



Media Release

CARIBCAN ARRANGEMENT EXTENDED UNTIL 2033

June 16, 2023:- Canada has obtained approval from the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to extend the Caribbean-Canada Trade Agreement, known as CARIBCAN, until December 2033.

CARIBCAN is a non-reciprocal economic and trade development assistance programme offered to Commonwealth Caribbean countries and territories by the Government of Canada since 1986. The objectives of CARIBCAN are to enhance Commonwealth Caribbean trade and export earnings, improve the trade and economic development prospects of the region, promote new investment opportunities, and encourage enhanced economic integration and co-operation.

The Agreement allows for duty-free access into the Canadian market for most commodities originating in Commonwealth Caribbean countries, including Trinidad and Tobago. The arrangement is non-reciprocal, which means that Caribbean countries are not required to provide duty-free access to Canadian products.

CARIBCAN grants Trinidad and Tobago's exporters access to more than 38 million consumers in the Canadian market, a significant portion of which represents the Trinbagonian diaspora in Canada, making the Canadian market one with significant export opportunities for local manufacturers.

Subsequent to the establishment of the CARIBCAN arrangement, Canada is now considered an important trading partner for Trinidad and Tobago, evidenced by the robust and increasing trade between both countries. In 2016 exports to Canada increased from TT\$405 million to TT\$936 million in 2022. Moreover, in 2021 Trinidad

and Tobago was recorded as the single largest exporter to Canada among CARIBCAN beneficiaries. In that year, 98% of Trinidad and Tobago's exports such as methanol, rum and biscuits entered Canada duty-free under the CARIBCAN arrangement underlining the instrumental role of the arrangement in supporting the export growth and diversification goals of Trinidad and Tobago. The Ministry of Trade and Industry is keen on increasing Trinidad and Tobago's utilization of the arrangement. Exporters are therefore encouraged to employ the benefits of CARIBCAN to expand exports to the Canadian market.

To ensure that CARIBCAN remains available to countries like Trinidad and Tobago, Canada is required to periodically obtain a waiver from the World Trade Organisation (WTO). In May 2023, the WTO granted the waiver that would allow Canada to continue the CARIBCAN arrangement until December 31, 2033. The Ministry of Trade and Industry expresses its appreciation to the Government and people of Canada for their continued support to Trinidad and Tobago and other CARIBCAN beneficiary countries.

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