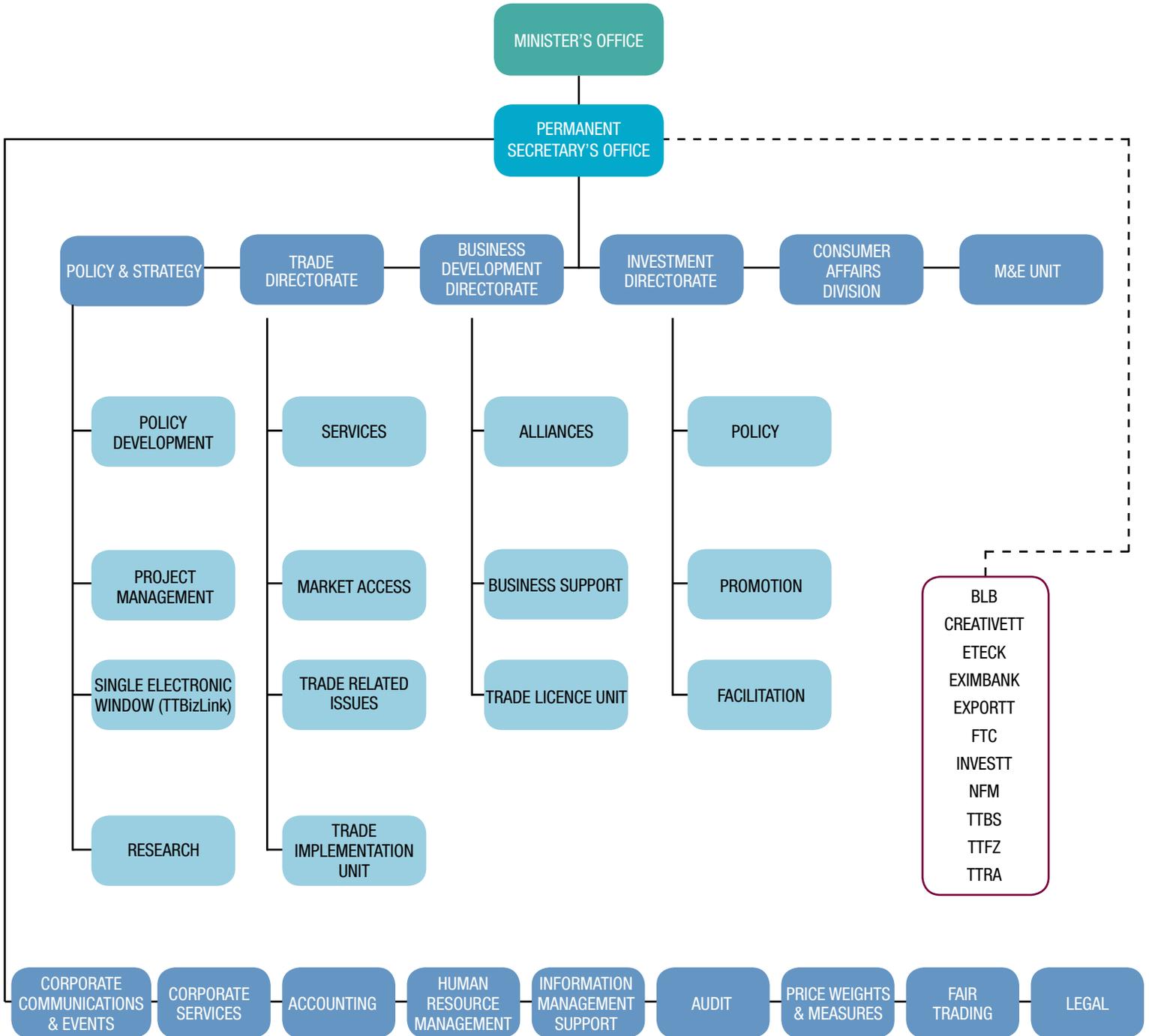
4. Indirectly Owned Enterprises:

- i. *National Flour Mills Limited (NFM)* is a local manufacturer in Trinidad and Tobago's flour and feed milling industries. The company commenced trading activities in 1966 and has grown to provide services such as flour milling, rice milling, animal feed production, dry mix blending and packaging related thereto. NFM is a publicly traded Company and is partly owned by the GoRTT.

5. Other Related Agencies

- i. *The Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries (TTCSI)* is a national umbrella body that brings together all services sector organisations and associations. It functions as a focal point to lobby, channel and address trade in services issues and services development issues, which are critical for the sector to thrive in the competitive global environment.

The following diagram outlines the current organisational structure of the MTI:



4.0 POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

The initiatives pursued by the MTI in Fiscal 2017 were aligned to the NDS 2016 to 2030 thematic area, “Theme IV - Building Globally Competitive Businesses”.

Theme IV of the NDS 2-16 to 2020 targets macroeconomic stability; entrepreneurship; investment and trade; and, the creation of high value products and services that can compete in export markets.

To contribute to the achievement of Theme IV, the MTI pursued the following strategic goals:

Goal 1: Diversified and Competitive Businesses

Goal 2: Increased Investment

Goal 3: Expanded and Diversified Regional and International Trade

Goal 4: Enhanced Protection and Empowerment of Consumers

Additionally, the MTI sought to strengthen its institutional operations through the execution of initiatives under “Goal 5: Transformed Ministry Performance and Service Delivery”.

The achievements in Fiscal 2017 under these goals are outlined below.

4.1 Diversified and Competitive Businesses

The viability of the non-energy sector is dependent on the ability of businesses to competitively produce and sell a diverse set goods and services. To support the establishment, operation and/or expansion of businesses in targeted sectors, in Fiscal 2017, the MTI targeted issues that negatively impact the business environment and firms’ ability to sustainably produce goods and services at competitive prices and quality. The MTI also provided direct support to established business to aid their growth. Initiatives executed included:

Yachting Tax Exemption

In February, 2017, the Ministry of Trade and Industry with the Ministry of Finance facilitated the reintroduction of tax (VAT) exemptions for services to foreign yachts.

Yachting Sector Policy

In June 2017, Cabinet approved the Yachting Policy of Trinidad and Tobago, 2017 – 2021. The approval of this Policy allows the MTI to work with stakeholders in the yachting sector to increase the sector’s contribution to Trinidad and Tobago’s gross domestic product (GDP).

The objectives of the Policy are to:

- reform and strengthen the legal and regulatory framework;
- improve the human resource and technical capacity in the yachting industry; and
- improve the environmental and social sustainability of the yachting industry.

Since the approval of the Yachting Policy, the MTI has developed a detailed implementation plan and commenced the execution of the policy.

Specific initiatives to be addressed by the policy include:

- **Yachting Legislation** – the MTI will spearhead the development of yachting-specific legislation that is distinct from the existing commercial maritime laws.
- **Single Harmonised Form** – the MTI is liaising with the Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs and others to give effect to a Single Harmonised Form, which will be required by visiting cruisers. This will reduce the wait time for vessel clearances from as much as 2 hours to as little as 15 minutes.
- **Yacht Marketing and Promotional Plan** – a comprehensive Yachting Plan will be developed to coordinate all yachting-related marketing and promotion activities.

Maritime Sector Developments

In Fiscal 2017, the MTI collaborated with stakeholders to develop legal, institutional and administrative frameworks in order to establish Trinidad and Tobago as a maritime shipping centre. More specifically the MTI pursued:

- the development of guidelines for the expansion of transshipment and cold stacking activities;
- an assessment of the economic viability of expanding the local Bunkering industry by the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries;
- the development of a Maritime Spatial Plan, with particular reference to the Gulf of Paria and the Galleons Passage.

Other activities for the development of the maritime sector include:

i. Investor financing

Ship repair and dry docking projects require significant capital investments and investment financing to support their successful execution. Given the challenges faced by local firms in accessing such large capital investments, in Fiscal 2017, the MTI facilitated investment meetings between local companies and the Andean Development Bank (CAF).

ii. Apprenticeship Programme

Given the demand for skilled labour in the maritime sector, in December 2016, a Maritime Apprenticeship programme was launched to training students in welding and ship hull fabricating.

iii. Large-scale developments

The Maritime Sector Standing Committee requested proposals and commenced discussions with individuals and firms interested in large maritime sector projects. The proposals submitted are under review.

Creative Sector Development

In Fiscal 2017, the MTI focused on building capacity within the three subsectors – music, fashion and film. The achievements within the sector for Fiscal 2017 are as follows.

i. Value Chain Investment Programme

The programme provides expert-selected local designers with international best practices standards on improving value chain and international competitiveness.

Additionally, a number of capacity building workshops were hosted by FashionTT in Fiscal 2017, in the areas of:

- Business planning;
- Financial management;
- Interfacing with a production facility; and
- Fashion branding/ marketing and merchandising.

ii. Artiste Management and Branding Production Workshops

In February and April 2017, MusicTT hosted two workshops—“The Business of Calypso” which featured Calypso Rose, and “Making a Living from Music”. The first provided valuable knowledge and insights on achieving success locally and internationally, while the second was hosted in conjunction with the local and international intellectual representative bodies, and provided information on critical issues such as Income Streams from Copyright and Related Rights for Authors and Artists, Advertising, Music Publishing and Contract Negotiation, and Monetization of content via the internet.

iii. Film Production Directory

To promote local film producers, an online database was launched in May 2016. The online platform showcases local talent to local and international film producers.

The National Quality Policy

A draft National Quality Policy was prepared in Fiscal 2017 to establish quality standards for imports and exports; providing opportunities to improve the quality and competitiveness of goods and services. The Policy development is being coordinated by the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS) having been funded by a grant from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) in May 2017.

Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS)

Verification of weighing devices in the shipping and export sector began on 01 June 2016 in keeping with the implementation of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Seas (SOLAS). To date, the first cycle of verification for weighbridges was completed by the TTBS and the second cycle will commence in the first quarter of Fiscal 2018.

The Secured Transactions Regime Policy

This policy was submitted to Cabinet in July 2017. Once approved, the policy will allow businesses and individuals to utilise their moveable property as collateral to gain access to credit providing companies with an alternative to business financing.

Enabling Competitive Business Strategy (ECB)

During Fiscal 2017, the following projects were completed through the ECB Strategy:

1. Tobago Good Foods Programme was completed in July 2017.
2. AJL Bizbooster completed three (3) cohorts in April 2017.
3. Two (2) workshops by TTMA Pronet were completed in July 2017.
4. CSO commenced 123 Pilot Project in Tobago in May 2017 and will continue in October of Fiscal 2018.
5. Cariri: Eight (8) clients were selected for seed capital funding totaling TT\$514,000.
6. Panland – The Certification compliance testing of pan was initiated with the registration of UPC Bar codes completed in August 2017.
7. Trinidad Chocolate Factory: The acquisition of the machinery and equipment for processing chocolates was completed in May 2017.

Ease of Doing Business

In April 2017, Cabinet approved a comprehensive implementation plan to improve the domestic business and investment climate. This plan was developed in collaboration with seven (7) ministries and government agencies and will be implemented over four years. The plan includes a number of administrative and legislative reforms that addresses several areas pertinent to business operations which will be implemented in the short-and medium-long- term. Key reforms include:

- Trading across borders
- Starting a business
- Dealing with construction permits
- Electronic payments

TTBizLink

TTBizLink is a national initiative designed to improve the efficiency of government service delivery. It seeks to modernise the way companies and individuals conducting trade and business facilitation activities connect with government agencies. In September 2017, TTBizLink recorded just under 1.1 million transactions, with over 8,000 registered users from over 2,700 companies.

During Fiscal 2017, several achievements were recorded:

- ***e-Mobile Inspection*** - this was launched in October 2016 and allows government agencies to carry out their inspections on-site using mobile apps and devices rather than paper forms.
- ***e-Utilities Module*** - this module was enhanced to include digital stamping and allows companies and individuals to submit applications for building development approvals and plumbing approvals from WASA.
- ***e-Maritime Service Module*** - This module was expanded in June 2017 and allows local shipping agents to submit vessel pre-arrival and departure declarations to the:
 - ▶ Maritime Services Division, Ministry of Works and Transport;
 - ▶ Coast Guard and Immigration Division, Ministry of National Security;
 - ▶ Environmental Health Unit, Ministry of Health; and
 - ▶ Port Administrations.

TTBizLink received the Award for Excellence in Electronic Government (ExcelGOV) in December 2016, which was organised by the Network of e-Government Leaders of the Latin America and the Caribbean, with support from the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Development Bank.

During the period 01 October, 2016 to 12 June, 2017 new registrations to use the system totaled 1,073 individual accounts and 206 companies.

Strengthening of the Single Electronic Window (TTBizlink)- Inter-American Development Bank Loan

The Single Electronic Window requires more to be done to transform itself and to expand its use to the public and private sectors. This is the rationale for the US\$25 million dollar loan agreement between the Government and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), which provides funding to develop and/or implement the following:

- a modern trade and business legislative framework;
- business process reengineering services;
- a change management strategy;
- an integrated risk management system;
- an automated construction permit system;
- a security strategy certification; and
- a new institutional and governance structure for TTBizLink.

The procurement of consulting firms to assist in the implementation of the aforementioned projects was substantially completed during the Fiscal.

4.2 Increased Investment

Investments are a critical component of the NDS 2016-2030 goals, as a result, in Fiscal 2017, the MTI focused on delivering policies and projects that seek to improve the investment climate and grow investments. The MTI investment achievements for Fiscal 2017 include the following initiatives.

Special Economic Zones

The MTI received Cabinet approval for the implementation of the Special Economic Zones Policy (SEZ). The policy, which was approved in March, 2017 will provide a structured approach to facilitating domestic and foreign investments into strategic areas and location.

Investment Approval and Facilitation Framework

In April 2017, Cabinet approved a new Investment Approval and Facilitation Framework to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness in accelerating targeted investments.

In accordance with the framework, an Inter-Ministerial Committee was established to aid in expediting investments that exceed US\$5 million. In Fiscal 2017, the Committee facilitated 12 investments, worth approximately US\$141 million. These investments are expected to result in the creation of 1,600 jobs in the information and communication technology services, business process outsourcing, food and beverage, manufacturing, and distribution.

Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investment Agreements

To effectively negotiate with other countries in which Trinidad and Tobago has investment opportunities, Trinidad and Tobago's Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investment Agreement (RPPIA) was reviewed and updated. The review was done in collaboration with key stakeholders and submitted to Cabinet in August, 2017. The agreement is expected to improve the investment climate and attract investors.

Partnered with the Private Sector to host the 18th Annual Trade and Investment Convention (TIC 2017)

The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) partnered with the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association (TTMA) to host TIC 2017 which attracted over 11,000 attendees, had 246 booths and five pavilions. The exhibitor population consisted of 157 local companies and 55 international firms. TIC 2017 attracted participants from 29 countries.

Tamana In-Tech Park

Tamana InTech Park was built and designed specifically for technology and innovation-driven enterprises, and is meant to promote business innovation, invention and collaboration of research and resources.

The sectors of focus at Tamana include:

- Information and Communication Technology;
- Business Process Outsourcing (BPO);
- Data Processing/Centres, Animation and Software Development; and
- High-Value Manufacturing/Assembly and Financial Services

During Fiscal 2017, the value proposition for Tamana InTech Park (TIP) which includes the competitor park analysis, tenancy campaign, tenant developer model and economic model was developed by invesTT and MTI. These documents are critical to the promotion and marketing of TIP.

Moruga Agro Processing and Light industrial Park

In October 2016, Cabinet approved the development of the new Agro Processing and Light Industrial Park at Moruga, which will be constructed on just over 18 acres. This specialised park will provide space for additional downstream activities such as food and fish processing, and add much needed jobs and non-energy revenue.

UDEcOTT engaged a consultant in July 2017 to commence the first phase of the project, which involves the preparation of the master plan. The master plan provides a blueprint for the successful implementation of the park, which takes into consideration the needs and expectations of the catchment area. The second phase of the project entails design and construction, which is scheduled to commence in 1st quarter of Fiscal 2018.

Point Fortin Industrial Park

In August 2017, the eTeck secured the final approvals from the Point Fortin Borough Corporation for the Point Fortin Industrial Park and executed eight leases. eTeck will continue to secure investors and populate the Park in Fiscal 2018.

4.3 Expanded and Diversified Regional and International Trade

Given the role exports play in driving macroeconomic development, the MTI strengthened its efforts to support businesses which exports Trinidad and Tobago's goods and services. In this regard, the MTI pursued trade agreements, developed exports capacity and provided loan financing to exporters. Initiatives executed in Fiscal 2017 are outlined below.

National Export Strategy

In Fiscal 2017 the MTI concluded consultations with key stakeholders and completed a draft National Export Strategy (NES). The draft NES will be reviewed and finalized by stakeholders and MTI in Fiscal 2018 and submitted to Cabinet for approval.

The strategy outlines a systematic approach to addressing key issues which negatively impacts exporters and provides initiatives which will equip exporters to expand exports to traditional and non-traditional markets in targeted sectors.

TT-Chile Partial Scope Trade Agreement

In May 2017, the MTI and its counterpart ministries held the first of a series of working group meetings on economic and commercial relations with Chilean representatives. These initial meetings will continue in Fiscal 2018 with the intention of negotiating a trade agreement with Chile giving Trinidad and Tobago exporters access to a market of 15 million consumers.

TT-El Salvador Partial Scope Trade Agreement

In Fiscal 2017, the MTI conducted stakeholder consultations on a potential TT-El Salvador trade agreement. Stakeholder feedback was incorporated into a note and submitted to Cabinet in August 2017.

Implementation of the CARIFORUM-European Community Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)

This trade partnership with the EU is aimed at sustainable development through the promotion of regional integration and the gradual integration of the CARIFORUM countries into the global economy. It gives T&T greater access to a 550 million EU market. During Fiscal 2017, a strategic implementation plan to meet obligation under EPA was completed and implementation commenced 2017.

Aid for Trade Strategy

The National Aid for Trade Strategy, which was launched in April 2017, is aimed at mobilising resources from donor agencies to assist in private sector development. In Fiscal 2017, an implementation plan was developed and the National Monitoring Committee was established to ensure deliverables are met from the various government institutions.

Trade Facilitation Agreement

The Trade Facilitation Agreement, which was entered into force in February 2017, ensures that all countries adopt the rules set in the agreement for the movement, release and clearance of goods.

In August 2017, the National Trade Facilitation Committee of Trinidad and Tobago submitted to Cabinet the Implementation Plan for the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation, including specific commitments dealing with future obligations and the receipt of technical assistance and capacity building support.

Trade Missions/Shows

i. CARICOM–Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement

On September 12, 2017, the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association (TTMA) with support from the MTI hosted a trade mission to the Dominican Republic. The delegation consisted of fourteen (14) companies from Trinidad and Tobago from varying non-energy sectors including: chemicals and non-metallic, food and beverage, distribution, transportation and shipping, automotive and manufacturers of household products.

ii. Mission to Ghana

A trade facilitation mission to Accra, Ghana facilitated by Republic Bank Limited and supported by the MTI was conducted in September, 2017. Approximately thirty (30) persons participated in the mission both in the energy and non-energy services and industries.

iii. FIHAV 2016

In December 2016, the MTI led a delegation of thirty-nine (39) local firms to Cuba (FIHAV 2016 Trade Show) which generated seventeen (17) potential leads between manufacturers from Trinidad and Tobago and Cuba with an intention to commence exports in Fiscal 2018.

Financial and Technical Support to Exporters

i. EXIMBank

In Fiscal 2017, EXIMBank developed its strategic plan in alignment to the MTI Strategic Plan 2016 to 2020 to provide a framework for providing financing to exporters. The strategic plan is expected to grow exports by overcoming financial hurdles which limit exporters' ability to export.

ii. exporTT

Business Development Programme (Export Capacity Building Programme)

The Business Development Programme (Export Capacity Building Programme) aims to build the export capacity and competitiveness for local exporters. The achievements under this project for Fiscal 2017 were as follows:

- 17 exporter training programmes were conducted with participation from over 150 unique companies.
- Five (5) companies benefited from co-financing for product promotion in countries across the region. Approximately US\$810,966 worth of new export orders have been placed as a result of the support given by exporTT at trade shows.

International Market Development - Country Promotion & Marketing Assistance to Exporters

This project is an export support programme designed to assist exporters in improving their performance in international markets. In Fiscal 2017, approximately six (6) matchmakers meetings were as facilitated. Further, exporTT completed two (2) market surveys to Panama and Canada providing exporters with market intelligence on potential markets.

Food and Safety Modernisation Act Programme

The Food Safety Modernisation Act (FSMA) Programme enabled local companies to conform to the regulations and laws required under the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) which allowed them to strengthen their food safety system, and therefore the quality of their exports. Under this project for Fiscal 2017, five (5) companies attained GMP/ HACCP Standard/ Compliance: GMP - Exotic Caribbean Mountain Pride; Tai Pan Industries; and HACCP - Fresh Start Limited; The Baking Café; and Slimdown 360.

Research Development Fund

In Fiscal 2017, three applications for products in the areas of ICT, security and education were assessed and approved. Funds provided under the fund were valued at approximately \$1,080,000.

4.4 Enhanced Protection and Empowerment of Consumers

Consumer Protection and Empowerment

In Fiscal 2017, the Consumer Affairs Division completed standard operating procedures for conducting lectures, workshop and outreach programmes on consumer rights and responsibilities. The Division strengthened its consumer awareness campaigns and held outreach programmes, talk shows and other promotional campaigns.

To improve the management of consumer complaints and quicken the resolution of complaints; the computerised Consumer Complaints Management System was upgraded and operationalised: 507 out of 711 complaints were resolved during this fiscal year.

Metrology

In accordance with the 2004 Metrology Act, TTBS commenced the verification of supermarket scales in groceries across Trinidad and Tobago. The regulation of scales will ensure consumers receive value for money and champion consumer rights. To date, 218 supermarket scales devices were verified and this initiative will continue in fiscal 2018.

4.5 Transformed Ministry Performance and Service Delivery

National Flour Mills

In August 2017, the construction of the two new prefabricated warehouses at Sea Lots was completed. These warehouses are upgrades for the NFM to meet the storage capacities that is needed for their daily operations.

MTI Change Management Strategy and Framework

In August 2017, a draft change management strategy and framework was completed for the MTI. This strategy is aimed at transforming the organisation's performance and service delivery. During the 4th quarter of Fiscal 2017, implementation of the strategy commenced on a number of initiatives, such as, technical officer's development programme, succession management, secretarial development programme and communications plan.

MTI Succession Planning Strategy

The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) in a circular memorandum dated June 8, 2017 mandated all Permanent Secretaries to submit a succession plan inclusive of a mentorship program in order to ensure that Ministries and Departments are adequately staffed to execute their mandate. As such, the MTI developed a succession plan to guide the management of its workforce.

The plan sets the framework for workforce management by routinely monitoring the movement of staff to determine impending staff departures; potential successors; training needs, documentation and mentorship opportunities.

MTI Monitoring & Evaluation Protocols

In August 2017, the MTI M&E protocol was developed to aid in correcting weakness within the planning, implementation and reporting on MTI initiatives. The implementation of the M&E protocol will lead to:

- i. Strengthen the MTI M&E culture;
- ii. Efficient and effective execution of MTI's policies, programmes and projects; and
- iii. Encourage evidence-based decision-making.

Business Continuity Management

The purpose of the business continuity and disaster recovery plans is to facilitate the recovery of the TLU's time critical business processes as quickly as possible in the event of a major unique business interruption or disaster. The plans provide guidance on the sequence of actions to be taken in the event of a major unique business interruption or disaster. The MTI command recovery team and back-up facility was established.

5.0 FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

5.1 Capital Expenditure

The following table provides a summary on the capital expenditure of projects under the Development Programme of the MTI. At the end of Fiscal 2016/17, 76 percent of the Ministry's allocation under the Development Programme was spent while 99 percent of Ministry's allocation under the Infrastructure Development Fund was utilised.

Statement of Capital Expenditure Extract as at September 30 2017 (End of Financial Period)

Project No.	Item/Sub-item/Group/Project	2017 Estimate	2017 Revised Estimate	Expenditure as at September 30, 2017	Unspent Balance	% of Funds Unutilised
F304	Development of a Business Development Programme	500,000	500,000	487,000	13,000	2.6%
R001	Investment Promotion Initiatives and Development	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	-	-
R005	International Market Development- Country	750,000	750,000	611,000	139,000	18.5%
R007	Establishment of Research and Development Facility	750,000	750,000	750,000	-	-
R011	Support to Enabling Competitive Businesses.	1,500,000	1,500,000	625,975.09	874,024.91	58.3%
R014	Business Development of the Creative Industries	4,250,000	4,250,000	4,111,000	139,000	3.3%
R016	Enhancement of the Single Electronic Window (IDB Loan)	5,000,000	5,000,000	2,089,373.89	2,910,626.11	58.2%
R017	New Economic Zones Development - Moruga	2,620,000	2,620,000	2,620,000	-	-
B212	Providing Reliability to Quality Infrastructure	500,000	500,000	337,500	162,500	32.5%
B216	Procurement of Equipment for the Implementation of the Metrology Act	750,000	750,000	600,000	150,000	20%
B218	TTBS- Building Capability for Sustaining Export	250,000	250,000	212,500	37,500	15%
A003	Inward Investment - Non Petroleum Initiatives	1,000,000	1,000,000	16,340.63	983,659.37	98.4%
Total of Development Programme		22,870,000	22,870,000	17,460,689.61	5,409,310.39	24%

Statement of Capital Expenditure Extract as at September 30 2016 (End of Financial Period)

Project No.	Item/Sub-item/Group/Project	2017 Estimate	2017 Revised Estimate	Expenditure as at September 30, 2017	Unspent Balance	% of Funds Unutilised
Q303	Single Electronic Window for Trade & Business	18,000,000	18,000,000	17,781,475	218,525	1%
Total of Infrastructure Development Fund		18,000,000	18,000,000	17,781,475	218,525	1%
GRAND TOTAL		40,870,000	40,870,000	35,242,164.61	5,627,835.39	14%

6.0 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Human Resources Unit (HRU) is charged with managing the selection and development of the human capital of the MTI. To do this, the HRU facilitates the recruitment and development of staff to ensure that a competent talent pool is available to support the execution of the MTI mandate.

To ensure the continued development of staff during Fiscal 2017, the HRU reviewed the MTI performance appraisal system and conducted training and championed the full adoption of the performance appraisal process. With regard to the complement of staff, the table below provides a summary of total, permanent and contract staff at the MTI.

6.1 Organisational Establishment and Employee Categories

Total Number of Established Permanent positions	263
Actual Number of Persons employed in Established Permanent positions	176
Number of Vacant Established Permanent positions	87
Total Number of Contract Positions	99
Actual Number of Contract Employees currently employed	63
Number of Vacant Contract Positions	36

7.0 PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

As a result of the impending implementation of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act 2016 (Amended) by the GoRTT, the MTI undertook the initiative to establish an interim procurement team to prepare for the adoption of the new procurement legislation.

In this regard, the Ministry has:

1. Conducted Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act 2016 (Amended) sensitisation workshops for staff.
2. Publicised on its website, the annual procurement plan for the period July 2017 to September 2017 which will continue to be updated accordingly.
3. Streamlined the process of procurement of goods and services within the MTI for which an online database was created.

8.0 PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS



Graduation Ceremony of the 2nd cohort of International Trade Specialists

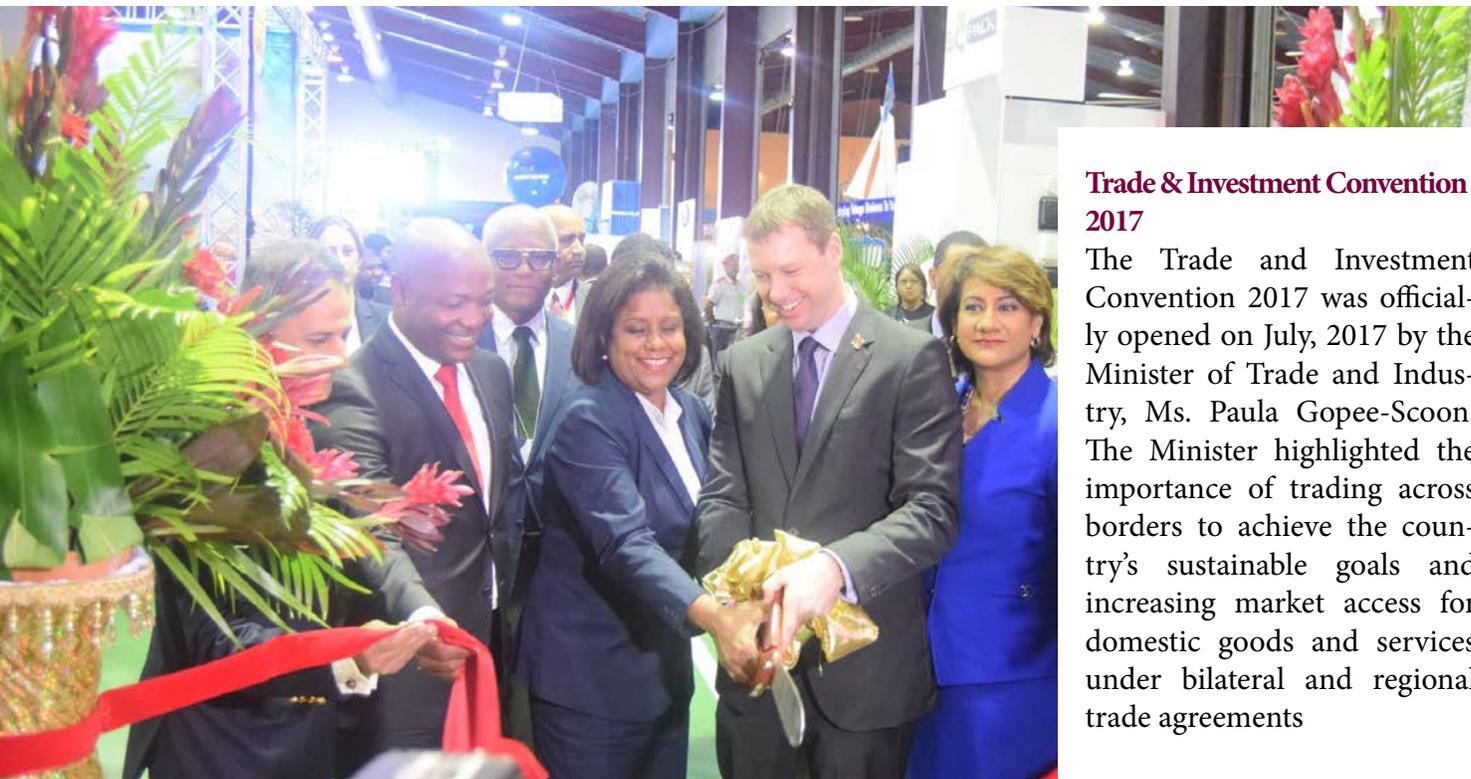
To support the development of experts in the field of international trade, the Minister of Trade and Industry, Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon delivered the feature presentation at the Graduation Ceremony of the 2nd cohort of International Trade Specialists on 27th January, 2017. Twenty - six International Trade Specialists gained global recognition from the eBSI Export

Academy. The Graduation Ceremony of the 2nd Cohort of International Trade Specialist was hosted by exporTT at the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce.



Consumer Affairs Division celebrated World Consumer Rights Day 2017

World Consumer Rights Day 2017 was celebrated via an outreach activity hosted by the Consumer Affairs Division under the theme “Building a Digital World Consumers can Trust” on 15 March 2017 at the Brian Lara Promenade, Port-of-Spain. Consumer Advocates spent the day educating commuters, shoppers and residents on their rights and responsibilities and avenues for online and security redress/complaints resolution.



Trade & Investment Convention 2017

The Trade and Investment Convention 2017 was officially opened on July, 2017 by the Minister of Trade and Industry, Ms. Paula Gopee-Scoon. The Minister highlighted the importance of trading across borders to achieve the country's sustainable goals and increasing market access for domestic goods and services under bilateral and regional trade agreements

World Cocoa and Chocolate Day 2017

In October, 2017, the Minister of Trade and Industry, Ms. Paula Gopee-Scoon officially launched World Cocoa and Chocolate Day's activities at the UWI' Cocoa Research Centre. The Minister emphasised that there is an increased competitiveness within cocoa sector globally and that the Ministry in collaboration with industry experts will develop strategies to build competitiveness in the cocoa sector, promote exports and grow foreign exchange earnings.



9.0 THE WAY FORWARD

In Fiscal 2018, the MTI will aim to implement those policy initiatives approved by Cabinet in Fiscal 2017. The MTI will also seek to execute initiatives designed to support the achievement of its mandate for business, trade, investment and consumer empowerment. These initiatives will include the following main projects:

- The implementation of the ***National Export Strategy (NES)*** for Trinidad and Tobago aimed at growing exports.
- The implementation of a ***National Services Policy*** which will provide a framework to boost the services sector.
- The development of a ***Trade Mission Strategy***, which will formalize and coordinate international Trade Mission.
- Continue the facilitation of donors through the implementation of the ***Aid for Trade Strategy***.
- The implementation of the new ***Research and Development Facility*** under exportTT.
- The implementation of the ***National Quality Policy***.
- The implementation of the ***Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Policy***.
- The implementation of the ***National e-Commerce Strategy***.
- Continue the implementation and expansion of the ***Single Electronic Window***.
- Continued development of the new ***Agro-Processing & Light Industrial Park*** in Moruga.
- Continued tenanting of ***Tamana In-Tech Park***.
- The development of the new ***Phoenix Industrial Park*** in Couva focused on light and high value manufacturing.
- The Negotiation of ***Investment Promotion and Protection Agreements with Chile and Panama*** and other strategic partners.
- Conduct ***Ease of Doing Business*** reforms which include:
 - ▶ the operationalisation of the port scanners;
 - ▶ the improvements of the re-engineering process for starting up a business;
 - ▶ the implementation of an automated system for construction permits; and
 - ▶ the development of Electronic Funds Transfer Framework for electronic payments.

- Continue the implementation of reforms under the Investment Facilitation Committee which comprise of:
 - ▶ a computerised system for management of e-visa/visas and visa exemptions; and
 - ▶ utilisation of the work permit module under the TTBizlink platform.
- The implementation of the **Grant Fund Facility** to support small and medium businesses in the manufacturing and agro-processing sectors.
- Implement the Action Plan for the **Maritime Sector**.
- Implement the **Yachting Policy**.
- The Launch of a **Live Music District** which will create new opportunities in the music industry and address the concerns of local stakeholders.
- The development of an **Artist Portfolio Development Programme** aimed at creating a strong, balanced portfolio of artistes to be readied for commercialisation and international export.
- The development of the **Music Tech Platform** geared to be a point of access for those seeking information on music, events, business news, data, and additional resources.
- Operationalise the **Local Garment Production Facility**.
- The implementation of the **Bespoke Tailoring Programme** which builds capacity in different areas in the Fashion Sector.
- The divestment of the **Carlsen Field Rice Mill**.

10.0 CONCLUSION

In Fiscal 2017, the MTI embarked on a number of initiatives designed to lead and oversee the implementation of the GoRTT's policy for business development, trade, investment and consumer empowerment.

The MTI was successful in the execution of its main initiatives for Fiscal 2017. These initiatives resulted in improving ease of doing business, building business capacity for firms within the sectors targeted for diversification, facilitating investments and strengthening exports.

Initiatives executed included:

- i. Cabinet approved Yachting Policy
- ii. Implementation of capacity building programmes for the fashion sector
- iii. Enhancements of various modules in the Single Electronic Window for businesses
- iv. Cabinet approved Investment Facilitation Framework for investment approvals
- v. Cabinet approved Special Economic Zone Policy
- vi. Implementation of export capacity building programmes

In Fiscal 2018, the MTI will continue to support of the achievement of the NDS 2030 through the execution of its Strategic Plan 2016 to 2020. The MTI will pursue initiatives that will contribute to the creation of a stable and predictable macroeconomic environment to allow for long-term social and economic prosperity; entrepreneurship; attracting investment and trade; and, producing high value products and services that can compete in export markets.



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