



Media Release

TRADE MINISTRY CELEBRATES WORLD ACCREDITATION DAY 2021

11 June, 2021 The Ministry of Trade and Industry joined the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS), the Trinidad and Tobago Laboratory Accreditation Service (TTLABS) and the international community in celebrating World Accreditation Day 2021 on Wednesday 9 June, 2021, a global initiative to promote the value of accreditation. Speaking at a webinar in commemoration of World Accreditation Day 2021, themed **“Accreditation: Supporting the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”**, Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry underscored the importance of accreditation and by extension quality infrastructure systems to achieving SDGs, competitiveness and industrial development.

This event was one of a five day webinar series which commenced on 7th June in celebration of World Accreditation Day. These webinars sought to provide an opportunity for TTBS and TTLABS to inform stakeholders, regulators and consumers on how accreditation can be applied to meet objectives such as increasing trade, addressing environmental, health and safety concerns and increasing Trinidad and Tobago’s overall export competitiveness.

Minister Gopee-Scoon highlighted the relevance of accreditation to the mandate of the Ministry of Trade and Industry to expand exports, particularly in the Non-Energy sector; facilitate and attract investment and support the development of globally competitive businesses to contribute to sustainable growth and diversification of the economy. This aligns with Theme IV of Vision 2030 which speaks to Building Globally Competitive

Businesses and more specifically, Goal 4 of this theme, which states that firms will produce high value-added products and services that can compete in export markets. Accreditation establishes a strong foundation for international trade, as outlined in the National Quality Policy (NQP) 2018-2030 and focuses on strengthening the National Quality Infrastructure. The NQP is a critical component of the country's diversification goal, as it supports local exporters in penetrating international markets by ensuring that products and services meet international quality benchmarks. The Minister indicated that MTI is currently working with the Office of the Attorney General and the Ministry of Legal Affairs to finalize legislation that will give effect to the establishment of an independent National Accreditation Body known as Trinidad Tobago Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment (TTASCA). TTASCA's role will be to provide internationally recognized accreditation services to conformity assessment bodies that provide testing, calibration and certification in accordance with global requirements.

The MTI also embarked on a program for the accreditation of public laboratories in Trinidad and Tobago. This initiative is currently being implemented and will seek to improve the competencies and reliability of the testing and calibration services of our public laboratories. The intention is to have all public labs accredited by 2030. To date, two public laboratories have benefitted under this program and are currently pursuing accreditation assessment. Minister Gopee-Scoon announced that a new project call for the lab accreditation programme will be launched soon to continue to assist at least two additional laboratories to prepare and establish their respective management systems for accreditation.

One notable achievement during this webinar was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between TTLABS and the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) Laboratory Accreditation Programs LLC (AIHA LAP). TTLABS is seeking AIHA LAP's engagement in mentoring and sharing information on operations, technology and assessment practices to assist the newly-established accreditation body (AB) to meet the rigors of becoming an IAAC Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) signatory, leading the way for international recognition.

Managing Director of AIHA LAP, Cheryl O. Morton in her address said, ***"AIHA LAP is prepared to assist the TTLABS to become an Inter-American Accreditation Cooperation Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (IAAC MLA) signatory and will work virtually with its staff to share knowledge and provide support toward attaining such. AIHA LAP has been an internationally-recognized accreditation body since 2010, and has established itself as a separate entity. As such, the AIHA LAP is well experienced in the processes and impartiality considerations to form a new AB and subsequently, achieve international recognition"***.

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