



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

MINISTRY OF FINANCE
Communications Unit

Media Release

To All Editors

For Immediate Release

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FIU- Information Secure

The Financial Intelligence Unit (the "FIU") of the Ministry of Finance wishes to respond to certain statements attributed to Dr. Keith Rowley, Leader of the Opposition, which was reported in various media which we find could have the effect of undermining public confidence.

One such report carried on Wednesday November 9, 2011 was to the effect that the Attorney General had asked the Director of the FIU for information pertaining to certain persons' banking arrangements. The implication was that the Director had provided such information. The report also stated that the Director was directed to "look the other way" with respect to business people who should be under scrutiny. He also alleged that the Unit was "*being abused by persons seeking to get persons' private information from the banking industry for motives which are not proper, mainly political motives.*"

The FIU states that:

1. The FIU has never received *any request from the Attorney General or any Minister of Government for personal or financial information on any citizen of Trinidad and Tobago.*
2. *The FIU has never given to the Attorney General or to any Minister of Government any personal or financial information on any citizen of Trinidad and Tobago.*
3. The officers of the FIU, in particular, the Director and the Deputy Director, are *fully cognizant of their duty of secrecy under the Financial Intelligence Unit Act (the*

“Act”. This duty is not to disclose the personal or financial information of any individual except (in accordance with the Act) to Law Enforcement Authorities and Foreign FIUs.

- 4. As such, disclosure of such information to the Attorney General or any other Minister of Government is not authorized under the Act and is illegal. This is known to all of the officers of the FIU, including its Director and Deputy Director, who follow the law in its entirety and who have taken solemn oaths of secrecy.*
- 5. No officer of the FIU, and specifically the Director and Deputy Director, has ever made any unauthorized disclosure. Any claim to the contrary is false and totally without merit.*
- 6. Finally, the FIU would like to remind reporting entities of their duty of non-disclosure under the Act and in particular under section 24 of the Act. which states that any person who discloses the fact that an investigation into a suspicious transaction/activity report (STR/SAR) has been recommended by the FIU or that an investigation has commenced commits an offence under the Act unless if the disclosure is in accordance with the Act.*

THE END

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