



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Trade, Investment and Tourism

MEDIA RELEASE

Senator the Honourable Satyakama Maharaj Congratulates Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar on Historic Meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump

Senator the Honourable Satyakama Maharaj extends heartfelt congratulations and profound appreciation to Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar for securing a landmark meeting with the President of the United States, Donald J. Trump, scheduled for 7 March, 2026.

This meeting is historic, timely and strategically important.

The world is undergoing a massive transition and restructuring in global economic relations. The established order is shifting; countries are called to produce more rather than merely trade at the cheapest price, supply chains are being restructured, energy markets are recalibrating, and geoeconomic alliances are evolving in real time. At the centre of this changing global order stands the United States. It is imperative that Trinidad and Tobago has a strong position within this new and emerging global economic architecture.

To achieve such a high-level meeting, particularly in light of the antagonistic and strained positioning adopted by the last administration, is nothing short of a diplomatic masterstroke of the highest order. It reflects the Prime Minister's foresight, strategic clarity, and exceptional skill in rebuilding trust and strengthening relations with one of the world's most powerful nations.

A central national priority remains restoring productive capacity and economic momentum, including the Government's clear commitment to the reactivation of the Pointe-à-Pierre refinery. The reopening of this critical national asset will not only benefit our energy sector but will have transformative ripple effects across the wider economy.

The closure of the refinery created severe economic dislocation, including a shortage of foreign exchange that placed immense strain on our small and medium enterprises. The reopening of Petrotrin will restore vital foreign exchange earnings, strengthen confidence in our economy, and provide breathing room for businesses across the country.

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Moreover, Petrotrin has always supported a vast and intricate ecosystem of hundreds of ancillary businesses: contractors, transport operators, fabricators, small service providers, manufacturers, food vendors, and countless other enterprises across every conceivable economic category. The inexplicable shutdown of the refinery brought this ecosystem to a grinding halt. Its reactivation will reignite economic activity, restore livelihoods, and stimulate growth at every level of our society.

Equally important is the need for hemispheric security cooperation. These discussions are expected to also focus significantly on security in the Western Hemisphere, crucial in order for our society and economy to be rid of the drug and crime scourge and improve investor confidence.

The United States has been Trinidad and Tobago's largest trading partner since Independence, and indeed even before. For the last ten (10) years to 2024, Trinidad and Tobago has been a net exporter to the amount of TT\$46.9bn. Our relationship with the United States remains a cornerstone of our external economic and people-to-people ties, through trade, tourism, investment, and a strong diaspora market that supports local enterprise. Our food and beverage, and scrap iron industries and numerous other sectors depend heavily on trade with the U.S. Many service operators, particularly within the energy industry, are based there.

Strengthening our dialogue and deepening our relationship with the United States at this pivotal moment in global economic transformation cannot be subject to short-term political likes or dislikes. It is essential. It is not optional.

On behalf of my Ministry, and on behalf of the thousands of small, medium, and large enterprises throughout Trinidad and Tobago that stand to benefit from renewed economic momentum, I wish Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar every success in this crucial and consequential meeting.

She has provided unmatched leadership and strategic diplomacy, positioning Trinidad and Tobago for maximum prosperity in the new global order.

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