



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Trade, Investment and Tourism

MEDIA RELEASE

TT Chamber and SMEs sign the Buy Local, Build Trinbago Charter

March 11, 2026:- Following the launch of the national **Buy Local, Build Trinbago Campaign** in January by the Minister of Trade, Investment and Tourism, Senator the Honourable Satyakama Maharaj, another campaign milestone has been achieved as the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce reaffirmed its support for the initiative. Chamber president Sonji Pierre Chase signed the **Buy Local, Build Trinbago Charter** at the Catalyst SME Conference 2026 hosted by the Chamber on 11th March, 2026 at its headquarters in Westmoorings.

Eight (8) SMEs also signed the Charter at the event, thus demonstrating their commitment to the Programme's objectives and broader national development plans.

During his opening address at the Conference, Minister Maharaj highlighted the Government's drive for strategic economic growth and competitiveness through the strengthening of frameworks that support local business development. He stated ***"local businesses must lead in Trinidad and Tobago. Our people must not remain spectators in their own economy. We must build local capacity, local ownership, local confidence, and local champions. That is how nations become strong. Buy local, build Trinbago."***

He urged SMEs to continue building the momentum for local production, stating ***"We must challenge the old mentality that imported automatically means superior. That is outdated thinking. Trinidad and Tobago produces excellence. Our people are capable of excellence. Our businesses are capable of excellence. Many of them are already meeting international standards, already exporting, already proving that they can compete with anyone. What they need is a country that believes in them and backs them."***

CEO of the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Vashti Guyadeen, highlighted that in many advanced economies, Buy Local campaigns and strategic procurement policies are deliberately used to strengthen domestic value chains, support small businesses and retain economic value at home.

She noted ***"SMEs account for just under 70 percent of our membership and remain the backbone of our economy. This Charter is an important step in encouraging greater utilization of locally produced goods and services while strengthening the competitiveness"***

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of our enterprises. Through initiatives such as the Catalyst SME Conference, the Chamber will continue working with government and the private sector to ensure our SMEs are positioned not only to serve the domestic market, but to scale, innovate and compete regionally and internationally.”

The Ministry of Trade, Investment and Tourism has launched a social media platform under the Buy Local, Build Trinidad Campaign which encourages consumers to support local products and services; and business owners to register to be listed in a digital catalogue of local products and services, which will be promoted nationwide by the Campaign.

About the Buy Local, Build Trinidad Charter

The general objectives of the Charter are to:

- i. increase the promotion of locally-produced goods and services in the domestic market;
- ii. build consumer awareness and confidence in locally-produced goods and services;
- iii. increase the competitiveness of locally-produced goods and services; and
- iv. support the development and expansion of local businesses.

Below is the list of SMEs that signed the Charter at the Catalyst SME Conference 2026 on Wednesday 11th March, 2026:

- Individual Aesthetics
- Musical Instruments of Trinidad and Tobago Company Ltd.
- Immortelle Beauty
- Intelligent Business Advantage Ltd.
- Star Global Production Studios
- Tropical Dehydrates
- Ecotox Environmental Ltd.
- Premium School Shop Ltd.

For further information, please contact: 623-2931 ext. 2411

Follow the campaign on Instagram, Facebook, and Tik Tok @buylocalbuildtt

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