



Media Release

GOVERNMENT COMMITTED TO RESURGENCE IN MANUFACTURING

08 January, 2021: The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) is encouraged by emerging signs of resurgence in manufacturing as indicated by the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago (CBTT) in its most recent Monetary Policy Announcement in December, 2020. This result is indicative of Government's support to the Manufacturing sector and the wider private sector and the activities and willingness of this group to invest and expand.

Trinidad and Tobago's Manufacturing sector remains important and dynamic to the economy. As the third largest contributor to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the Manufacturing sector is recognized as a catalyst for achieving economic transformation and diversification through the reduction in the country's food import bill, import substitution, generation of foreign exchange through exports and provision of sustainable employment.

In order to crystallize this positive development, the Ministry will continue to work closely with the Manufacturing sector to further transform the economy. Over the years the Government has been supporting the growth and expansion of the Manufacturing sector via a series of tangible interventions in successive annual budgets during 2015-2020 as well as:

- Development of a comprehensive Strategic Framework for the expansion and transformation of the Manufacturing sector in Trinidad and Tobago (2020-2025) in collaboration with the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association (TTMA). A major objective of this Framework is the doubling of select Non-energy Manufacturing Exports by 2025;
- The Roadmap to Recovery Committee appointed by the Honourable Prime Minister in April 2020 prioritized the Manufacturing Sector in its various Reports as a targeted area of economic activity for the transformation of the economy which is in keeping with the Vision 2030 National Development Strategy (NDS);

- Promotion of Research, Development and Innovation in selected sectors of economic activity including manufacturing under the Revised Research and Development Facility (RDF);
- Introduction of a Grant Fund Facility (GFF) which provides funding for the acquisition of machinery and equipment by export oriented small and medium-sized local manufacturers and agro-processors. A similar facility was also extended in January 2020 to manufacturers of steelpans by the Government for the acquisition of new machinery, equipment, software, tools, raw material and training by local steelpan manufacturers;
- Establishment of a US \$100Mn Foreign Exchange Facility via EXIM-BANK LTD in 2018 to finance the purchase of imported inputs into manufactured exports. A further injection of US \$100 Mn was made to this Facility in October 2020;
- Collaboration with the TTMA, the National Training Agency (NTA) and other Industry stakeholders to address skills shortages and labour gaps in the Sector which will lead to the establishment of a National Vocational Training Strategy and a Manufacturing National Apprenticeship Programme;
- Commitment to combatting the illegal trade in selected goods such as tobacco, clothing, makeup, alcohol and pharmaceuticals. This involves a collaborative effort between the public and private sectors in addressing the issue together with key law enforcement authorities to develop and implement methods to deal with the scourge of illicit trade;
- Restructuring of the country's National Export Facilitation Organization (exporTT) to transform the organization into one that is more client oriented;
- Developing domestic and regional supply chains in the Manufacturing sector by creating both forward and backward linkages between buyers and suppliers domestically and regionally for locally manufactured goods; and
- In Fiscal 2021, TT\$50 Mn is allocated for an overseas market development and export promotion Facility to assist manufacturers to boost exports in traditional and new export markets.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago through the MTI remains committed to the well-being and expansion of the domestic Manufacturing sector and looks forward to ongoing and future collaborations with the private sector.

END
