



Republic of Trinidad & Tobago

## Social and Economic Policy Framework 2006-2008

**Vision 2020**

Ensuring Our Future Prosperity

Addressing Basic Needs

2006 - 2008

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# I. Introduction

Trinidad and Tobago has as its primary development goal “Vision 2020”, which is a vision for the economic social and political development of the country, whereby Trinidad and Tobago will attain developed country status by the year 2020. The vision is that of a country which is economically wealthy and one in which every member of society will experience a standard of living that is comparable to the highest in the world. Citizens will enjoy benefits that go beyond their basic needs of food, clothing and shelter.

The achievement of the stated goals of Vision 2020 would demand a transformation of the economy. Historically, Trinidad and Tobago has relied on the Energy Sector for the majority of its wealth, making it susceptible to industry and market volatility. The economy is now sufficiently robust and some of the wealth accumulated over the years is being diverted into the development of other aspects of the economy, with the aim of achieving diversification and sustainable growth.

For the Trinidad and Tobago economy to survive and achieve developed status by the year 2020 it must invest heavily in its people and move away from the dependence of the Energy Sector and build on the competence of existing institutions.

The Social and Economic Policy Framework (SEPF) 2006-2008, is the action plan for ensuring this outcome. The document sets out the essential elements of National Policy in a comprehensive and integrated agenda that places people at the centre of the developmental process.

The body of the SEPF comprises the **Human Development Agenda**, where policies are presented to ensure that economic growth becomes more inclusive and socially responsive and that citizens are afforded opportunities for personal growth and self actualization. Over the medium-term, this objective demands a steady decline in poverty, unemployment and crime, as well as growing opportunities for education, skills development and the best health care available, regardless of socioeconomic standing, religion or gender.

The SEPF also includes an agenda for the diversification and growth of the economy which primarily revolves around the expansion of the non-oil sectors as new engines of economic growth.

In addition, Government, through its comprehensive legislative agenda intends to continue the process of strengthening and improving existing legislation and regulations, in order to facilitate economic and social transformation.

## II. Global and Regional Developments

### a) International b) Regional

### a) International <sup>1</sup>

#### Growth

Growth in the global economy remains fairly robust and is currently estimated at 4.3 percent in 2005, 0.8 percent slower than in 2004. Estimates of Global GDP growth indicate a similar pace at around 4.6 percent in 2006. However, economic growth has varied significantly across regions, most notably in Emerging Asia where growth is estimated at 4.0 percent. A gradual recovery in the Euro Area and Japan, continued strong output in China GDP and heightened export activity in Latin America, aided by prevailing low interest rates have provided strong support to overall global economic activity.

Among the **Advanced Economies**, the United States economy continues to grow at a fairly solid pace with an estimated GDP growth of 3.6 percent in 2005, driven by buoyant domestic demand. In contrast, growth in most other industrial countries has fallen short of expectations. In the Euro Area, although GDP growth has shown some signs of a recovery in 2005 for some EU countries, confidence indicators have generally eased and the upturn in 2005 is expected to be significantly weaker

than anticipated. Growth in Japan has rebounded as economic activity picked up in early 2005 driven largely by private consumption and business investment.

In **Emerging Asia**, GDP growth in 2004 exceeded expectations in almost all regions, and continued growth is projected during 2005, consistent with global developments. Economic prospects remain favourable as export growth has recovered and improvements in domestic demand, has continued. High oil prices and the objectives of maintaining low inflation and nominal exchange rate stability remain the major risk to the region in the medium-term.

In **Latin America**, economic activity continues to exceed expectations with GDP growth in the three largest economies exceeding 3 percent in 2004. The expansion in real output continues to be broad-based, driven by exports, primarily high commodity prices, and robust domestic demand. While inflationary pressures continue to be higher than targeted in most Latin American Countries, the outlook for the Region remains positive.

Among the poorest countries, GDP growth in **sub-Saharan Africa** rose to 5.1 percent in 2004, underpinned by a general prudence in macroeconomic policies; improved weather conditions, (notably in Ethiopia); and ongoing debt relief under the **Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC)** initiative. In 2005,

**Table 2.1: Advanced Economies: Real GDP, Consumer Prices, and Unemployment**

	Real GDP			Consumer Prices			Unemployment		
	2004	2005	2006	2004	2005	2006	2004	2005	2006
Advanced Economies	3.4	2.6	3.0	2.0	2.0	1.9	6.3	6.1	6.0
United States	4.4	3.6	3.6	2.7	2.7	2.4	5.5	5.3	5.2
Euro Area	2.0	1.6	2.3	2.2	1.9	1.7	8.8	8.7	8.4
Japan	2.6	0.8	1.9	-0.4	-0.2	---	4.7	4.5	4.4
United Kingdom	3.1	2.6	2.6	1.3	1.7	2.0	4.8	4.7	4.7
Canada	2.8	2.8	3.0	1.8	2.1	1.9	7.6	7.2	7.1

Source: IMF World Economic Outlook, April 2005

<sup>1</sup> Source:- IMF World Economic Outlook 2005 and European Central Bank

## II. Global and Regional Developments

**Table 2.2. Selected Economies: Real GDP, Consumer Prices, and Current Account Balance**

	Real GDP			Consumer Prices			Unemployment		
	2004	2005	2006	2004	2005	2006	2004	2005	2006
Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean	4.0	3.6	3.5	7.1	5.1	4.1	-1.6	-1.8	-2.0
China	9.5	8.5	8.0	3.9	3.0	2.5	4.2	4.2	4.0
India	7.3	6.7	6.4	3.8	4.0	3.6	0.3	-0.3	-0.3
Middle East	5.5	5.0	4.9	8.3	8.6	8.3	13.7	17.2	14.9
Middle East Oil Exporters	5.7	5.2	5.0	9.0	9.2	9.4	15.7	20.3	17.5
Africa	5.1	5.0	5.4	7.7	7.7	5.9	0.2	0.8	0.5
Sub-Saharan Africa	5.1	5.2	5.6	9.1	9.2	6.8	-1.9	-1.3	-1.6

Source: IMF World Economic Outlook, April 2005

overall GDP growth for the region is projected to remain robust, underpinned primarily by continued strong growth in the oil producing countries, although improved political stability continues to remain a major challenge to a number in the regions.

### Inflation

Inflation and inflationary pressures remain relatively subdued in most Advanced Countries in 2005. With monetary stimulus gradually removed or remaining unchanged since early 2004, and inflationary expectations generally well grounded, inflation is expected to remain moderate in the short-term as overall inflationary pressures continue to be relatively well contained in most regions. This notwithstanding, inflation rates remain a cause for concern in the Latin American economies.

Concerns about deflationary pressures have now moderated especially in Japan, reflecting growing domestic consumption and heightened consumer

confidence. However, with increased energy costs and potential tightening of labour market conditions, inflationary pressures will gradually increase as the global expansion proceeds.

### Interest Rates

Although there has been some tightening in conditions recently in the United States, long-term interest rates in the major industrialised economies still appear well below equilibrium levels and close to zero in real terms. Nevertheless, equity markets across the globe remain robust and private capital inflows to emerging markets have also been strong. These developments partly reflect improved economic fundamentals, including well grounded inflationary expectations and reduced external vulnerabilities in emerging markets. However, expectations of a higher interest rate environment could tighten financial conditions in the future, particularly in the event of unexpected shocks.

## II. Global and Regional Developments

### b) Regional <sup>2</sup>

Following five (5) years of sluggish growth and a 1.9 percent expansion in 2003, Latin America and the Caribbean recorded favourable growth of 5.5 percent in 2004. Growth in the region's six largest economies exceeded 3 percent, with Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Uruguay and Venezuela experiencing their strongest growth in a decade. Venezuela experienced the highest growth (18 percent), followed by Uruguay (12 percent), and Argentina (8 percent). During the year, per capital income grew by 4 percent - 2 percent above the 1998 figure.

The factors contributing to the favourable performance were strong international conditions coupled with internal factors. The external factors included expanded exports as a result of favourable external prices (demand propelled price increase); significant growth in world trade; and competitive exchange rates. On the domestic front, the reduced need for external financing; falling level of real effective exchange rates; and relatively relaxed monetary policies that served to drive the expansion of credit in many countries. Consequently, total exports from Latin America and the Caribbean grew by approximately 22 percent in 2004.

The cumulative inflation rate as at December 2004 amounted to 7.3 percent, compared to 8.5 percent in December 2003, while unemployment declined from 10.7 percent to 10.0 percent in 2004.

In keeping with global trends, most countries in the CARICOM region recorded higher levels of economic growth in 2004 as compared to 2003. Economic growth was strongest in Anguilla (12 percent), Trinidad and Tobago (6.7 percent), St Lucia (5.4 percent), and Antigua and Barbuda (5.1 percent).

A number of factors contributed to the economic performance of the region. Anguilla's robust growth was fostered by strong performance in Tourism and Construction; Trinidad and Tobago's growth was due to increased activity in the Energy Sector; St. Lucia's economy expanded due to activities in the Tourism and Agriculture Sectors and the impetus experienced by Antigua and Barbuda was consequent on developments in the Tourism Sector, and attendant favourable returns in the Transportation and Distribution Sectors.

Higher levels of output were originally forecast for Grenada and Jamaica but these two countries, being faced with the damages caused by Hurricane Ivan, (as well as Hurricane Charley in the case of Jamaica) were unable to rebound. Consequently, Grenada recorded a decline in output of 3 percent and subsequently received a credit rating downgrade, whereas, Jamaica's economy expanded by approximately 1.1 percent compared with 2.3 percent in 2003.

#### Box 2:1 Issues Relating To Sugar

The drive towards trade liberalization has substantially reduced earnings from commodities that were under preferential arrangements.

For quite a number of years sugar cane has been a dominant crop in the region and indeed the main economic export commodity of a number of countries. With impending changes to the **EU Sugar Import Regime**, coupled with the objections raised in 2003 and submitted to the **World Trade Organisation (WTO)** by Brazil, Australia and Thailand over the special sugar agreement between the EU and the **African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP)** countries, under which the region's sugar is sold, the future of the sugar industry in the region is expected to continue to decline.

<sup>2</sup> Source: Caribbean Development Bank – Annual Economic Review, Inter-American Development Bank- Economic Performance and Macroeconomic Policies Latin American and the Caribbean in 2004 and ECLAC

## III. Domestic Conditions

- a) Fiscal Operations
- b) Monetary Conditions
- c) The Real Economy
- d) Social Conditions

### a) Fiscal Operations

Central Government's Overall Fiscal Balance is expected to register a substantial surplus of \$299.7 million or 0.3 percent of GDP. Similarly, the Current Account is also anticipated to record a significant surplus of \$3,110.1 million or 3.4 percent of GDP. When compared to the surpluses achieved in the previous fiscal year both the Current Account and the Overall Balance showed remarkable increases of 59.9 percent and 41.7 percent, respectively. Record high international oil prices and several policy initiatives such as, the review and reform of the tax system, the reform of the financial system, and the reorganization of the public sector all contributed towards the favourable surpluses on these balances.

Total Expenditure is projected to increase by 33.6 percent to \$27,615.6 million in this fiscal period. This is largely due to higher transfer payments to the State enterprises and Statutory Boards and an increase in the allocation to the Public sector Investment Programme (PSIP).

#### State Enterprises

Profits of Non-Financial Enterprises are anticipated to increase by 97.3 percent to \$940.1 million largely due to increased dividends from some companies in the energy sector. On the other hand, profits from Financial enterprises are expected to decline by 24.3 percent to \$169.3 million consequent upon a reduction in the payment of dividends from some companies.

The State Enterprises and Public Utilities are expected to generate an operating surplus of \$4,470.5 million during the fiscal period 2004/2005. This represents an increase of \$163 million over the preceding comparative period. The State Enterprises in the energy sector continue to be the main contributors to the overall operating surplus estimated for the period.

#### Box 3:1 The Heritage and Stabilisation Fund

Cabinet has agreed to the retirement of the Interim Revenue Stabilization Fund and the establishment of a Heritage and Stabilisation Fund in its stead.

The objectives of the Heritage and Stabilisation Fund will be:-

- To sustain public expenditure capacity through periods of revenue downturns stemming from declines in oil and gas prices;
- To sustain public expenditure in the face of the inevitable revenue decline from the depletion of the non-renewable resources of oil and gas; and
- To undertake such strategic and tactical investments which are necessary to advance the transformation and economic diversification of the economy .

Annual deposits to the Fund, if any, will be allocated as follows:-

- 60 percent of the deposits for the **Fiscal Sustainability Account** and the **Heritage Account**, the proportions to be determined by the Central Bank on the basis of investment criteria relating to the need

to balance liquidity for short-term financing considerations and longer-term assets on which financial returns could be greater; and

- 40 percent for the **Strategic Account**, the resources to be initially invested in short-term liquid securities pending its investment in tactical and strategic assets.

Deposits in any financial year will be made when oil and gas taxation revenues for that year exceed the budgeted medium-term oil and gas taxation revenues by at least 10 percent. Withdrawals in any financial year will occur when oil and gas taxation revenues received for the year are at least 10 percent less than the medium-term oil and gas taxation revenues anticipated in the annual budget for that year. In this case, withdrawals from the Fund will be undertaken for stabilization purposes, be guided by fiscal sustainability rules, and be the lesser of 60 percent of the amount of the deficit of oil and gas tax revenues; or 25 percent of the balance standing to the credit of the Fund at the beginning of the financial year.

### III. Domestic Conditions

#### Debt

In fiscal 2004/2005, the Gross Public Sector Debt is expected to decrease to \$36,779.6 million or 40.7 percent of GDP compared to \$36,910.8 million or 48 percent of GDP in fiscal 2003/2004. Central Government Debt is also projected to decrease to \$21,523 million or 23.8 percent of GDP compared to \$22,043.1 million or 28.7 percent of GDP which was achieved in the last year. In contrast however, Central Government Contingent Liabilities, which includes both Guaranteed Debt and Letters of Comfort for the Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises are also anticipated to increase to \$15,256.6 million or 16.9 percent of GDP compared to \$14,867.7 million or 19.3 percent of GDP in the preceding year.

The decline in the Central Government Debt results from decreases in both the Domestic and External Debt signifying the repayments of already existing debt. Central Government also refinanced \$800 million in high cost domestic debt. Central Government's Debt Service is anticipated to increase by 37.6 percent from \$3,115.4 million in 2003/2004 to \$4,286.5 million in this current fiscal year largely as a result of the refinancing of \$800 million and the repayment of a Eurobond in the amount of US\$150 million.

#### b) Monetary Conditions

In 2004, against an economic profile of moderate bank credit growth and low inflationary pressure, the Central Bank maintained its Repo rate at 5 percent. Prior to 2004 the rate was decreased by 25 basis points in September 2003 to 5.25 percent. The stationary repurchase rate throughout 2004 was congruent with the Bank's accommodative policy and sought to augment private sector credit.

In the first quarter of 2005, the Central Bank continued its monetary policy against a backdrop of rising inflationary pressures and a narrowing of the TT and US interest rate spread.

In response to these developments, the Central Bank raised the 'repo' rate by 25 basis points to 5.25 per cent on March 3 2005, signaling a gradual shift towards a less accommodative monetary policy stance.

The Central Bank subsequently increased its 'Repo' rate by 25 basis points from 5.25 per cent to 5.50 per cent with effect from July 22, 2005.

The decision to raise the 'Repo' rate was made against the background of the following developments:-

- i. The announced increase in cement prices, adverse weather conditions and the difficulties at the port could create further price pressures in the coming months;
- ii. While Government spending has been lagging behind budget projections, the recent passage of supplementary expenditures by the Parliament, if fully implemented, could signal an increase in fiscal pressures;
- iii. Interest rates have continued to rise in the US, reducing the spread with local interest rates; and
- iv. Foreign exchange demand has been stronger than usual in recent weeks, in part, due to identified capital transactions.

The above factors could add to inflationary expectations and justify the need for tightening bank liquidity and provide a corresponding signal through the policy interest rate.

The Bank is working with the commercial banks to improve arrangements for smaller value payments. Another automated system, an Automated Clearinghouse (ACH) is to be introduced in 2005 to meet this need. The ACH would be a facility for clearing high volume low value retail payments, including direct debits and credits, in a batch system. This system is a multilateral net settlement arrangement which is more cost effective for large numbers of small value payments.



In November 2004 the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago announced that this country had been selected to participate in the Joint IMF-World Bank Financial Sector Program (FSAP). The assessment, which is done by a team consisting of IMF and World Bank staff, supported by experts drawn from co-operating central banks and regulatory agencies, is scheduled to be conducted in two missions in February and early May 2005. A final report is to be released in September 2005. The FSAP is designed to assist the Government, the Central Bank, and regulatory agencies in:-

- i. Assessing the financial sector's strengths and weaknesses, and vulnerabilities to macroeconomic shocks;
- ii. Analyzing the structural and institutional issues that may be hindering financial sector development and evaluating its contribution to growth;
- iii. Evaluating the degree of observance of a selected number of international financial sector standards and codes; and
- iv. An **Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) Assessment** will also be carried out in the context of the FSAP.

In December 2004 the Central Bank went live with an electronic **Government Securities Settlement (GSS)** system. The new system will be used for transactions involving Treasury Bills and Treasury Notes in the first instance, and will be expanded to include Government Bonds in the first quarter of 2005. The GSS system, which is a part of the reform plan for the national payments system, is comprised of an on-line auction system and an integrated securities depository.

On settlement day, the system simultaneously records ownership of securities in the depository and debits funds from the relevant account at the Central Bank, thereby introducing "delivery versus payment" for the first time as a standard in the securities market.

The new system conforms to international best practice and will bring benefits such as a reduction of transactions risk, more rapid (real time) settlement and improved record keeping.

## c) The Real Economy

Following the historic growth spike which was experienced during 2003, real economic growth in Trinidad and Tobago fell sharply to 6.5 percent in 2004, which was well within its normal range band. This reduction in growth came despite accelerations in both the Services and Manufacturing sectors, which were outweighed by a much slower expansion in the Energy Sector. The slowing of Energy Sector growth was due to the leveling off of production from Atlantic LNG Train III. Economic growth is however projected to accelerate slightly to 7.0 percent during 2005, driven by increased production from the Atlas Methanol plant which began operations in late 2004, and the initiation of production in late 2005 at the Methanol Holdings M-5000 plant and the larger Atlantic LNG Train IV.

Unemployment resumed its downward trend in 2004 dropping sharply to 8.3 percent from 10.5 percent in 2003. During the first quarter of 2005, the unemployment rate stood at 9.0 percent, which compared favorably with the 10.2 percent rate which was recorded during the first quarter of 2004.

Inflation declined slightly to 3.7 percent in calendar 2004 from 3.8 percent in 2003. However during the first eight (8) months of fiscal 2004/2005, driven by food prices, the general price level recorded an increase of 4.7 percent. This almost doubled the 2.5 percent rise experienced during the similar 2003/2004 period.

### Labour Force

Trinidad and Tobago's labour force increased from five hundred and sixty-three thousand, four hundred (563,400) persons in 1999 to six hundred and thirteen

### III. Domestic Conditions

thousand, four hundred (613,400) persons in 2004, which represents an increase of fifty thousand (50,000) persons in the labour market over the period. The number of persons employed increased by seventy-two thousand, eight hundred (72,800), from four hundred and eighty-nine thousand, four hundred (489,400) persons in 1999 to five hundred and sixty-two thousand, two hundred (562,200) persons in 2003. This precipitated a significant decline in the overall unemployment rate during the period from 13.2 percent to 8.3 percent, reflecting declines in the unemployment rates for both males and females. The unemployment rate for males was reduced from 10.9 percent to 6.4 percent between 1999 and 2004, while the rate for females declined from 16.8 percent to 11.2 percent during the same period.

The overall participation rates increased slightly from 60.8 percent in 1999 to 63.0 percent in 2004. The rate of male participation continues to be significantly higher than the rate for females. However, female participation in the labour force has been growing at a faster rate, increasing from 46.6 percent to 50.9 percent during the period. The male participation rates remained fairly constant at approximately 75 percent.

### d) Social Conditions

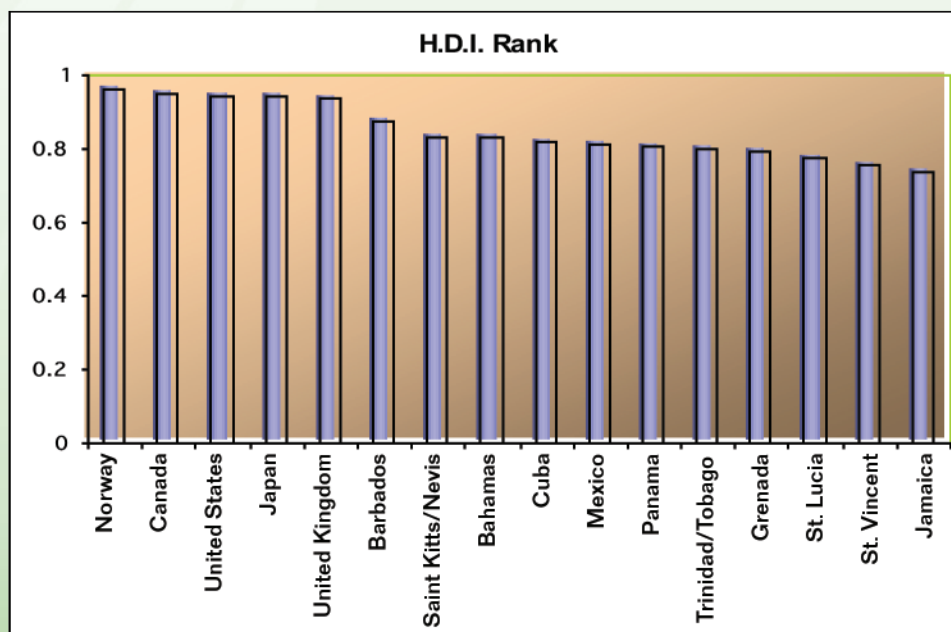
The 2005 United National Human Development Report, Trinidad and Tobago ranks fifty-seventh (57th) among 177 countries. According to the Report, Trinidad and Tobago's HDI has consistently improved from 0.792 in 1990 to 0.800 in 2000 to 0.801 in 2003 and currently remains above the average HDI for Developing Countries (0.694) and Latin America and the Caribbean (0.797).

#### Box 3:2 The Human Development Index

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a summary measure of three (3) basic dimensions of human development:-

- A long and healthy life, as measured by life expectancy at birth;
- Knowledge, as measured by the adult literacy rate and the combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrollment ratio; and
- A decent standard of living, as measured by GDP per capita.

**Figure 1: Human Development Index For Major Countries**



Source: Human Development Report 2005

### III. Domestic Conditions

#### Population

Trinidad and Tobago's rate of population growth for the period 1999 to 2004 has averaged less than 1 percent and is expected to continue that trend into 2005. According to statistics compiled by the Central Statistical Office (CSO) the largest rate of growth was subsumed in the 15-19 age group (2.5 percent), followed in descending order by the 60-64 (1.9 percent) and 65 and over (1.4 percent) age groups.

Births per one thousand (1000) persons remained constant at fourteen (14) persons for the period 2003/2004 and are expected to remain constant into 2005. Similarly, death rates have remained fairly constant over the 2003/2005 period averaging seven (7) deaths per one thousand (1000) persons.

#### Health

The 2005 United Nations Human Development Report calculates Trinidad and Tobago's Life Expectancy Index at 0.75. Caribbean and Latin American countries which share similar life expectancy indices include Jamaica (0.76), Chile (0.88), Bahamas (0.75), Panama (0.83), St. Kitts and Nevis (0.75) and Cuba (0.87). (Box.3.2)

For the period 2001 to 2002, health statistics compiled by the Central Statistical Office (CSO) illustrated that the largest increases in the causes of death in Trinidad and Tobago, are Malignant Neoplasms (5.5 percent), Cerebrovascular Disease (4.7 percent) and Heart Disease (2 percent). The same period however, recorded decreases in the incidence of Diabetes Mellitus (5.2 percent) and HIV Disease (6 percent) as causes of death.

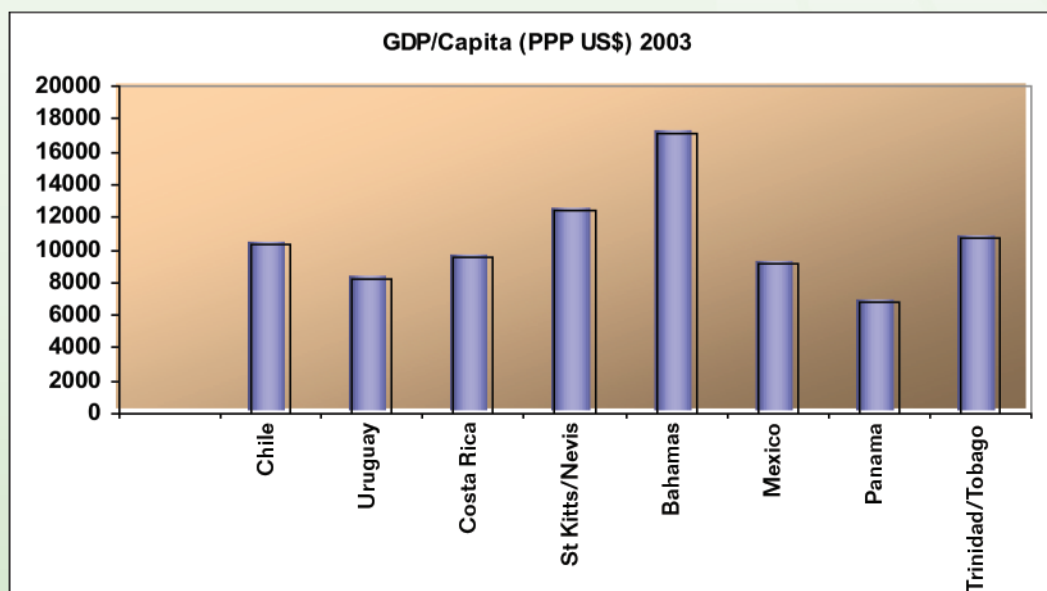
#### AIDS and HIV Disease

The prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS continues to be a priority issue of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. This objective was realized in 2004 by a 15.9 percent decrease in the number of new cases over the 2003 period.

#### Box 3:3 The Life Expectancy Index

The Life Expectancy Index measures the relative achievement of a country in life expectancy at birth. It is calculated by taking the country's life expectancy (Trinidad and Tobago=69.9 years) in relation to maximum and minimum life expectancies of 85 and 25 years respectively.

**Figure 2: GDP/Capita For Latin American Countries**



Source: Human Development Report 2005

### III. Domestic Conditions

By the first quarter of 2005, three hundred and forty one (341) new HIV positive cases were reported, which brought the cumulative total from 1,983 to date to fourteen thousand, nine hundred and eighty nine (14,989) confirmed cases. In the first quarter of 2005, two hundred and ninety eight (298) HIV non-AIDS cases were reported.

The demographics for the first quarter 2005 indicates that thirty seven (37) additional males (or 77.1 percent) and eleven (11) additional females (or 22.9 percent) have contracted the AIDS virus as compared to the same period in 2004. Deaths among males (fourteen) for the first quarter of 2005 were more prevalent than among females (nine) for the period. The primary source of transmissions of the virus was sexual exposure.

The County of St. George reported one hundred and seventy two (172) HIV cases, 27 AIDS cases and fifteen (15) deaths in the first quarter of 2005 as compared to one hundred and fifty three (153) HIV cases, twenty seven (27) AIDS cases and four (4) deaths in the same period of 2004. The largest category (32) of new HIV

positive cases for male falls within the 40-44 age group, with 69.5 percent of all males (141) clustering in the 25-49 age group. 19.7 percent of all females were found in the 20-24 age group, while 44.8 percent of all new cases (57) among females, belonged to the 20-34 age group.

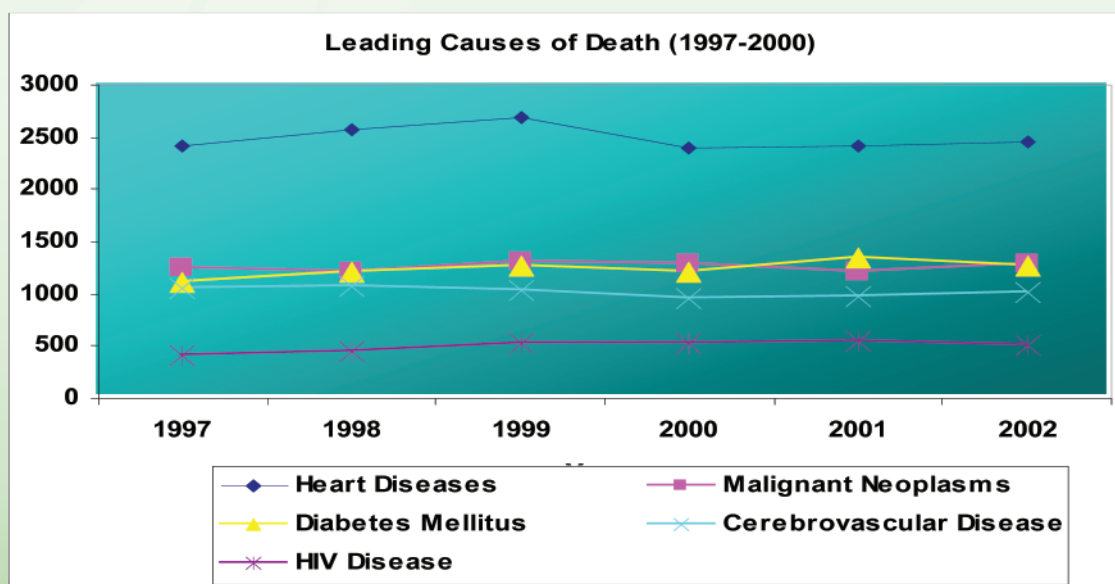
With respect to pediatric HIV cases, there was a fall from fifty six (56) to twenty three (23), a reduction of 58.9 percent in the first quarter of 2005 as compared to the same period in 2004.

#### Education

Trinidad and Tobago presently enjoys an adult literacy rate of 98.5 percent and youth literacy rate of 99.8 percent. This is reflective of this country's combined gross enrollment rate for primary, secondary and tertiary institutions of 67 percent in the 2002/2003 period.

Public expenditure on Education as a percentage of total Government expenditure increased from 11.6 percent in 1990 to an average of 13.4 percent in 2000/2002. This percentage compares favorably when compared with other high human development countries including

**Figure 3: Leading Causes Of Death (1997-2002)**



Source: Ministry Of Health

### III. Domestic Conditions

Ireland (13.5 percent), Chile (18.7 percent), Barbados (17.3 percent), Cuba and St. Kitts and Nevis (19 percent).

#### Crime

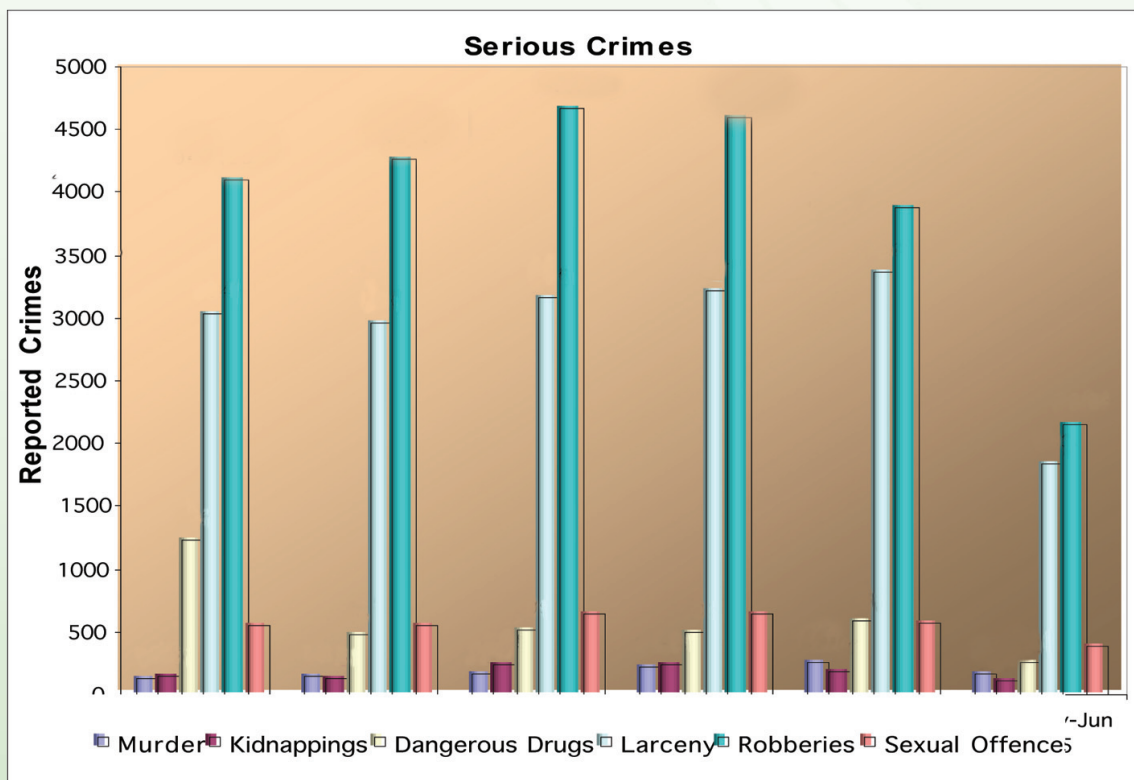
Statistics for the year 2004, as compared to the previous year, indicate that there was a decrease in the number of severe crimes committed and reported. In 2004, the number of serious crimes reported decreased by 3 percent, from sixteen thousand, eight hundred and ninety (16,890) in 2003 to sixteen thousand, three hundred and eighty seven (16,387) in 2004. Reported crime for the first and second quarters of 2005 amounted to eight thousand two hundred and twenty four (8,224), showing a marginal increase when compared to the same period in 2004. In 2004, there were five thousand, three hundred and seventy five (5,375) arrests and eight hundred and ninety three (893) criminal convictions.

There was a 14.4 percent increase in the murder rate in 2004 (262) over 2003 (229) and one hundred and seventy three (173) murders between January and June 2005.

There were one hundred and sixteen (116) arrests in 2003 compared to eighty nine (89) in 2004, a decrease of 23.2 percent.

Kidnappings in 2004 (177) declined by 24.6 percent over the 2003 period (235). The January/June 2005 figure for kidnappings was one hundred and fifteen (115). Of the one hundred and thirty (130) arrests in 2004, five (5) convictions were made.

**Figure 4: Reported Serious Crimes (2000 - June 2005)**



Source: Ministry Of National Security

## IV. Financial and Economic Policy Objectives

- a) **Medium-term Outlook**
- b) **Fiscal Policy**
- c) **State Enterprises**
- d) **Trade And Investment**

### a) Medium Term Outlook

Trinidad and Tobago (the economy) is projected to maintain a favourable growth path over the medium-term, with economic growth estimated at 6.7 percent in fiscal 2005/2006 and expected to average 7.2 percent over the period 2006/2008. Continued growth is expected to be driven primarily by the Energy Sector which is estimated to expand by an average of 8.5 percent. The Non-energy Sector is forecast to grow at a steady pace of about 4 percent per annum over the period. The pick up in world economic growth and trade over the last year will complement the increased activity within both the Energy and Non-energy Sectors. The rate of inflation is anticipated to remain comparable with those of our major trading partners, averaging 4.9 percent over the medium-term. With the economy operating at or near capacity, unemployment reached an all time low in 2005, and is expected to remain at low levels over the medium-term.

The external account is projected to continue to record large surpluses reaching 9.3 percent of GDP by 2008. This activity will be largely supported by increased Energy exports as well as sustained levels of exports from the non-traditional sectors. Imports of capital goods will remain substantial over the medium-term on account of sizeable net FDI inflows which are projected to peak in 2006. Gross official reserves are expected to remain strong, increasing from 6.5 months of prospective imports in 2004 to about 10.3 months by 2008.

The public sector external debt stock is programmed to decline from US\$1,350.6 million in 2004 to US\$1,085.4 million in 2008 as a result of extensive amortization over the period. Consequently, the country's debt service ratio

is expected to fall from 5 percent to 1.3 percent while the interest service ratio will reduce from 1.7 percent 2004 to 0.7 percent in 2008.

### b) Fiscal Policy

#### Debt Management

Government's Debt Management Strategy for the medium-term 2006-2008 will focus on the establishment of a risk management framework and the development of an efficient market for government securities. Government will ensure that both the level and the rate of growth of the public debt are fundamentally sustainable and consistent with international standards.

The debt management strategy will involve:-

- Identification, assessment and management of risk associated with foreign currency debt and floating rate debt;
- Achievement of an optimal level of debt that offers fiscal sustainability, external sustainability and solvency in the short, medium and long term; and
- Careful monitoring and management of contingent liabilities.

The Debt Management Strategy will be designed to achieve the following objectives:-

- To minimize over the long term the cost of meeting Government's financing needs, while containing its exposure to risk;
- To facilitate the development of a well functioning domestic capital market, with the creation and maintenance of a local interest rate yield curve; and
- To ensure that debt management policy is consistent with the objectives of monetary policy, fiscal policy and other macroeconomic policies.

Over the medium-term, Government will pursue the

## IV. Financial and Economic Policy Objectives

establishment of a new **Debt Management Unit** within the Ministry of Finance with a structure that is more conducive to modern debt management practices. This will include front, middle and back offices separated by way of accountabilities and transparent reporting framework.

The new Debt Management Unit would be supported by a management information system known as the **Debt Management and Financial Analysis System (DMFAS)**. This system will facilitate accurate debt recording and reporting, the timely payment of debt service obligations, an improved quality of budgetary reporting and the transparency of Government financial accounts. The first phase of the installation of the DMFAS was concluded in July 2004 and completion of the second phase is expected by December 2005. The system is expected to be fully operational by year-end when all new loans are recorded in the system.

### Financial Management

Government will continue to make significant improvements to its Financial Management Systems with a view to ensuring greater accountability and transparency in respect of all public monies collected and expended by and on behalf of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

#### **Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS)**

A major component of Financial Management Reform is the implementation of an Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS). The IFMIS is a robust IT-driven management tool which integrates current best practices in accounting and budgetary systems.

Introduction of this system will ensure several very tangible improvements in the current system. These include:-

- Elimination of time-consuming manual accounting systems with high reliance on human verification, time consuming processes and multiple levels of approvals;
- Elimination of the cash-based system of accounting which does not provide adequate information for critical decision-making;
- Elimination of computerized systems which store the same data in different formats leading to duplication of resources and reconciliation problems;
- Provision of stronger linkages between resources provided and results achieved; and
- Improvement in accountability by the provision of better information and the elimination of long delays between presentation of accounts and their examination by Parliamentary Committee.

With respect to the processing of accounting transactions, the IFMIS will replace the manual Vote Book System of recording and approving expenditure and will integrate it with the releases and estimates of expenditure to automatically monitor the implementation of the Budget over the Financial Year.

The IFMIS will produce the Appropriation Accounts of Ministries and Departments as well as the Consolidated Accounts of the Republic in less than half the time of four (4) months now required by the Exchequer and Audit Act. This will lead to a general enhancement of productivity and will enable undistracted focus on the requirements of the new Financial Year, at least two (2) months earlier than obtains at present.

The IFMIS will also integrate the entire cycle of budgetary activities including:-

- Budgetary Planning;
- Budget preparation and production of Budget Documents;

## IV. Financial and Economic Policy Objectives

- Budget execution and review; and
- Linkages between the various executing agencies and the Ministry of Finance.

With respect to Revenue, the IFMIS will link all revenue collecting agencies with the General Ledger at the Treasury Division and will interface with specialized revenue systems such as the ASYCUDA System of the Customs and Excise Division, and the Inland Revenue Division's Tax and VAT Systems.

### Output Management

Over the medium-term, Government will seek to bring about a fundamental shift in the way Government does business particularly in terms of budget preparation, presentation, implementation and monitoring. This will be accomplished by moving away from the methodology of simply indicating the elements of costs which comprise a Ministry's Budget e.g. Personnel Expenditure, Goods and Services, Minor Equipment Purchases, to identifying and costing the Services provided by these Agencies as well as indicating by performance measures and targets whether those services were actually delivered or not.

Output Management represents a shift from inputs where cash is paid for services to outputs where the quantum of cash is allocated by the actual measurable delivery of services.

Output Management will provide the mechanism to link Government's strategic priorities to departmental objectives and strategies by requiring managers to demonstrate how their services or outputs will contribute to the achievement of these priorities through the development of Corporate and Business Plans.

Accordingly, Output Management will focus public sector managers or "service providers" on:-

- The need to plan over the long-term in order to deliver quality services in a consistent manner and to take advantage of new and emerging technologies which reduce costs and improve efficiencies;
- The needs of a community-output focus as opposed to an internal focus on maintenance of Ministry operations; and
- Ensuring that services are delivered in a financially efficient, resourceful and accountable manner.

In this regard a new **Output Management System** will enable Government to:-

- Know what outputs it is funding from which departments and to deliver and assess whether output represents value for money;
- Assess whether the agreed outputs are being delivered; and
- Make better decisions when allocating resources.

### Box: 4:1 Upgrade of the Cheque Writing System

Government will acquire a new web-enabled cheque writing system. This system will include the functions of cheque reconciliation and electronic funds transfer which will lead to greater efficiencies and timeliness in reporting by Ministries and Departments.



## IV. Financial and Economic Policy Objectives

### Reform Of The Non-energy Tax Regime

In the 2005 Budget Statement, the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance reported that there were considerable leakages in the current Tax System and that a complete overhaul of the current Non-Energy Tax Regime was necessary. To achieve this, a **Non-Energy Tax Reform Steering Committee** was established in the Ministry of Finance to develop a plan of action aimed at modernizing and improving the efficiency of the current tax system.

In pursuing its mandate, the Steering Committee, with the assistance of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Fiscal Affairs Division (FAD), undertook an evaluation of Trinidad and Tobago's current tax structure and submitted a series of recommendations aimed at simplifying and modernizing the tax system and in particular, the indirect taxes, direct taxes and incentives regimes.

These recommendations, which form part of the continuing tax reform initiative, are currently under consideration by Government and are expected to form a critical component of the Government's fiscal measures in 2005/2006.

### Pension Reform

The main components of the Pension Reform Programme, which include the establishment of the Legal and Regulatory Framework, the development and implementation of a Contributory Pension Plan for the entire public service and the integration of the Old Age Pension and National Insurance Scheme, have not progressed as anticipated.

The responsibility for the establishment of the legal and regulatory framework governing the Pension System was transferred to the Central Bank with effect from December 2004. However, because of commitments to the amendments of the Financial Institutions Act and

the Insurance Act, work on the Pension System in this regard is expected to commence early in the new year and be completed in time to be brought to Parliament by December 2006.

The development and implementation of a Contributory Pension Plan for the entire public service has been quite challenging and has proven to require the assistance of a Technical Consultant. The approach to the exercise must therefore be re-assessed to explore the market for appropriate Technical Consultancies.

The proposed administrative integration of the Old Age Pension and National Insurance Scheme is currently being re-examined with a view to determining the best approach to this exercise. Included in this review would be a comprehensive overhaul of the Old Age Pension Regime.

Progress with respect to the portability and transferability of pension benefits has been achieved, however further work on the modernisation of the National Insurance System is expected in the coming year.

### Procurement Reform

The main aim of the reform of the Public Sector Procurement Regime is to create a system for the acquisition of goods and services that is based on the fundamental Operating Principles of Value for Money, Transparency and Accountability. Government's objective is the promotion of a transparent, efficient and effective system as evident in the Principle Model.

The Green Paper on the Reform of the Government's Procurement Regime has been converted into a White Paper. In September 2005, the White Paper titled "Reform of the Public Sector Procurement Regime" was laid in Parliament, paving the way for a new comprehensive approach to Government's acquisition of goods and services.

## IV. Financial and Economic Policy Objectives

The Procurement Reform exercise involves several key components. One of the critical components is the repeal of the Central Tenders Board Ordinance with its subsidiary legislation, and its replacement by a new Act aimed at providing a legal framework applicable to all procuring entities using public money, including State-Owned Enterprises.

Additionally, the new Procurement Regime will require:-

- The establishment of procurement units in all Ministries and State agencies;
- The reorganization of the Central Tenders Board Division of the Ministry of Finance, to provide support to an independent Procurement Regulator. (It is anticipated that, given the demands to be made of agencies, a professional cadre of procurement officers will evolve and be appropriately trained, and remunerated); and
- The introduction of appropriate IT systems to support the Regulator's reporting requirements and communication with the public.

An independent **Procurement Regulator**, directly accountable to Parliament, will be appointed by the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, to proactively ensure an efficient and relevant procurement system that conforms to the Operating Principles of Value for Money, Transparency and Accountability.

To give effect to the establishment of the new procurement regime, a **Procurement Implementation Committee** has been established with oversight for the establishment of Procurement Units in Line Ministries, staff training at all levels of Procurement, and the development and establishment of a Procurement web-site, a Procurement Gazette and Databases on contractors, suppliers and small businesses.

### Financial Sector Reform

Since the White Paper on the Reform of the Financial System was laid in Parliament as Government's Policy in June 2004, a number of important steps have been undertaken which will push Government's agenda for the Financial Services Sector closer to its goal of achieving a modern and efficient Financial Sector that has depth, flexibility and resilience.

In July 2004, the Insurance Act was amended to allow for the transfer of responsibility for the Insurance Sector to the Central Bank. In March 2005, Electronic Trading commenced on the Stock Exchange, while two months later the office of the Financial Services Ombudsman – an upgrade from the Banking Service Ombudsman – was launched. In April of this year, the Take-Over-By-Laws under the Securities Industry Act were published in the Gazette and is now law. Amendments to the Venture Capital Act were passed in Parliament in July 2005.

Through collaborative efforts, a Credit Bureau and a Credit Rating Agency commenced operations in 2004. Another important step towards modernisation of the Financial Sector was the creation/development of the Real Time Gross Settlement Systems and the Government Security Systems, which became operational earlier this year. An Automated Clearing House is currently being tested and is expected to come on stream very shortly.

Additionally, various legislation governing the Financial Services Sector is expected to be brought before Parliament as we move closer to implementing a modern regulatory and supervisory framework. Amendments to the Financial Institutions Act and the Securities Industry Act are expected to be completed and brought to the Parliament by the end of the year.

Currently, work is actively being done on procuring comprehensive amendments to the Insurance Act, which, together with new legislation governing the pension

## IV. Financial and Economic Policy Objectives

industry, are expected to be presented to Parliament before the end of 2006.

It is Government's intention that the Financial System be regulated by a single Regulator. While this office will not be put in place until the end of 2006, an Interim Regulatory Council, the predecessor to the Single Regulatory Authority, has been created and will meet on a quarterly basis to take a more detailed look at regulating the sector.

### c) State Enterprises

In the context of Government's pursuit of its Vision 2020 objectives, the State Enterprise Sector will continue to play an important role in facilitating and supporting the expansion of the domestic economy by expediting the necessary infrastructure development, providing key developmental and other services in support of Private Sector business development, implementing priority sectoral initiatives and facilitating the attainment of policy objectives more generally.

Government acknowledges that the State Enterprise Sector has made significant contributions to the economy and continuous reform of the Sector remains a deliberate policy initiative, the main objective being to boost economic efficiency and improve resource allocation.

#### Review of Existing Portfolio

The Minister of Finance, as Corporation Sole, is responsible for managing Government's participation in equity investments. Such management of Government's investment portfolio requires periodic evaluation of the deployment of assets in the State Enterprise Sector.

The vision for the State Enterprises Sector is one in which activities are guided by equity, transparency, efficiency and accountability. Government will continue with its ongoing monitoring of the State Enterprises to ensure

that public resources vested in the Sector are optimally utilized. This entails a clear commitment to good corporate governance, clear delineation of Enterprise mandates and deliverables and optimal financial performance.

Existing state equity holdings will be evaluated in light of each company's strategic national significance and will involve a proactive stance with respect to a range of policy options, including financial restructuring, private sector participation and when appropriate, divestment.

#### Capacity Building

Government relies on the Ministry of Finance to provide appropriate recommendations for investments in order to ensure that fiscal revenues and surpluses are used to the maximum benefit of present and future generations. To this end, the Ministry of Finance will continue to enhance its institutional capacity to enable it to more efficiently perform its duty regarding the State's equity participation in tactical and strategic investments. This will be accompanied by the strengthening of its capability for effective monitoring of State Enterprises and portfolio evaluation.

#### New Investment

Government recognizes that as matters of strategic national significance requiring pivotal intervention arise, state resources should be committed to the funding of new ventures through equity participation. Accordingly, the Ministry of Finance is facilitating the establishment of the following State Enterprises:-

#### The Education Facilities Company Limited

In support of Government's efforts to accelerate the delivery of the required infrastructure to advance the country's social and economic development, the Education Facilities Company Limited was established for the procurement of designs, construction and management of projects under the purview of the Ministry of Education. Expertise will be outsourced so that projects are delivered in a cost effective and timely manner.

## IV. Financial and Economic Policy Objectives

### ***The National Infrastructure Development Company Limited***

In support of those Ministries that do not possess the institutional capacity to manage projects, Government established the National Infrastructure Development Company Limited with the mandate for procurement of designs, construction, management, and financing of priority projects under the Public Sector Investment Programme.

### ***The Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited***

The Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited was established to facilitate the implementation of the National Sport Policy pending the establishment of the Sport Commission of Trinidad and Tobago. The Company is charged with responsibility for providing advice and making recommendations to the Ministry responsible for Sport on matters relating to sport and physical recreation, implementing suitable programmes for total participation in sport and high performance sport, management and maintenance of sporting facilities and designing and setting standards for National Coaching Programmes for coaching certification.

### ***The Tourism Development Company Limited***

In support of Government's commitment to diversify the economy and develop capacity in the Non-energy Sector, the Tourism Development Company Limited was established to develop all aspects of the Tourism Sector in Trinidad and Tobago by generating new tourism products and by ensuring the maintenance of adequate physical infrastructure and amenities that meet international hospitality standards.

### ***The Rural Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited***

With a significant number of large-scale projects under the purview of several Ministries, Government has formed the Rural Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited to undertake the management and implementation of Public Sector Investment Programme

projects which relate to rural development. This will entail the establishment of an institutional framework to facilitate rural development on a systematic and continuing basis, with the company having a pivotal role to organize, manage and fund the process of rural development through all stages.

### ***Community Improvement Services Limited***

Activities were undertaken to bring into operation the Community Improvement Services Limited, which was established to undertake developmental activity in communities, particularly in respect of the improvement of secondary road networks and drainage, development of cultural centres, community centres and sporting facilities.

### ***The Trinidad and Tobago Film Company Limited***

The Trinidad and Tobago Film Company Limited was established with the mandate of facilitating the development of the local film industry and the generation of revenue and employment within the sector, as well as, the promotion of Trinidad and Tobago as a premier location for international productions. The film industry was identified as one of seven (7) priority industries for new opportunities of business development, expansion and job creation possibilities and to compete effectively in a globalized environment.

### ***The Caribbean New Media Group Limited***

In accordance with Government's framework for the restructuring of the National Broadcasting Network Limited, a new broadcasting company, Caribbean New Media Group Limited (CNMG) was incorporated. CNMG would operate a television station and radio frequencies. CNMG is presently taking steps to recruit a core leadership team who would develop an implementation plan for the Company.

## **Divestment**

Government's policy continues to be that the State Enterprise Sector must be examined and rationalized with

## IV. Financial and Economic Policy Objectives

a view to maximizing State resources in the interest of all citizens. In this regard, the State will retain or acquire equity in State Enterprises only where the achievement of policy objectives for the sector in which an enterprise is located depends on it. However, it is not intended that such participation would be long-term in nature and Government will seek to ensure that such enterprises are divested to the Private Sector as soon as this is feasible.

Such divestment of Government's ownership stake in enterprises may be full or partial, and the concomitant Private Sector participation may take a variety of forms. The Ministry of Finance will continue to play a key role in recommending divestment initiatives and in facilitating the implementation of those divestment plans approved by Government.

There are currently a number of companies in varying stages of liquidation. This requires that the Ministry of Finance continue to take appropriate steps to resolve, in a timely manner, all outstanding legal, financial, and other matters pertaining to those companies.

Two (2) major activities that are being undertaken in this regard are:-

i) The continued adherence to the *Post Caroni (1975) Limited: A Comprehensive and Integrated Development Plan*. Following the divestment of Caroni (1975) Limited, Government is in the process of honoring its post divestment obligations to former employees, managing the outstanding debts and liabilities of the Company and disposing of its remaining assets.

ii) Restructuring of the **Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (PATT)**. Government has approved an overall structure for the Port which involves the separation of the various business units into operating entities with individual management arrangements. The Port of Spain Infrastructure

Company (POSInCo) has been established to oversee these activities.

Government also acknowledges the need to continue its focus on providing facilitatory mechanisms, including the removal of constraints to investment and the establishment of the appropriate institutional, regulatory and incentive framework.

### Corporate Governance

Government will continue to focus on corporate governance structures in the State Enterprise Sector, with a view to maintaining high standards of governance among these companies.

Government will also continue to further equip members of Boards of Directors of the Sector by hosting conferences in matters relating to good governance practices. Additionally, it is Government's intention to review the legislative and regulatory framework governing the State Sector. As an initial step, draft By-laws, which will become the standard for the Sector, and a draft Code of Best Practice are being reviewed.

## d) Trade And Investment

In furtherance of Government's objective of ensuring sustainable growth of the economy, development and expansion of the Non-energy Sector will remain in focus over the medium-term. This objective will be achieved by:-

- A planned approach to the diversification of the economy;
- Building competitiveness; and
- Generating sustainable export-led economic growth.

## IV. Financial and Economic Policy Objectives

### Diversification Of The Economy

#### Sector Initiatives

Government will continue the pace of diversification of economic activity and enhancing the competitiveness of the Non-energy Sector to ensure sustained balance in the country's external accounts. Accordingly, the Government has developed strategic plans to develop the following sectors:-

- Yachting;
- Fish and Fish Processing;
- Merchant Marine;
- Music and Entertainment;
- Film;
- Food and Beverages; and
- Printing and Packaging.

The **Standing Committee on Business Development** will continue to oversee and monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plans. Upon attaining acceptable levels of sustainability, the Standing Committee will thereafter seek to identify other sectors for targeted development. In addition to this initiative, the Committee will also focus on developing an enabling environment for business by reviewing and spearheading continuous improvement in those agencies responsible for facilitating business.

#### Development of the Services Sector

Government recognizes that the Services Sector is an engine of growth and major contributor to the economy. Therefore, a **National Services Trade Policy** for the period 2006-2010 is currently being developed which will attempt to achieve greater coordination of the Sector. The policy will be completed by the end of 2005.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), in collaboration with relevant private and public sector agencies will begin implementation of the recommendations of the Services Policy in 2006. Major areas of focus for implementation will be in facilitating services sector development, addressing specific constraints to development of the various sub-

sectors and legislative interventions by Government. In addition, increasing the export promotion of services in all sub-sectors will be a key strategy that would be actively pursued during the implementation period.

In keeping with its commitment to facilitate Private Sector development in the Services Sector and to assist in institutional strengthening of the private/public sector consultative mechanism, the Minister of Trade and Industry has been facilitating work towards the establishment of the **Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries (TTCSI)**. The TTCSI is expected to be functional by 2006. The TTCSI will facilitate improved Private Sector collaboration on all services trade issues affecting the sector.

### Manufacturing Centre & Transportation Hub Of The Region

To achieve this objective a number of strategies will be pursued:-

- Establishment of a **Research and Development Fund** to develop the local research environment. This intervention is seen as imperative to strengthening the research capability of this country's domestic firms and stimulating innovation and further investments in the Non-energy Sector;
- Programmes on product development - Improvement in quality, environmental management, health and safety systems;
- Completion of the **Technology Park** at Wallerfield;
- Introduction of a Degree Programme in Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT);
- Enhancing the Customs environment;
- Modernization of existing Industrial Parks and the development of new Industrial Parks; and
- Development of Business Opportunities Profiles, Production of guidelines on product labelling, packaging standards and meeting quality requirements.

## IV. Financial and Economic Policy Objectives

### Destination Of Choice For Foreign Direct Investment

Concurrently with the enterprise development thrust, Government will seek to stimulate greater flows of investment both foreign and domestic into and within the country for the continued development and fortification of the Nation's productive capacity. The specific strategies to be pursued during the medium-term will include:-

- Continuing to modernize the Hotel and Conference Centers Infrastructure of the country, namely the upgrading and refurbishment of the Hilton Trinidad and Convention Centre;
- Completion of a new **Investment Policy for Trinidad and Tobago** by December 2005;
- Enactment of new foreign investment promotion legislation;
- Negotiation and ratification of **Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs)** with the Swiss Confederation, Spain, Ukraine, Germany, Argentina, Mauritius, Italy, Netherlands, India and China; and
- Working within the **Association of Caribbean States (ACS)** to complete a reciprocal Agreement on Investments in the Greater Caribbean.

### Building Competitiveness

Government recognizes that the competitiveness of the economy is crucial to developing a sustainable Non-energy Sector to capitalize on expanded market access opportunities. Policies and strategies that will be implemented in the medium-term to engender competitive and resilient domestic firms include:-

- Increasing the efficiency of the Port of Port of Spain;
- Increasing the employment of technology in the manufacturing process;
- Assist the Business Sector in implementing a programme aimed at improving the knowledge of

intellectual property issues and opportunities;

- Development and execution of an **Export Strategy for Trinidad and Tobago** which would seek to achieve a 30 percent increase in selected sectors over the medium-term;
- Initiation of a new business expansion and industrial restructuring (BEIR) programme;
- Development and implementation of a programme to benchmark companies against international standards; and
- Technical Support in the form of **Business Development and Support Services (BDS)**.

The **Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS)** will continue to execute its plans to develop capacity and international recognition with respect to conformity assessment of products and accreditation of conformity assessment bodies.

The Business Development Company (BDC) will continue to provide comprehensive business support to enable SMEs to maximize their potential. It will also provide a 15 percent annual increase in funding through the **Loan Guarantee Programme (LGP)** for working capital, plant expansion and leasing for purchase of machinery and equipment for plant modernization.

The **Venture Capital Incentive Programme (VCIP)** will also continue to provide financing in the form of equity financing to a larger number of SMEs by among other things, working to widen the capital market to increase access to equity finance; increasing the education outreach programme on the benefits of venture capital and facilitating greater access to funding through alternative sources of financing.

### Fair Competition

Government will continue to develop a comprehensive legislative framework that would facilitate the development of trade and investment and create an environment for fair competition in the domestic market. This legislative framework will concurrently ensure that

## IV. Financial and Economic Policy Objectives

Trinidad and Tobago is compliant with its international trade obligations.

### Trade Sector Support Programme

Government will continue the implementation of the Inter-American Development Bank financed Trade Sector Support Programme. The overall objective of this programme is to improve the international trade performance of Trinidad and Tobago. The Programme will therefore seek to strengthen the human resource capacity of the Ministry of Trade and Industry to formulate and implement trade policy and to participate more effectively in trade negotiations. During the medium-term, implementation of the various components of the programme will be accelerated.

### Trade Assistance Programme

Government recognizes that trade liberalization will bring many opportunities and challenges for domestic firms. A Trade Assistance Programme will be developed in collaboration with the **Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers Association (TTMA)**. This programme will assist domestic firms in sunset industries and their employees to make the transition to new growth areas.

## Generating Export-led Growth

### Expanding Market Access

The overall objective of market access is to ensure that our manufactured exports and services have a transparent, predictable and sustained entry to traditional and new markets. In this regard, a diversified set of strategies will continue to be implemented to facilitate the two-pronged approach of increasing market access with:-

- i. Enhancement of export activity in traditional markets; and
- ii. The creation, penetration and sustainability of new markets.

The principal strategies that will be used to achieve this objective are the negotiation of mutually advantageous arrangements, whether bilateral, regional, hemispheric or multilateral, directed at the removal of tariff and other barriers to trade and the execution of three (3) trade missions per annum to selected countries. This policy to expand market access opportunities into new markets has already been activated with Trinidad and Tobago currently negotiating on four (4) major fronts:-

**i) Bilateral:** Trinidad and Tobago along with its CARICOM partners will initiate and attempt to conclude negotiations with MERCOSUR, Canada and Central America.

**ii) Regional:** Trinidad and Tobago as a member of CARIFORUM will continue to participate in negotiations to forge a new reciprocal trading relationship with the **European Union (Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA))**. It is envisaged that an EPA with the EU will create new trade opportunities, strengthen regional integration and improve trade capacity and competitiveness. By September 2005, the third phase involving structuring and consolidating of EPA negotiations will focus on channeling the points of common understanding into elements of a draft EPA. The final phase of EPA negotiations will take place from January to December 2007 and will concentrate on consolidating and completing the results of the negotiations. It is expected that the process to incorporate the Agreement into national law will take place in 2008.

**iii) Hemispheric:** Negotiations with the other thirty three (33) democratically elected Governments in the Western Hemisphere to form the **Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA)** have stalled. However, Trinidad and Tobago remains optimistic that negotiations will resume after the conclusion of multilateral trade negotiations under the **World**



## IV. Financial and Economic Policy Objectives

**Trade Organisation (WTO)**, which is expected to culminate at the Hong Kong Ministerial in December 2005. It is therefore expected that an agreement can be achieved during the medium-term.

**iv) Multilateral:** Negotiations under the WTO, to secure a favourable outcome in ongoing negotiations under the **Doha Development Round** will continue in earnest to conclude by the end of 2006. For Trinidad and Tobago, the main issue is ensuring that some flexibility or policy space to advance economic development and industrialization policies is achieved.

The second pillar for enhancement of export activity in traditional and new markets involves research on issues that affect effective market access such as market entry surveys and classification of non-tariff barriers.

### Spanish As The First Foreign Language

As Trinidad and Tobago continues its integration into the Latin American economy, Government will continue to implement its initiative to make Spanish the first foreign language of Trinidad and Tobago. In fiscal 2004/05 steps were taken to establish the Secretariat (SIS) that will spearhead the implementation of this initiative. The Secretariat will ensure that all requisite services needed by persons who are willing to become Spanish-speaking, will be made available by service providers. Specific activities to be undertaken by the SIS during the medium-term will include:-

- Working with the Ministry of Education to ensure that Spanish becomes compulsory at secondary education level;
- A 20 percent annual increase in business people and Government officials who are fluent in Spanish;

- Continuing the transformation of our road networks, seaports, airports and public buildings with the use of both English and Spanish signage; and
- Development and implementation of various student exchange programmes with Venezuela, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic and Cuba.

### Air Services

Government recognizes that transportation is a critical platform for international trade. In the medium-term air-links between Trinidad and Tobago and its major trading partners will continue to be strengthened particularly with Latin America.

## V. Facilitating the Policy Agenda

- a) Law And Justice
- b) National Development Planning
- c) Foreign Policy
- d) Public Administration
- e) Telecommunications
- f) Local Government
- g) Intellectual Property
- h) Consumer Rights
- i) Registration

### a) Law And Justice

The Ministry of the Attorney General continues to strive for excellence in providing services to its clients and the people of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Accordingly, over the medium-term, the Ministry will ensure that a relevant and up-to-date legal and regulatory framework is in place to enable public entities and private organizations to function effectively, as well as, to protect the fundamental rights and values of our citizens and ensure their safety.

#### Administration Of Justice

##### Measures to Facilitate Anti-Crime Initiatives

The Ministry of the Attorney General has been working assiduously to support and strengthen the various initiatives being implemented by Government to stamp out the scourge of crime. To this end, the Ministry is poised to facilitate the implementation of several innovative strategies, one of which is the crime package of amendments to existing legislation to remove certain impediments to prosecute offenders and therefore, strengthen the Administration of Justice. This package includes:-

- The **Indictable Offences Preliminary Inquiry Amendment Bill, 2005**, which provides for more effective measures for taking evidence at the preliminary inquiry;
- The **Bail Amendment Bill, 2005** which seeks to make kidnapping a non-bailable offence; and

- The **Corporal Punishment Amendment Bill, 2005**, which removed the six (6) months limitation preventing infliction of corporal punishment on a convicted person after such time.

It is envisioned that these initiatives would facilitate improvement in the Criminal Justice System and contribute to the reduction in serious crimes.

##### The Legislative Agenda

Government, through its comprehensive legislative agenda intends to continue the process of strengthening and improving existing legislation and regulations, as well as to continue to consult with key stakeholders and clients to create new and relevant laws that will deal effectively with lawlessness and terrorism and other important areas such as family life, the environment, regional integration, financial management and trade and investment. To this end, the process for determining the Legislative Agenda for 2005-2006 is underway.

##### Case Management System

Government, through the Ministry of the Attorney General, will continue to pursue its policy objective of reducing the time-frame for dealing with the prosecution of criminals. In this regard, the Ministry will implement a **Case Management System**, which is intended to facilitate expeditious hearing of criminal matters.

##### Mutual Legal Assistance and Extradition Initiatives

The Central Authority Unit of the Ministry of the Attorney General will continue its ongoing process of internal improvement both administratively and functionally, in order to provide the highest quality of work possible. Another key priority of the Central Authority is increasing the number of international treaties in the area of Mutual Assistance and Extradition. More specifically, over the medium-term, it is hoped that Trinidad and Tobago will enter into bi-lateral treaties and agreements with Latin American countries such as Venezuela, Colombia and Mexico.

### Monitoring System For Legal Services

The recently established **Process Review Team (PRT)**, which started operations in 2004, has been devising tactics to monitor and fast track legal matters such as legislative drafting, legal opinions and contract preparation and vetting. The operations of this Unit, together with the implementation of the **Electronic Monitoring Service Delivery System (EMSDS)** project, are expected to contribute to improvement in the performance of Government's legislative output.

### Measures For Improving Institutional Capacity

Government has been grappling with the issue of high-turnover of legal personnel which has significantly impacted its capacity to operate at the optimal level. In fact, eighty (80) percent of the middle and senior legal positions in the Ministry of the Attorney General remain vacant. In response, Government is considering creative and innovative ways to ensure that appropriately qualified and experienced legal officers are recruited and retained.

Some of the strategies proposed include the employment of legal personnel on contract, provision of training opportunities and rotation of junior legal staff to provide for learning opportunities and job enhancement and negotiation of more attractive remuneration packages for legal personnel. This notwithstanding, it is recognized that a more comprehensive approach is necessary in order to tackle and resolve the issue of inadequate staffing and other organizational issues. As a result, the Ministry of the Attorney General will work with an external consulting firm to prepare a Strategic Plan for the Ministry, which will assist in the preparation of a more effective Human Resource Plan.

### Training

In order to ensure that staff members are capable and efficient in their respective field of work to adequately serve the needs of their clients, the Ministry of the Attorney General has pursued and will continue implementing a policy of training and education of staff. In the area of legislative drafting, training at entrance level has resumed after a cessation of seven (7) years. Additionally, with the new **Civil Proceedings Rules of Court** to be implemented by September 2005, sensitization and training programmes will be introduced and implemented for Attorneys-at-Law and non-legal staff over the medium-term.

Apart from training of the legal personnel, training will continue for various categories of staff including professional and administrative staff.

### Electronic Systems

Another initiative that is expected to contribute to the improvement of the performance of the Ministry over the medium-term is the continuation of computerization of the operations of the Ministry of the Attorney General. Under this project, electronic systems for several areas such as inventory tracking, file management, asset management, payroll, and use of standard forms will be implemented. It is intended that most (if not all) of the Ministry's operations would be computerized by 2007.

### Facilities and Infrastructure

In terms of infrastructure, the Ministry of the Attorney General is continuing its programme of improving existing accommodation and providing new facilities for its various departments. The designs for the refurbishment and outfitting of a building for use by the North Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions is in progress and Government will carry out refurbishment and outfitting works in the 2005/2006 fiscal period. This accommodation, when prepared, will provide state-of-the-art electronic systems, facilities and suitable offices to enable this office to function efficiently and effectively.

## V. Facilitating the Policy Agenda

Over the period 2006 –2008, design and construction of the **South Office of the Ministry of the Attorney General** will be completed.

In the first quarter of the 2006/2007, the outfitting of a building in Port of Spain to accommodate the Caribbean Court of Justice will be completed. Also, over the medium-term, Government will ensure that the pre-conditions for the design and construction of several new Magistrates Courts are in place and thereafter, that steps will be taken to complete the design and commence construction.

### Communication And Public Relations Strategy

Government recognizes that the provision of relevant legal services to the satisfaction of its clients and key stakeholders are the main reasons for its operations and as such, the communication and public relations strategy of the Ministry of the Attorney General will be expanded with a view to more effectively disseminating information on legal issues and avenues available to organizations, groups and citizens to provide their feedback and concerns.

## b) National Development Planning

The task in National Development Planning is about building coherent, integrated approaches that enhance the quality of life through sustainable development. It is a task that engages prudent management of resources for economic, social, environmental and cultural development for meaningful results. This is a task that requires true partnership within the society to enable us to focus necessary resources to positively impact the lives of individual citizens and by extension, the quality of life of the national community.

National Development Planning is the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Planning and Development. From this macro

perspective, there is recognition that the framework for development must strategically position this country for internal sustainability and global competitiveness. This is the mandate of Vision 2020, the **Draft National Strategic Plan** that was recently completed.

The draft Plan acknowledges the value of a shared comprehensive sense of priorities and capacities that are vital to achieve the forward, optimistic vision of what Trinidad and Tobago strives to become, as a developed country, in the next decade and beyond. Implicit in its recommendations is also the acknowledgement that vibrant, sustainable communities are critical to the national planning process.

It is in this context that the Ministry of Planning and Development is developing a preliminary data set as the basis for policy and programme intervention at the community level. This community profiling exercise will be undertaken utilising the 2000 Population and Housing Census Data, as well as supplementary data from other relevant sources. The exercise will involve:-

- Analysing the socio-economic conditions existing in communities throughout the country to determine basic needs;
- Assessing the resource base and potential of each community; and
- Developing strategies consistent with the specific level of socio-economic development taking into consideration resource availability in each community.

This initial study will support the implementation of the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan in its final configuration. The Reports of the various Sub-Committees whose work informed the Draft Plan collectively serve as a very useful resource, not only in terms of identifying strategic priorities but also in respect of highlighting areas for further research. They will also inform the Study on National Manpower requirements within the development framework.

## V. Facilitating the Policy Agenda

The development thrust must also be supported by adequate, relevant and timely data. In this context, the **Central Statistical Office** which is the national statistical agency is targeted for modernisation and upgrade to meet the needs of a society that is transitioning to developed status.

The importance of the management of land use and development patterns for sustainability in the context of a modernising society cannot be over emphasised. On completion, the **National Physical Development Plan** will therefore articulate the overall urban and regional planning framework that will facilitate the objectives and strategies of Vision 2020. This will continue to enhance existing capability and infrastructure in support of sustainable urban and regional development.

In the upcoming period, capital investment will even more so become a catalyst for addressing development priorities. The management of the **Public Sector Investment Programme** will assume even more significance, while enhancing access to loans, grants and technical cooperation from Multilateral Institutions in support of national institutions and civil society.

In pursuit of these initiatives, the Ministry of Planning and Development will, over the medium-term, strengthen the capability of its human resource base in order to attain efficiency and effectiveness in programme implementation.

### **Draft National Strategic Plan (Vision 2020)**

The draft National Strategic Plan articulates an agenda for phased development to the year 2020. It defines a strategic road map and details an implementation agenda in the context of time-bound targets and measurable indicators for the achievement of specific goals and objectives.

The Plan proposes that the thrust towards developed country status will be grounded in five (5) development priorities, namely:-

- i) Developing innovative people;
- ii) Nurturing a caring society;
- iii) Effective Government;
- iv) Enabling Competitive Business; and
- v) Investing in Sound Infrastructure and Environment

These thematic areas will guide national policy development and will be the basis for the allocation of resources, investment and for strategy implementation throughout the Public Sector.

### **The Central Statistical Office**

The Central Statistical Office (CSO) will be one of the priority agencies to benefit from transformation into a modern and relevant institution, empowered and positioned to support the development thrust and to cost-effectively provide information and information services to end users. Over the medium-term, areas of focus for the CSO will include: statistical support for the priority areas of food security; re-aligning the Trade Statistics System; monitoring the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; revision of the Index of Retail Prices; and re-basing the Gross Domestic Product.

#### **Food Security**

The issue of food security is a critical element in the development agenda. In the short term, to support the development thrust, CSO will update the Survey of Establishment sample frame and engage in the processing of the 2004 Agricultural Census data.

Further, surveys of small ruminants and food crops will be undertaken in Tobago, with the objective of providing indicators to improve monitoring efficiency and measure the level of food security on the island in the short term.

## V. Facilitating the Policy Agenda

### **The Trade Statistics System**

In order to support the initiative of the revision of the **Trade Classification Systems** and the development of a Correlation Table, a survey is proposed to commence in January 2006 to inform the design and development of a new report format for the analysis of Trinidad and Tobago's international trading relations.

### **The Millennium Development Goals**

This country is committed to meeting the targets of the Millennium Development Goals which are being addressed within the context of the overall development agenda. However, in order to monitor the achievement of these goals, an improved statistical system is required. Towards this end, the Ministry of Planning and Development, is in the process of preparing a country specific range of social statistics and relevant social indicators.

### **Revised Index of Retail Prices**

The revised Index of Retail Prices serves as a tool for accuracy in the measurement of the monthly movement of a specified basket of goods and services and serves a variety of functions both locally and internationally. In 2006, price intelligence officers will be recruited and trained for the collection of price data and the development of the relevant database.

### **Re-basing of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**

The recent refinement of the methodology for the rebasing of the GDP (the measurement of the goods and services produced in the national economy) to the base year 2000, which was updated from 1985 to 2000 will be followed by a new re-basing exercise to the base Year 2005.

### **The 2000 Population, Housing Census**

Statistical analyses of the data generated from the 2000 Population and Housing Census will be undertaken to provide the basis for policy formulation and decision-making in various sectors.

## **Urban And Regional Planning**

During the period 2006-2008, physical development planning and development control will be addressed through the **Town and Country Planning Division** by the establishment of an overall **Strategic National Physical Development Planning Framework to the Year 2020**. Preliminary steps have been engaged for the formulation of the National Plan, a Port of Spain Land Use Plan, as well as for review and amendments to the Physical Planning Legislation.

Pursuit of area-specific strategic action is critical to the promotion of urban and regional planning. In this regard, policy formulation in respect of hillside development is being pursued; as well as policy development for the Woodbrook area. Policy reviews for other areas are also envisaged. In addition, an area-wide Environmental Impact Assessment to inform decision-making on essential elements of development is under active consideration for South East Trinidad.

A **National Land Information System (LIS)/ Geographic Information System (GIS)** will be established to integrate and facilitate the management of a wide range of relevant geographic, land, environmental, demographic, socio-economic and infrastructural data for analysis and decision-making. In this regard, terms of reference are currently being reviewed and bid packages prepared.

## **Coordination And Allocation Of External Resources**

### **European Development Fund (EDF)**

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the European Commission entered into an agreement for a **National Indicative Programme** which is funded by grant resources under the European Development Fund (9th EDF).

## V. Facilitating the Policy Agenda

The Government has placed high priority on addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic; increasing the level of enrollment in tertiary education; as well as directly targeting poverty reduction. In this regard, EDF funds are being directed in support of these priority areas.

The Financing Agreement for HIV/AIDS was signed in June 2005 by the European Commission and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

Additionally, funding is also being provided to the **Caribbean Business Services Limited** for professional and managerial support to enhance the productivity and competitiveness of small and medium sized enterprises. EDF resources will also provide support for the **Poverty Reduction Programme** and a **Rural Electrification Programme Phase II** which will be implemented in 2006.

A **Technical Cooperation Facility** funded under the EDF will facilitate and support the implementation of the National Indicative Programme. This will include five (5) main components: the Technical Assistance Facility, training support for projects and programmes, conferences and seminars, audit and evaluation of the programmes and contingencies.

### **Technical Cooperation**

The Technical Cooperation Unit of the Ministry of Planning and Development facilitates the linkage between technical cooperation initiatives and national priorities. In this regard, dissemination of information on technical cooperation opportunities to Public Sector Agencies and Civil Society is a primary function. The goal is to improve efficiency of allocations and ensure the full utilization of resources in fulfillment of national development objectives.

## **Facilitating Urban Development**

### **Chaguaramas Development Authority**

The assets of the Chaguaramas Peninsula hold vast potential for development initiatives and investment opportunities. The Chaguaramas Development Authority has responsibility for development and management of the peninsula.

Over the period 2006-2008, the assets of the Peninsula will be marketed nationally, regionally and internationally. Environmental conservation and enhancement, forest rehabilitation, golf course improvement and expansion as well as improvements to the physical infrastructure and eco-tourism projects will be actively pursued.

A fully operational **National Heritage Park and Cultural Village** will be established and beaches are being developed to cater for local visitors. In this regard, upgrade of Williams Bay and re-sanding and beautification of Chagville Beach can be cited.

### **The Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago**

The Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago (UDeCOTT) is facilitating the regeneration of the city of Port of Spain as a business and financial centre. The Corporation also contributes to the development of other urban centres. It further seeks to facilitate Government's thrust for development of the Tourism Sector through implementation of projects for the medium-term.

Over the period 2006-2008, UDeCOTT will be actively involved in the implementation of the **Port of Spain International Waterfront Project**. This Project involves: construction of the **Association of Caribbean States (ACS)** building; construction of two office towers; and construction of the Hyatt Hotel. One component of this Project, which involves construction of the new Breakfast Shed has already commenced.

## V. Facilitating the Policy Agenda

The Corporation is also involved in the construction of Government offices. In this regard, construction is ongoing on the Ministry of Public Administration and Information Building at St. Clair. Also, construction of the Government Office Campus Plaza, which includes Customs and Excise Headquarters, the Board of Inland Revenue Tower, the Ministry of Legal Affairs Tower, the Ministry of Education Head Office and a multi-storey car park, will be completed within the period 2006-2007.

Construction of units for allocation and disposal by the Ministry of Housing in accordance with Government's thrust for affordable housing is continuing in the following areas:- Lady Young Road, Oropune, Champs Fleurs, Olera Heights, Coconut Grove in Trinidad and Bleinheim, Roxborough and Castara in Tobago.

In support of the thrust for preservation of our historical buildings, work is ongoing on the refurbishment of Stollmeyer's Castle and the refurbishment of the Mille Fleurs building.

In respect of developing the sporting infrastructure, UDeCOTT is involved in the construction of the **Brian Lara Stadium**, which will be ready for the ICC warm-up matches in 2006.

## c) Foreign Policy

### The Caricom Agenda

The wide-ranging Agenda, which engages the attention of CARICOM Member States, like Trinidad and Tobago, illustrates the economic, trade, political and social issues facing the Region. These include:-

- Deepening of the integration process through the establishment of the **CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME)**;

- Facilitating of the free movement of university graduates, sports persons, musicians, artistes and media workers throughout CARICOM;
- Development of CARICOM relations with the Russian Federation and India and strengthening of relations with China, Japan, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Venezuela, the United States of America and Canada;
- Establishment of a mechanism to deal with common resources in CARICOM (such as fisheries and energy resources);
- Strengthening regional agriculture for sustainable growth and development;
- Formulation of feasible options for implementation of recommendations of the **Prime Ministerial Expert Group on Options for Governance in the Caribbean Community**; and
- Co-operation in security matters where Trinidad and Tobago currently retains responsibility.

### The Americas

With respect to the Foreign Policy Agenda pertaining to the Americas, during 2006, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will focus on :-

- i. Preparations for the Thirty-Sixth Regular Session of the General Assembly of the Organisation of American States (OAS) in 2006;
- ii. Preparation and liaison with line Ministries for sectoral meetings under the auspices of the OAS, in particular, meetings on issues pertaining to corruption, legal matters and terrorism (**Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism, CICTE**);



## V. Facilitating the Policy Agenda

- iii. Follow-up on decisions taken at Hemispheric, Regional and Sub-Regional Meetings to ensure compliance; and
- iv. Preparation of briefs for missions conducting promotional visits in connection with Trinidad and Tobago's bid to host the **Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA)** Headquarters.

### Europe

The general thrust of bilateral relations objectives in this regard, is to promote Trinidad and Tobago in Europe through:-

- Trade, Business and Investment Facilitation;
- Marketing of Trinidad and Tobago's cultural products in Europe; and
- Exploration of avenues for technical cooperation with key European countries in order to strengthen national capacities in strategic areas.

In addition, an assessment will be undertaken with respect to the establishment of diplomatic ties with Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Iceland, Lithuania, Macedonia FYR and Malta.

Government will also seek to re-evaluate, with a view to boosting the relationships between Trinidad and Tobago and the United Kingdom, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway and Sweden.

Over the medium-term, Government will undertake a strategic assessment of Trinidad and Tobago's relationship with Europe with a view to:-

- Evaluating the results of the current respective bilateral agendas;
- Identifying strategic ways in which Trinidad and Tobago could increase its profile in Europe as well as in the various European based international organisations; and

- Evaluating the efficacy of the current deployment of diplomatic missions in Europe given the scope of existing and projected relations and current national objectives and the enlargement of the European Union into Central and Eastern Europe.

With respect to Spain, which has become increasingly important in the European Union, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will pursue the accreditation of the Trinidad and Tobago Embassy, Brussels to the Kingdom of Spain while ensuring that Spain follows up on its intention to establish an Embassy in Trinidad and Tobago.

In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will continue to support the initiatives of its European missions to advance trade and economic opportunities for Trinidad and Tobago business enterprises through participation in Trade Fairs such as the Aroma Fair in February 2006, the ACP Trade Exhibition on the margins of the 2006 ACP Summit, flower shows in Chelsea and Hampton Court and to promote Trinidad and Tobago's products, its culture and its music to markets in the diaspora.

The High Commission in London will continue its business outreach and trade and investment initiatives, utilising as far as possible the assistance of its honorary consuls in various European cities to identify companies, businesses and individuals with an interest in investing in Trinidad and Tobago.

### Africa, Asia, Middle East And The Pacific

#### China

Implementation of the following agreements will be monitored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs over the medium-term:-

- Cultural Agreement;
- Framework agreement on draft banking arrangements pursuant to an Agreement on Economic

## V. Facilitating the Policy Agenda

- and Technical Cooperation signed in 2003; and
- Agreement on Mutual Exemption of Visas.

Other matters to be pursued include:-

- Commencement of negotiations on an Air Services Agreement between the two countries;
- Conclusion of the Treaty on the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes and Income; and
- Grant of 1 million Renminbi Yuan to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

### India

Implementation of the following agreements will be monitored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs over the medium-term:-

- Conclusion of draft agreement on the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments;
- Negotiation of an Air Services Agreement; and
- Finalization of a draft programme of cultural and educational exchanges; and

### Japan

Follow-up action with respect to the fisheries project between the Ministry of Agriculture and Japanese Government will be ongoing with a view to implementation over the medium-term.

### Nigeria

Initiatives regarding the Nigerian Republic would include:-

- Convening of the Second Session of the Trinidad and Tobago/Nigeria Joint Commission;
- Follow-up on the Bilateral Air Services Agreement; and
- Liaison with the Ministry of National Security on matters of military exchanges between the two countries.

### South Africa

With respect to South Africa, Implementation of the following agreements will be monitored:-

- Double Taxation Agreement;
- Reciprocal Visa Abolition Agreement;
- Draft agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation;
- Bilateral Air Services Agreement; and
- Draft Agreement on Cooperation in the fields of Art and Culture.

## Multilateral Relations

A main focus of Foreign Policy will continue to be issues pertaining to the United Nations and its Specialised Agencies, the Commonwealth, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77.

### United Nations Agencies

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will continue to work closely with the United Nations Agencies in Port of Spain with a view to ensuring that Trinidad and Tobago maximizes the benefits to the country of their presence here and continues to meet all its obligations under the United Nations including submission of reports and payment of assessed contributions.

The Ministry will continue to work with the relevant Ministries/Agencies, in particular the Ministry of Public Utilities and the Environment, to give effect to the measures of priority for Trinidad and Tobago contained in the Plan of Action adopted at the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

### Candidatures

The Ministry of Finance is engaged in discussions with the Ministry of National Security, the National Commission for UNESCO and the Ministry of Education on the possibility of submitting candidatures to the **Commission on**

## V. Facilitating the Policy Agenda

**Narcotic Drugs** and **UNESCO** in 2006. The proposed UNESCO bodies include the **Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme (IFAP)** and the **World Heritage Committee**.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will continue to engage in similar discussions with other Ministries with a view to developing a long-term strategy for the pursuit of membership on various international bodies. Such membership will enhance Trinidad and Tobago's international profile as well as its ability to influence policies, rules and regulations that emerge from within these bodies.

In keeping with the Ministry's articulated policy of ensuring that the interests of Trinidad and Tobago are protected and promoted within those international organizations to which Trinidad and Tobago belongs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will seek to enhance Trinidad and Tobago's representation on appropriate bodies by suitably qualified individuals.

### Protocol And Consular Affairs

A **Republic of Trinidad and Tobago Protocol Handbook** is proposed. This comprehensive document will capture all the information that will be of relevance and benefit to the diplomatic corps and members of staff of international organisations during their tenure in Trinidad and Tobago.

Training geared towards personnel such as immigration officers, customs officers and airport security officers who interface with members of the diplomatic corps will be designed and implemented to build awareness of the role of diplomats and the diplomatic corps and their privileges and immunities.

### Legal And Marine Affairs

Bilateral agreements to be negotiated include: -

- Maritime Boundary Delimitation Agreements with

- Grenada and with St. Vincent and the Grenadines;
- Trinidad and Tobago – Venezuela Unitisation Agreement for Cross-border Hydrocarbon Reservoirs;
- New Trinidad and Tobago-Venezuela Fishing Agreement;
- Trinidad and Tobago-Venezuela Extradition Treaty;
- Trinidad and Tobago-Venezuela Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance;
- Trinidad and Tobago-Costa Rica Extradition Treaty; and
- Re-negotiation of the Trinidad and Tobago-United States of America Bilateral Investment Treaty.

### International Trade And Economic Relations (ITER)

The programme for the promotion of Trinidad and Tobago's bilateral and multilateral trade agendas will focus on:-

- Active engagement of diplomatic missions resident in this country to identify and develop trade and investment opportunities for this country abroad;
- Negotiation of Bilateral Investment Treaty between Trinidad and Tobago and India;
- Exploration of trade and investment opportunities in the newly independent Eastern European Countries;
- Negotiation of increased market access and more beneficial 'Special and Differential Treatment' for Trinidad and Tobago in the multilateral trade environment through the Geneva Mission at the World Trade Organisation and bilaterally with Canada, China, Colombia, India, Costa Rica and Brazil;
- Collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources to facilitate the negotiation, by the representatives of the Mission

## V. Facilitating the Policy Agenda

in Geneva, of the most beneficial arrangements for this country in the Agricultural Sub-Committee at the WTO, to realise increased market access for this country's agricultural products;

- Continued liaison with the Ministry of Trade and Industry to provide officers at the Geneva Mission with comprehensive briefs in the areas of Services, Investment and Non-agricultural Market Access, to facilitate the negotiation of optimal benefits for this country.

- Close partnership with the **United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** to ensure that this country maximises the exploitation of available trade facilitation assistance from this body; and

- Identification of niche marketing opportunities through this country's missions abroad, for high quality agricultural products, including cocoa and rum, cultural products; carnival, steel-pan, chutney music and the tourism product.

- Building institutional capacity in the Tobago House of Assembly and the Ministry of Public Administration and Information; and
- Assessment of the readiness of the Public Sector to embrace information technology.

The Ministry of Public Administration and Information is also engaged in developing policies to support the **Public Service Transformation Process** including:-

- Philosophy and Policy for Value for Money;
- Policy on Innovation in the Public Service;
- Policy for Monitoring and Evaluation in the Public Service;
- Policy for Retention and Exit at the Executive Level of the Public Service; and
- Policy for the Management of Change in the Public Service.

## d) Public Administration

### Public Sector Reform

The Ministry of Public Administration and Information has taken the lead in implementing a number of key initiatives aimed at achieving the goal of public service reform.

The **Public Sector Reform Initiation Programme** was launched in March 2004, with a series of studies, some of which are expected to be completed during 2006. These studies will form the basis of the strategy which will guide the reform process throughout the public sector. The Programme also encompasses some initiatives which will directly improve the capacity of the Public Sector in key areas, namely:-

- Institutional strengthening of the Central Statistical Office;

### Human Resource Management

#### Career and Succession Management

The Service Commissions Department, the Personnel Department, the Ministry of Public Administration and Information and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), will continue to collaborate to implement new mechanisms for career and succession management in the public service. With the assistance of the **Public Service Commission of Canada, Assessment Center** processes were utilized in 2004-2005 for selecting candidates for positions of Deputy Permanent Secretary. The assessment process will be completed for the first group of candidates in the latter part of 2005. Activities in 2006/2008 will include assessment operations for additional groups and competency-based training and development programmes.

#### Scholarships and Advanced Training

The **Scholarships and Advanced Training Division (SATD)** has established a website for generating wider public access of its services and enhancing communications with its stakeholders.

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The Division will move to further improve the delivery of service to its clients as follows:-

- Development of a **Scholarship Information System** enabling the computerization of scholar and scholarship records; and
- Provision of competency training to staff to improve job performance and service delivery.

The Division is taking a proactive approach in its research and HRD assessment needs and also in its ability to perform an enlarged consultative, auditing and advisory role in order to:-

- Ensure that the public is provided with an enhanced service;
- Increase public awareness of scholarship opportunities offered by/through the GORTT; and
- Maximise the investment in Government Scholars.

Some of the strategies include outreach seminars with current and future scholars as well as workshops at the secondary school level for prospective scholars.

### HR Policies and Systems

The Personnel Department is committed to creating appropriate policies for the management and maintenance of the human resource function in the Public Service and to developing systems and strategies to aid implementation of those policies. Some of the new/updated policies, systems and strategies are intended to assist in the transformation of the Public Service through the promotion of strategic human resource management practices. Others are aimed at improving the capacity of the Public Service to address workplace and work life issues which impact on productivity, thereby enhancing the performance of the HRM function so as to achieve optimal levels of service delivery.

The establishment of an **Employee Assistance Programme** is a critical human resource strategy geared

toward improving productivity in the Public Service, restoring employee well-being, ensuring satisfactory job performance and providing for the safety and security of all employees.

The establishment of a system for the conduct of HR Audits and the development of a programme for Competency-based Management are intended to promote a consistently high quality of service delivery in the administration of the human resource management function in Ministries and Departments.

### Creating a Knowledge-Based Society

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the context of Vision 2020 will not be viewed as a purely productive sector but one that will contribute to the development and creation of knowledge that will redound to the acceleration of social and economic development. This will essentially mean the adoption of a holistic and cross-sector strategy aimed at harnessing the uniqueness of ICT to advance a wider development process.

Over the period 2006-2008 activities will continue on three main tasks :-

- Implementation of the **National Information and Communication Technology (NICT) Plan**, otherwise known as **fastforward**;
- The development of the institutional and regulatory – framework, necessary to effectively and efficiently oversee the expansion of domestic ICT sector, notably the telecommunications sub-sector; and
- Improvements in access to library services. Measures pertaining to the organizational development of an appropriate policy planning and programme management system are expected to take center stage in 2006.

Implementation of Programmes and Projects under **fastforward** will accelerate over the medium term, especially in 2006 as a result of the operationalisation of

## V. Facilitating the Policy Agenda

the ICT Division. The first phase of the implementation strategy will see the immediate commencement and continuation of consultancies in the following areas:-

- ICT Government and Management;
- Community Access;
- SchoolNet;
- Broadband Strategy and Implementation;
- E-Commerce/E-Business Development (Business -to-Business (B2B) Pilot);
- E-Government Portal;
- Legislative Review and Reform; and
- Promotion and Awareness.

These eight (8) activities are known as **Pathfinder Projects** and are essential design and foundation components to map out the implementation of **fastforward**. They will comprise research studies, assessments, proof of concepts and pilots.

The second phase of implementation will include further research of best practices, feasibility studies and assessments, pilots, comprehensive design initiatives and roll-out and extension of the Pathfinder Projects from the first phase. Projects have been identified for further development and commencement over the three year period, some of these projects are:-

- **Community Connections:** An operational project to roll out the design developed under the Community Access Pathfinder Project;
- **Knowledge, Innovation and Development (KID):** Extension of the SchoolNet Project to other schools in collaboration with the Ministry of Education;
- **E-Government Portal:** Roll-out of phase 1 of the Portal Project;
- **LibraryNet:** A pilot to move to high speed connectivity in twenty-two (22) public libraries will be conducted along with continued research and development into digitization and on-line distribution of music and video articles and archives;

- **Integrated Justice Network:** A pilot network integrating Ministry of National Security, Defence and the Judiciary will be developed; and
- **Computers for Communities:** The design of a programme to equip and maintain computers in communities, schools and libraries.

### Job Evaluation

The Personnel Department is continuing its efforts to improve the remuneration packages of Government employees. In order to achieve the vision of developed country status by the year 2020, it is essential for the Public Service to be in a position to compete for the best talent available in the country. The conduct of Job Evaluation Exercises is one of the means of achieving that objective.

Following the completion of the Job Evaluation Study in the Civil Service and Statutory Authorities in 2003, activities in the wider Public Service commenced in 2004. The project is scheduled for completion by May 2006.

Job Evaluation Exercises in respect of daily-rated workers in both the Port of Spain and San Fernando City Corporations are due to commence shortly, while the on-going exercise in the Sugar Cane Feeds Center is nearing completion.

### Public Sector-specific Policies/ Guidelines

As Employer, the **Chief Personnel Officer** has responsibility for ensuring that there is adherence to legislation governing the management of workplace events. To this end, sector-specific policies and guidelines are being developed to complement national policies on **Occupational Health and Safety** and the management of persons living with HIV/AIDS and other life-threatening illnesses. These policies and guidelines will be made available when all national policies are in place.

### Library Services

The **National Library and Information Systems Authority (NALIS)** will continue to direct its attention to providing high quality and information services to the people of Trinidad and Tobago. Accessibility will be enhanced by:-

- Increasing the number of service points in the country through the provision of new facilities and bookmobiles;
- Using ICT to achieve efficiency in the delivery of information; and
- Increasing collections at both the national and branch libraries. These collections will be available in a variety of media to cater for all persons.

### Government Information Services

The **Government Information Service, Information Division** will restructure and upgrade its services to operate more efficiently and effectively in a technologically advanced and changing communications environment. It will develop a strategic plan to transform and improve the structure of the Division and complete a re-engineering exercise.

## e) Telecommunications

The governance of the Telecommunications Sector will be a shared responsibility between the Ministry of Public Administration and Information, through the ICT Division responsible for policy, and the **Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT)** as the regulatory agency. The Ministry will have ultimate responsibility for sector development. The Division, in the short-term, will be staffed with the necessary capacity to review, monitor and evaluate policy measures and strategies as well as to perform oversight functions in respect of the Telecommunications Authority.

Over the medium-term, TATT will finalize and implement its five-year Strategic Plan. An immediate priority will be the formulation of its financial management system, which will seek to establish the rules and procedures for the charging of fees for any concession or licence and the charging of fees for any service that it provides, all in accordance with the **Telecommunications Act No. 4 of 2001**.

TATT will commence in the medium-term, a review of its interim organizational structure with the aim of creating permanent posts on the Authority's establishment and the establishment of a pension plan.

Due to constraints in 2004 and 2005, which have since been addressed, implementation of the **Telecommunications Liberalisation Programme** was severely affected. The institutional capacity will be improved through the adequate staffing of the Policy, Pricing and Research Division of the Authority. In the 2006-2008 periods, efforts will be accelerated to advance the execution of the following project components:-

- Development of IT Support Systems for TATT;
- Development of a **Universal Service and Implementation Plan**; and
- Development of an **Advanced Automated Spectrum Management System (AASMS)**.

The development of the AASMS will be a continuation from 2004-2005 where external consultants assisted the Authority in creating a **Frequency Allocation Table (FAT)**, a precursor for deploying an AASMS. TATT has already prepared a draft **Spectrum Management Policy and Spectrum Regulations**.

Continuous economic analysis and performance review of the ICT sector, domestic and international, will be done in collaboration with the ICT Division, Ministry of Public Administration and Information. TATT is expected to complement the Division's proposed **Sectoral**

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**Performance Management Framework**, which aims to establish benchmark indicators to track the progress of NICT Plan implementation and the results in relation to sector development.

Government in 2004-2005 established a **Technical Advisory Committee** to review the relationship with Telecommunications Services of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (TSTT). The Report of this Committee was accepted and a Negotiating Team was appointed. This Team will pursue negotiations with Cable and Wireless Limited in order to advance the process of liberalizing the Telecommunications Sector.

### Communications And Information Technology (CIT)

The Ministry of Public Administration and Information has a mandate to re-invent and reshape the Public Service through Information and (Network) Communications Technology (ICT) Programmes and Projects. Its efforts to strengthen its internal Communications and Information Technology Services through the provision of desktop computers are substantially completed and/or underway and nearing completion in eleven (11) of its fifteen (15) divisions. Other projects for 2006/2008 include information sharing and work activity collaboration systems.

### f) Local Government

Over the period 2006-2008, Government will take a multi-faceted approach towards the development of Municipal Bodies and the process of Local Governance taking into consideration the overriding objective of obtaining developed country status by the year 2020, with mission and vision statements that set people as priority.

In this regard, the Ministry of Local Government is working towards the acceptance, adoption and adaptation of the recommended policies of the **Vision**

**2020 Sub-Committee for Regional Development and Sustainable Communities**, for which the focus is on transformation and renewal of society at the level of the fourteen (14) Municipal and Regional Corporations of Trinidad and Tobago, and the creation of sustainable communities whose residents are able to access their needs for adequate housing, social facilities, physical infrastructure, recreation and employment opportunities either within or in close proximity to the community. The Draft Report of the Sub-Committee for Regional Development and Sustainable Communities articulates a framework for sustainable development at the community level and it incorporates the following elements:-

- Employment and job creation;
- Education;
- Health and Wellness;
- Transportation;
- Safety and Security;
- Housing and Shelter;
- Water;
- Infrastructure and Utilities;
- Wealth;
- Recreation;
- Food Security;
- Positive Values and Attitudes;
- Healthy Environment; and
- Spirituality.

For 2006-2008 therefore, Government, through the Ministry of Local Government, will continue to focus on developing communities through effective policy guidance, facilitation and monitoring of Municipal Bodies in a network that promotes constructive partnerships and wide participation in governance issues.

### Local Government Reform

Government has as its leading policy initiative in the Ministry of Local Government, the “Policy on Local Government Reform” that was laid in Parliament as a Green Paper entitled “**A Draft Policy Paper on Local Government Reform 2004**”, and which is being taken



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through the advanced stages of the policy development process. This policy sets out strategy for the continued reform and modernization of Local Government in Trinidad, and advocates:-

- Legislative Reviews;
- Re-definition of the roles of the Ministry and the Municipal Corporations;
- Re-definition of boundaries;
- Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Building;
- Delegation of operational activities from the Ministry of Local Government to the Corporations; and
- De-linking of the regional corporations from the administrative structure of the Ministry of Local Government.

### Decentralisation Initiatives

The role envisioned for the Local Government System in the medium-term is one where Municipal Corporations will be armed with a larger measure of authority through decentralisation. The newly re-activated Decentralization Unit is charged specifically with the task of facilitating the decentralisation process. To this end, the Decentralisation Unit has made great strides towards intensifying the decentralisation process and is in the process of obtaining approval for its staff establishment as well as Cabinet approval for the **Report of the Local Government Inter-ministerial Transitional Task Force on Functions and Responsibilities to be Decentralized to Local Government Bodies** among other initiatives.

### Legislative Review

The need for legislative review will be a priority over the medium-term, given the current decentralization thrust of the Ministry of Local Government which will enable corporations to achieve greater financial self-sufficiency

by working towards establishing Property Assessment and Collection Units in nine (9) Regional Corporations.

### Sustainable Community Development

In the provision of physical and social infrastructure, the **Local Area and Regional Planning and Development Unit** of the Ministry of Local Government will seek to provide a framework for Municipal development that uses as benchmarks the **Sustainable Community Indicators** developed by the Town and Country Planning Division and Regional Development and Sustainable Communities Committee, which was adapted by the Sub-Committee on Regional Development and Sustainable Communities. (Box 5:1)

Government has therefore recognised the need for a multi-product approach to Municipal development and has proceeded through the Ministry of Local Government, to develop policies and formulate standards and programmes of actions for the following areas:-

- Municipal Roads and Drainage Infrastructure;
- Recreational Facilities;
- Public Baths and Conveniences;
- Heritage Parks;
- Local Area, Regional and Rural Development;
- Burial grounds/ Cremation Sites/ Crematoria;
- Markets and Abattoirs;
- Play Parks;
- Local Bridges; and
- Landslips Rehabilitation

In addition, Government is intent on encouraging wider stakeholder participation for all areas of policy-making regarding Municipal development so as to encourage a sense of pride, ownership and acceptance of all policies, programmes and projects created.

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### Box: 5.1 Sustainable Community Indicators

INDICATORS	TARGET
<b>HEALTH FACILITIES</b>	
Health Centers	1/2,000 dwelling units (du)
<b>EDUCATION FACILITIES</b>	
Nursery Schools	1/200 du
Primary Schools	1/400 du
Secondary Schools	1/2,500-3,000
<b>RECREATION FACILITIES</b>	
Park/Playlot	1/20-200du
Neighbourhood Recreation Ground	1/600 du
Sub-Regional Recreation Ground	1/2,000 du
<b>HOUSING</b>	1 du per household
<b>PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICE (INCLUDING SHOPPING)</b>	0.4 ha per 200 du 2.0 ha per 1000 du
<b>INCOME</b>	>\$623 per month/household
<b>UNEMPLOYMENT</b>	<10%
<b>WATER</b>	90% households with piped water to du
<b>CRIME</b>	Zero tolerance and 25% reduction/ year

### Infrastructure

The Ministry of Local Government will carry out its programme of infrastructural works based on the programmes and systems of standards that have been produced by the policies developed in the areas identified above.

Furthermore, it is intended that infrastructural programmes would have a multi-fold effect on communities. **The Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP), Road Improvement Fund (RIF)** and the newly created Infrastructure **Renewal Improvement and Development (IRIAD) Programme** are aimed at upgrading and constructing community infrastructure, while employing community members and encouraging entrepreneurship. These three (3) capital programmes will continue together with efforts to transform Local Government infrastructure by undertaking works such as road building and refurbishing, improvement to markets and abattoirs, drainage works, construction of bridges,

development of recreation grounds, and upgrading cemeteries and cremation facilities. (Box 5:2)

While addressing the visible problems affecting communities, Government will afford opportunities to a new phase of entrepreneurs. In this regard, small contractors would be encouraged to bid for and carry out projects in their community. It is also proposed that community labour will be utilised for the execution of these projects. The generation of employment will raise the level of community income, while increasing the entrepreneurship skills of its members. Additionally, the **Unemployment Relief Programme** is now geared towards construction type projects in a bid to afford a greater level of skills transfer to participants, while providing them with short-term unemployment relief and contributing to the development of the nation's infrastructure.

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### Community Safety

#### Community Health

The Ministry of Local Government, through the Municipal Corporations will, by way of its preventative health functions, continue to address the problem of community health and conditions of poverty, which are often, exacerbated by poor sanitation and poor access to safe water and health services.

#### Disaster Preparedness

Being prepared for natural disasters can reduce fear and anxiety as well as the losses that accompany such occurrences. At the local level, Government will continue to bolster its emergency procedures at the Municipal Corporations and work with the **National Emergency Management Agency** to mitigate the hazards of floods, landslides, hurricanes and other symptoms of adverse weather conditions.

#### Municipal Policing

Over the medium-term, Government will seek to improve municipal policing through a strengthening of its ranks as well as providing municipal police stations, vehicles and equipment. Municipal Police carry out policing functions as well as other responsibilities outlined in the **Municipal Corporations Act No. 21 of 1990** and its related amendments.

### Institutional Strengthening

The Ministry of Local Government recognises the importance of the need for good organizational performance and as such has planned several programmes of activities with respect to human resource development, administrative operations, staffing matters, and accommodation issues over the medium-term. Training programmes would include building capacity in areas such as project management, organisational development, information systems management, teamwork, municipal taxation, as well as taking advantage of foreign technical assistance opportunities. In addition, human resource

#### Box 5:2 The Tapana Quarry

The Ministry is cognizant of the fact that the increasing price of aggregate materials has driven the cost of construction upwards, and has therefore reduced the overall amount of projects possible given the average level of funding received. It is in this regard that the Ministry of Local Government has sought to re-establish and rehabilitate its quarry and aggregate processing operations at the Tapana Quarry.

development will continue to be addressed through the provision of training in key areas for administrative staff, technical staff, and clerical staff as well as Local Government practitioners.

Organizational performance will also be bolstered through the filling of vacant posts as well as the creation of those that are needed for efficient and effective service delivery. In this regard, the creation of the posts of Chief Officers for the Regional Corporations, as mandated by the Municipal Corporations Act No. 21 of 1990 is paramount, as well as the filling of those posts for the newly reactivated Decentralization Unit, the Municipal Police Units, the Property Assessment and Collection Units as well as all other functional units of the Ministry of Local Government.

### Information Technology

Technological transformation is an essential aspect of organizational performance. The objective therefore is to continue to develop the information technology structure for the Ministry of Local Government and the Municipal Corporations. A key goal for the medium-term, is to complete installation of **Local Area Networks (LANs)** in all the Municipal Corporations, thereby facilitating a **Wide Area Network (WAN)** enabling the free flow of information and improving communication links between the Ministry of Local Government and the Municipalities. Additionally, the implementation of Information Systems for Human Resource Management, Financial Management, Electronic Data Communication, Payroll, and the Collection of Rates and Taxes will be continued.

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Also included in the programme of works for the medium-term is the development of a **Voice Over Internet Protocol** and **IP Telephony System** that would enable improved communications and greater data flows, reduced charges for long distance calls, and lower operating costs without sacrificing quality .

### Municipal Buildings And Staff Accommodation

The provision of adequate accommodation for staff of Local Government bodies is inextricably linked to greater organisational performance, effective service delivery, the furthering of the decentralisation process and the move toward greater decentralisation of functions.

Over the medium-term therefore priority would be given to the construction and upgrade of **Municipal Buildings** as well as better accommodation for head office staff. In this regard, Government will:-

- Construct eight (8) Administrative Buildings for the Municipal Corporations;
- Upgrade five (5) Administration Buildings for the Municipal Corporations; and
- Provide a new Head Office for the Ministry of Local Government.

### Local Government Awareness

Government recognises the importance of community empowerment and proposes to continue to encourage greater participation by local citizens in municipal affairs. By involving communities in the planning and implementation of projects and by conducting meetings of council in strategic areas of communities, Government will effectively increase civic awareness. Additionally, communities will be engaged on a wider scale through a greater level of information dissemination regarding the activities of Local Government. This will be accomplished through a wider use of various forms of media including newspaper, radio, television and the internet. The

establishment of a **Media Production Unit** is aimed at providing this capacity.

Additionally the Ministry of Local Government will create an internet presence on the World Wide Web. This website will greatly facilitate the provision of information to citizens on a wide variety of topics and activities related to their municipality, as well as providing ways to strengthen transparency and implement the principles of good governance.

### Unemployment Relief Programme

The Unemployment Relief Programme (URP) affords a temporary income to families in cases of employment distress, by making available to them, short-term unemployment relief while enhancing the skills of individuals in the community and developing, maintaining and improving the physical and social infrastructure.

The Vision of the URP is for a community-oriented mechanism to empower people through employment opportunities, skills enhancement and the undertaking of sustainable development initiatives. The effective decentralization of the Programme via twelve (12) regions in Trinidad, seeks to empower the citizenry within communities.

The Unemployment Relief Programme (URP) continues to be a major support for the unemployed, providing 60,000 jobs between September 2004 and July 2005, effectively exceeding the original target by 4 percent.

The URP is comprised of:-

- **Core Programme** – which consists of construction and maintenance projects;
- **Women's Programme** – which focuses on the enhancement of the physical environment at Government institutions and properties; and
- **Special Projects** – which aims at providing projects of greater size and complexity than the

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Core Programme, and targets young and emerging entrepreneurs both as individuals and groups.

For the medium-term priority will be placed on re-introduction of a programme-wide training system and strengthening the administrative arm of the URP while improving its core processes to enable timely, secure and accurate salary systems as well as bolstering the effectiveness of its procurement mechanisms.

### Administrative Operations

With respect to administrative operations, it is proposed that the conduct of regular audits and financial evaluations of local government operations would work towards ensuring greater accountability, transparency and compliance with regulations, procedures and specifications for all departments in the Ministry of Local Government.

The URP will continue to ensure that it remains useful, relevant and productive by affording short-term unemployment relief to those families experiencing employment distress, while enhancing the skills of individuals in the community as well as developing maintaining and improving the physical and social infrastructure of these communities.

### g) Intellectual Property

Intellectual Property policy has as its primary objective the facilitation of investment and the promotion of industrial development. Accordingly, the mission of the Intellectual Property Office is:-

“To stimulate research and creativity within the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago by providing intellectual property rights and the legal means for their protection and encouraging the public disclosure and the effective use of accurate information on creative effort thereby enhancing the competitiveness and

contributing to the economic and social development of the people of Trinidad and Tobago.”

With respect to Intellectual Property, the principle strategies to be applied over the medium-term are:-

- Improving the administration of the Intellectual Property System;
- Heightening awareness and use of the Intellectual Property System; and
- Facilitating the enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights.

These strategies are expected to result in an Intellectual Property System that allows the people of Trinidad and Tobago and local and foreign investors to more effectively determine whether their intellectual effort is being exploited within Trinidad and Tobago. The system will meet all the requirements of the international trade community and will be harmonised with international systems.

These strategies will also result in a reduction in the costs incurred in undertaking research and in accessing and acquiring technological solutions to industrial problems in Trinidad and Tobago.

### h) Consumer Rights

The centerpiece of Government’s policy on consumerism for the period 2006-2008 will continue to be consumer empowerment. As such, Government will focus on creating the social and economic environment to ensure consumer safety and equity and the development of educated and assertive consumers, fully knowledgeable of their rights and responsibilities.

The critical initiatives that will be pursued to support the achievement of this policy objective are:-

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- Updating the Legislative Infrastructure;
  - Vigorous enforcement of existing legislation;
  - Upgrading redress capacity;
  - Vigorous networking among local and international Consumer Protection Agencies;
  - Intensification of the **Consumer Outreach and Education Programme**;
  - Structured Interface with key sections of the Business Community; and
  - Updating the **National Consumer Profile**.
- Increasing consumer confidence in the marketplace through fair and transparent rights and responsibilities;
  - Enabling technological and e-commerce innovation and growth; and
  - Ensuring that the country is an attractive and competitive location for existing and new business investment.

### Development Of New Consumer Legislation

Trinidad and Tobago's framework of consumer laws varies in age from statutes drafted in the late 19th century to others brought into force approximately twenty (20) years ago. The major consumer laws enforced today are the:-

- Adverse Trade Practices Order 2000;
- Consumer Protection and Safety Act, 1985 (as amended);
- Trade Descriptions Act, 1984;
- Goods Act, 1985 (as amended);
- Hire Purchase Act, 1957; and
- Unfair Contract Terms Act, 1985.

While these laws afforded the consumer some degree of coverage in the past, the marketplace has changed rapidly in the last twenty (20) years leaving gaps in the protections afforded by today's consumer laws. Developments such as trade liberalization, globalization, and the advent of the internet and e-commerce, are changing the very nature of the way consumers and businesses interact. The upcoming **Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME)** will also increase the need for current and harmonized consumer laws in the region.

Modern and flexible consumer protection laws can serve as a catalyst for:-

The process for developing this new legislation involves several steps. The first of which was the preparation of a draft Green Paper. The Green Paper highlights the weaknesses and inadequacies of the old legislation and gives proposals for the new legislation. Currently, Public Consultations are taking place throughout the country in order to gather the views and opinions of the citizens of the country. This process is scheduled to be completed in September 2005 and it is anticipated that legislation will be laid in Parliament by December 2006.

### Enforcement

**The Consumer Protection & Safety Act No. 30 of 1985** creates the office of the Director of Consumer Guidance which establishes the legal framework for the operations of the Consumer Affairs Division (CAD). The Act provides for the making of Safety Regulations, Prohibition Orders, Adverse Trade Practice Orders and sets out the offences for any breaches.

The **Adverse Trade Practices Order, 2000** is the only Order made to date under the **Consumer Protection and Safety Act No. 30 of 1985** and it targets specific trade practices which adversely affect the economic interests of consumers. The **Trade Description Act No.7 of 1984** seeks to protect consumers and honest traders alike against the misleading practice of mis-describing goods supplied in the course of trade.

In order to ensure vigorous enforcement of the Consumer Protection and Safety Act, the following procedure will be adopted:-

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- Commercial practices within Trinidad and Tobago will be reviewed and those which are adverse to the economic interest of consumers identified;
- Information and advice would be published in accordance with Section 43 of the **Consumer Protection and Safety Act**;
- The CAD will conduct public awareness programmes to educate and inform both suppliers and consumers of their legal obligations;
- The development of codes of practice among the respective trade industries and sectors will be encouraged;
- Requests will be made for letters of satisfactory written assurance from suppliers pursuant to Section 21 of the Consumer Protection and Safety Act; and
- Legal proceedings against suppliers/traders for failure to comply with letters of assurance will be instituted.

In order to ensure vigorous enforcement of the **Adverse Trade Practices Order** and **Trade Description Act**, the following procedure will be adopted:-

- Commercial practices within Trinidad and Tobago will be reviewed and those in contravention of the laws identified ; and
- Legal proceedings will be instituted against suppliers and traders for contravention of any of the provisions under the legislation.

### Redress Capacity

In seeking to enhance and upgrade redress capacity, over the medium-term, Government will seek to:-

- Enhance the team of “redress” personnel by increasing the number of Consumer Advocates; and
- Make services more accessible by establishing offices in other locations.

### Networking

The CAD has recognized that it can only succeed in its mission to create an enabling environment for consumer empowerment, if the Division can successfully network and achieve coordination in the development and implementation of programmes and agendas among the key consumer protection agencies locally and internationally. To this end, the Division is represented on the various committees of local agencies like the TTBS and the CFDD. Internationally, the CAD participates fully in the various activities of organizations like Consumers’ International, and SOCAP. The Division will continue to adhere to this strategy during the period 2006 to 2008 and will aggressively seek out opportunities to deepen and widen the relationship among consumer protection agencies.

### Interface With The Business Community

The CAD has established a series of Ministerial Standing Committees on key sectors of the national economy. The Division has been using these committees as a key element of its strategy for fostering an environment of mutual respect and trust among business, consumers and Government. These committees serve as a mechanism for the continuous interaction with key players in the respective commercial sectors. Through these committees, all parties have the opportunity to confer on important developments affecting consumers and take appropriate corrective action to treat with such occurrences. Over the medium-term, the CAD will redouble its efforts at increasing the effectiveness and output of these standing committees.

### National Consumer Profile

In 1997, a consumer profile study was undertaken by the CAD to obtain a substantive profile of consumers in Trinidad and Tobago. Given the fact that this study was the first of its kind, the information obtained was useful to the development of policy direction, education

## V. Facilitating the Policy Agenda

programmes and research projects all aimed at addressing the needs of the consumer.

Over the last seven (7) years, however, both globalization and liberalization have led to the increased involvement of the local economy in the sphere of trade, financial flows, technology spill-over, information networks and cross-cultural activities. These developments have also led to health and safety concerns as well as environmental issues.

### i) Registration

#### Land Registry

Implementation of the automation of the **Real Property Ordinance (RPO)** records entails the creation of a database with all existing titles; provision of the facility of maintaining and updating related transactions; creation of new Real Property Ordinance; and the bringing of lands under the Real Property Ordinance.

Each parcel of land in Trinidad and Tobago will be assigned a **Unique Parcel Reference Number (UPRN)**. The UPRN will be the tool for quick and accurate title searches. The UPRN will be the link to the databases across Ministries which provide information relating to the parcel of land.

#### Moveable Property Registry

The Moveable Property Registry (MPR) shall be a fully electronic registry where notices of all secured transactions pertaining to moveable property will be managed and maintained. The MPR shall register all such transactions and provide information on same via remote registration and search facility to all Credit Organizations. The Registry will support the **Credit Bureau** by providing debtor information.

#### Box 5:3 The Population Registration System

Implementation of the Population Registration System (PRS) entails the capturing of all members of the population and issuing each person with a PIN (Personal Identification Number) which will be the key used in identifying all citizens and residents. All persons are to be issued with a PRS Card. Access to the system will be given to all Ministries and Government Agencies based on their requirements and use of the information.

Maintenance of the PRS entails the implementation of related legislation which will allow for the Registrar General's Department to access information from other Ministries and to keep the PRS current.



# VI. Human Capital Development

- a) **Basic Education**
- b) **Tertiary and Technical and Vocational Education**

## a) **Basic Education**

Education is the key to sustainable development and an indispensable means to prepare citizens for effective participation in societies that are constantly challenged by the impact of globalization.

Cognizant of this, Government continues to ensure that every citizen has access to a well functioning Education System that is tailored to meet the needs of a contemporary society. (Box 6:1)

Government has identified four (4) strategic objectives necessary for the development of the country's human resources. These objectives are:-

- i) Accessibility to education opportunities for all;
- ii) Delivery of quality education to citizens at all levels of the Education System;
- iii) Sustainable policy development for the Education Sector; and
- iv) Continuous alignment of strategic direction in the Education System with objectives set for National Development.

### **Schools Construction Programme**

#### **Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Centres**

In an effort to make educational opportunities accessible to all citizens at every level of the education system, Government is moving apace with its school construction programme.

#### **Box: 6.1 - Programmes & Projects**

Over the medium-term, Programmes and Projects for the transformation of the system, will include:-

- Construction of new ECCE centres;
- Modernization of curricula at all levels;
- Establishment of a system of Heads of Department and senior teachers at primary and secondary levels;
- Reform of the system for teacher education and continuous professional development;
- Vigorous literacy drive under the aegis of the **Center of Excellence for Teacher Training (CETT)**;
- Strengthening and expanding student support services;
- Adoption of modern methods for testing and assessment;
- Minimising the educational gap for special needs students;
- Restructuring of the school supervision system;
- Introduction of a Quality Assurance System;
- Development of indicators to continuously assess, measure and evaluate student achievement throughout the system;
- Implementation of **Local Schools Boards** in primary, secondary schools and ECCE Centres;
- De-shifting and conversion of junior and senior secondary schools;
- Implementation of the **School Net Programme** and the continuation of full computerization of all schools;
- Enhancement of adult education programmes through distance learning;
- Rehabilitation, expansion and technical upgrade of one hundred and nineteen (119) secondary schools;
- Replacement of dilapidated primary schools;
- Repair of primary schools;
- Increase access to post-secondary education;
- Provision of infrastructure for Information and Communication Technology and Tech Voc Education;
- Restructuring of the Ministry of Education - establishment of seven (7) district offices;
- Introduction of Substitute Teacher System; and
- Introduction of a Pilot Magnet Programme.

## VI. Human Capital Development

Over the period 2006-2008, forty-three (43) centres will be constructed on a phased basis. Thirteen (13) centres in Phase I will be completed by the end of 2006. During Phase Two, thirty centers will be constructed starting in 2006. As part of its plans for a seamless education system, these thirty (30) centres will be constructed on lands available on the compounds of existing primary schools. This project is now at the stage of prototype design with designs for thirteen (13) centres completed to date.

### Primary Schools

Fifty (50) primary schools will be re-constructed. Refurbishment work under the **School Repair Programme** will continue at primary schools throughout the country.

### Secondary and Sixth Form Schools

The programmes consist of:-

- deshifting of Junior Secondary and conversion of Senior Secondary Schools;
- construction of new secondary schools;
- construction of 'A' level colleges; and
- the technical upgrade, expansion and rehabilitation of facilities at existing secondary schools.

Review of designs to reflect the physical infrastructural requirements for delivery of the new curriculum which now includes Physical Education, Technology Education and Visual and Performing Arts was completed. Forty-four (44) secondary schools will be upgraded over the period 2006 to 2008.

### Deshifting and Conversion

The programme of deshifting and conversion of junior and senior secondary schools will continue over the period 2006 – 2008. Master plans for twenty-five (25) junior and senior secondary schools were completed during 2005 in preparation for commencement of construction in fiscal 2006.

### Box 6:2 New ECCE Centres

Thirteen (13) centres will be constructed in the following districts:

- Ortoire;
- Toruba;
- Sangre Grande;
- Carapichaima;
- San Juan;
- Arima;
- Laventille;
- St. James;
- Morvant;
- La Puerta;
- Lopinot; and
- Diego Martin.

### Box 6:3 The SEMP Programme

Expansion of ten (10) secondary schools under SEMP and FBEP is planned at:-

- Matura High School;
- Coryal High School;
- Valencia High School;
- Tableland High School;
- Debe High School;
- Waterloo High School;
- Mazanilla High School;
- Brazil High School;
- Cunupia High School; and
- Blanchisseuse High School.

### Box 6:4 The Educational Facilities Company Limited

A limited liability company was established in order to expedite the school construction and refurbishment programme. The Educational Facilities Company Limited will be responsible for the procurement of design, construction and management of projects under the Ministry of Education. The company will become operational in September 2005. The staffing establishment was approved and the company is now in the process of hiring staff. The process of developing a scope of works and terms of reference has also begun.

## VI. Human Capital Development

In order to meet the demands for sixth form places, a plan was formulated to achieve increased access, quality and equity in advanced proficiency. The plans includes the following strategies:-

- the purchase of 'A' level places at private institutions where necessary;
- the upgrade and expansion of facilities at existing Government and Government-assisted secondary schools including Polytechnic Sixth Form and Corinth Sixth Form Schools; and
- the construction of four (4) new 'A' level colleges e.g. Vessigny and Rio Claro.

At present, of the existing one hundred and thirty-five (135) secondary schools in Trinidad and Tobago sixty-four (64) offer 'A' Level/CAPE programmes catering for eight thousand and eighteen (8,018) students, i.e. 14 percent of the relevant age cohort. It is expected that twenty one thousand, one hundred and thirty (21,130) students i.e. 40 percent will benefit from the implementation of these initiatives.

At the secondary level, four (4) new schools are to be built in Malabar, Mt. Hope, Barataria and Curepe.

Expansion work planned for ten (10) secondary schools built under the Secondary Education Modernization Programme (SEMP) and Fourth Basic Education Programme will commence in 2006.

### **Magnet Schools**

Given the development of new learning styles, Government recognizes the need to provide students with new avenues for learning.

Government will therefore provide students with the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to society through the establishment of magnet schools.

### **Box 6:5 - Magnet Schools**

The objectives of the pilot Magnet Programme in schools include the following:-

- To prepare students for further education and the world of work;
- To provide opportunities for achieving excellence through diverse delivery modalities mechanisms;
- To enhance the teaching and learning environment by incorporation of specialists in the instructional process;
- To provide adequate resources to allow students to conduct research and problem solving activities in the real world context;
- To pursue a specialized programme in one of the curriculum areas identified;
- To provide field based and hands on learning experiences;
- To integrate and maximize the use of technology throughout the school, curriculum and school administration;
- To foster closer co-operation and collaboration with the larger community; and
- To foster positive self concept and to enhance school ethos.

The primary objective for establishing Magnet Schools is to provide students with the opportunity to pursue a general education while at the same time engage in specialized activities suited to their various interests and abilities. The idea is that students will choose Magnet Schools according to their interests.

Apart from emphasizing student-centered learning and individualized instruction, Magnet Schools will be built on the philosophy of excellence and superior student achievement.

Initially, the Programme will target the following areas:-

- Visual and Performing Arts;
- Physical Education;
- Information and Communication Technology;
- Business;
- Languages;
- Sciences; and
- Technical and Vocational Education.

## VI. Human Capital Development

The Programme will be implemented from in academic year 2005/2006 at sixteen (16) schools, two (2) schools from each Education District. (Box 6:5)

### The Total Quality System Model

As the reform of the education system continues, the issue of improving and maintaining educational quality is thrust to the forefront. Government has embarked on a quality initiative to ensure that the minds of all learners in Trinidad and Tobago are guided towards self-actualization, and that they develop the necessary skills, attitudes and attributes to make a productive contribution to the development of the society. Central to this endeavour is the development of a Quality Assurance Policy that will guide the formulation of national standards for the operation of all schools and ECCE centres.

The **National Standards of Education** will provide the following:-

- A working consensus on major issues of education such as responsibility, norms and values, relevance, opportunity, rights and equity;
- A consensual framework for governance encompassing all categories of schools and learning establishments for school-age children; and
- A framework for governance for all schools in Trinidad and Tobago.

A Quality Assurance Unit is being set up and implementation of the plan will commence in 2006. In recognition of the fact that teachers play a crucial role in the functioning of a quality Education System, plans are in train to professionalize the entire teaching service. Towards this end, a Working Committee was established to consider the relocation of the programme to tertiary level and to consider issues such as recruitment, training, professional development, licensing and certification of teachers.

### Curriculum Modernization

Concomitant with the reform of the system is the need for a new curriculum that is more reflective of the learning needs of a diverse student population. To this end, curriculum documents for Forms I to III in eight (8) subject areas were completed and piloted in the classroom. Following completion of the review process, final documents will be prepared for distribution to schools.

Draft curriculum guides for Forms IV to V in eight (8) subject areas have been developed and are being distributed.

In addition, as part of the drive to support the implementation of the new curriculum at primary and secondary schools, these schools are to be supplied with textbooks and resources.

### Testing and Assessment

Efforts are ongoing to strengthen the teaching and learning process at the primary level. Assessment of Standard I and III students continues with the annual conduct of the **National Test** in Language Arts and Mathematics, the results of which are used to address the weaknesses in the performance of students in Mathematics and Language Arts.

The **Continuous Assessment Programme (CAP)** at the primary level has been strengthened with the hiring of four hundred and eighty three (483) school clerical officers. These officers were contracted for a three-year period and assigned to primary schools at the start of the new school year September 2004, to assist Principals with clerical duties especially as they relate to the CAP. The objective is to ease the administrative burden of Principals so that they could offer more pedagogical support to their teaching staff.

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Forms for data collection have been revised and converted into electronic mode. Works will continue in 2006 on the creation of an Education Management Information System (EMIS) for monitoring the system and for the easy retrieval and analysis of data.

### Literacy

The **Caribbean Center of Excellence for Teacher Training (CETT)** was established to address the issue of illiteracy affecting the system. To date, the Programme has targeted pupils from the Infant Level to Standard II. From an initial start of twenty-five (25) schools the Programme has expanded to sixty-one (61) schools throughout the country and includes three (3) Teacher Training Colleges.

Many education systems rely on their performance in the international arena to gauge the performance of their own systems. Trinidad and Tobago is no different and plans are in train for the country to participate in **Progress in International Reading Literacy Survey 2006 (PIRLS)**. Ministry of Education personnel have attended and will continue to participate in overseas training workshops as part of this country's preparation for the survey. Field test documents were completed and 1,200 students participated in a pilot test in April 2005.

### Secondary Level

Steps were taken in 2005 to improve the system of assessment and certification of school graduates. The **National Certificate of Secondary Education (NCSE)** Level I was piloted in eight (8) subject areas in thirty three (33) secondary schools. Implementation of NCSE is expected to come fully on stream in June 2006.

Nineteen (19) schools which commenced the **Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)** curriculum in 2004 advanced to year two (2) examinations in May/June 2005. Fifty two (52) additional schools sat year one examinations in May/June 2005. Full implementation of CAPE is scheduled for 2008.

A **National Examinations Authority** is to be established over the period 2006-2008. A sub-committee was set up and has developed the relevant policy. The first stage of the implementation plan has started. The Authority is to be fully established in 2006.

### Student Support Services (SSS)

In order for students to be fully engaged in their learning and benefit from the education system, a wide variety of student support services has been implemented. These services include psycho-social, diagnostic, guidance and counselling services to schools. The services are administered by the Student Support Services (SSS) Division.

During 2005, services were available to fifty-eight (58) primary schools in eight (8) educational districts with support staff treating six hundred and ninety two (692) primary school students for various personal/social and learning concerns. Phase II will be implemented in 60 additional schools during the academic year 2005/2006. There will be an increase in staff to include school social workers and psycho-social staff.

### HIV/AIDS

The pandemic of HIV/ AIDS continues to pose a serious threat to our human resources and the education system. During the fiscal year the SSS Division undertook the following initiatives:-

- Completion of a five-year strategic plan to guide the actions in this area;
- Establishment of a management structure to co-ordinate the strategic plan;
- Increase awareness among eight thousand (8,000) students at twenty five (25) secondary schools;
- Conduct of the HIV/AIDS Programme through the Drama Association at forty (40) secondary schools;

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- Establishment of abstinence clubs at thirty (30) secondary schools; fifteen (15) more clubs to be established by the end of 2005. Fifteen more clubs to be established over the medium-term. A coordinator will be hired for National Aids Council to increase awareness and advocacy in school.

### Text Book Rental

The **Textbook Rental Programme** was expanded to include a maximum of eight (8) textbooks, dictionaries, atlases, CXC papers and syllabuses. As a result of this, access to the **Book Grant Programme** has been limited to first year 'A' Level students for academic year 2005/2006.

### School Violence And Indiscipline

The issue of a safe and secure learning environment for the nation's children has been addressed through the hiring of two hundred and seventy eight (278) School Safety Officers for Secondary Schools with the senior comprehensive and other high risk schools receiving top priority.

A joint venture between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of National Security to address the problem of indiscipline among students has yielded some measure of success and will continue in the future.

Achievements include:-

- **School Safety Officers** provided at all government secondary schools throughout Trinidad and Tobago (2 officers per school);
- A **Vacation Training Programme** was completed in July/August, 2005. Officers with ongoing post deployment training in areas relevant to their functions, roles and responsibilities.

A number of initiatives were completed by the **School Intervention Strategies Unit** in order to address school indiscipline including:-

- Approximately fifteen thousand (15,000) students were trained in conflict resolution;
- Eight hundred (800) teachers in twelve (12) secondary schools were trained in anger and stress management; and
- Six (6) homework centers were established and one hundred and ten (110) students and six (6) facilitators were trained in 2005.

Based on the outcome of a consultancy to address violence and delinquency in secondary schools, follow-up research activities were conducted in ten (10) schools in 2004 and research works has commenced in twenty (20) schools in 2005/2006. The objective is to develop a blueprint for discipline in schools to inform changes in the culture of schools towards peace and stability.

### Box 6.6: Other Initiatives Of The School Intervention Strategies Unit

- Reclaiming the classroom alternatives to Corporal • Punishment.
- Parenting Education.
- Together We Light the Way.
- Out of School Suspension
- Alternative Education Programme (skill based).
- Driver Responsibility Education.
- Project School Safety Officers.
- Establishment of 102 Students Councils.

### Institutional Strengthening

#### Local School Boards

Attempts to strengthen the relationship between the school and community were further enhanced with the implementation of Local School Boards in sixty eight (68) secondary schools as at September 2005. The final twenty three (23) Local School Boards were inaugurated in September 2005 to assist Principals in the management of the schools and to ensure community and student participation in schooling. A Planning Committee was established in 2005 to assist in introducing local school boards in government primary schools and ECCE

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### Box 6:7 Tertiary Education Science & Technology Objectives

- To develop an internationally competitive labour force that is well educated and knowledge driven, with a strong scientific, technological, engineering and entrepreneurial capability;
- To establish an equitable and effective education system;
- To create and maintain relevant and responsive tertiary education and training systems;
- To empower civil society to participate individually and collectively in improving the quality of life;
- To promote education that fosters social harmony amidst diversity;
- To develop an education system that promotes attitudes, values and behaviours for a sustainable future;
- To build a National Innovation System (NIS) that encompasses all the existing and new STI institutions and mechanisms, both public and private so as to allow for an efficient, productive, symbiotic partnership between Government, the human resource development and training and research and development institutions, as well as the industrial and financial sectors, so as to build a competitive economy;
- To increase substantially public and private sector investment in research, development and innovative activities so as to promote industry competitiveness, sustainable development, social well-being and national capacity building in STI; and
- To engender a culture of Science, Technology, Engineering and Innovation at all levels of society.

centres. The Committee has made recommendations on the structure, composition, duties and responsibilities of local school boards as well as presented various models for governance of schools by boards.

### Decentralisation

During the period 2006-2008, the Ministry of Education will continue with the implementation of its Decentralisation Plan, which is designed to achieve better organization, performance, and management of schools and a higher level of effectiveness throughout the system.

The major activities over the year 2006, with respect to the decentralization thrust, are as follows:-

- Continuation of the roll out of Local School Boards in Government Primary Schools and all ECCE centres;
- Alignment of decentralization efforts of the Ministry of Education with the national goals and objectives and the reform thrust of the Government;
- Continued implementation of a comprehensive training plan to develop capacity within the Ministry of Education at the level of the school education districts and Head Office;
- Development and implementation of a change management plan, a physical resource plan, a financial plan and a system for outsourcing of services;
- Institutionalization of the system of **School Based Management**;
- Continuous monitoring of projects being implemented; and
- Modernization of the Information Management System to support the various reform initiatives.

### Legal Unit

The Legal Unit of the Ministry of Education (MOE) will be fully established in 2006. The Unit will continue to guide the legislative framework required to support the reform of the education system. To date the Unit has guided the following pieces of legislation to be laid in Parliament in 2005:

- The Education (Local School Board) Amendment Regulations 2005; and
- The Education Amendment Act 2005.

In 2006 the Unit will undertake a comprehensive reform of the Education Act.

The unit will also work to facilitate the smooth transition into and the proper functioning of the many new initiatives of the restructured MOE.

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### b) Tertiary And Technical And Vocational Education

With respect to Science, Technology, Tertiary and Technical/Vocational Education, Government is in the process of developing its policy framework which takes into account:-

- A **National Accreditation System**;
- Relevant, coherent, coordinated and affordable tertiary education and training of a high quality;
- A seamless education and training system;
- Funding mechanisms for tertiary education;
- An **Integrated System for Science, Technology and Innovation (STI)**. (Box 6:6)

The Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education in looking at its strategic thrust, has identified the major components as:-

- Finalizing and implementing the **Tertiary Education, Training, Distance and Lifelong Learning Policy**;
- Developing the Seamless System of Education and Training to widen and deepen access to tertiary education;
- Expanding tertiary access to achieve a participation rate of 60 percent by 2015, (an average of 14 percent per annum);
- Managing the expansion and articulation of **The University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT)** and **The College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago (COSTAATT)** to rationalize necessary access to quality tertiary education programmes that meet the needs of industry, commerce and civil society;
- Recognising and rewarding advancements and achievements in the Tertiary Education Sector through a **National Awards Scheme**;
- Establishing National Funds for managing growth and development in the Tertiary Education

#### Box 6:8 - Science, Technology & Tertiary Education Objectives

- To develop an internationally competitive labour force that is well educated and knowledge driven, with a strong scientific, technological, engineering and entrepreneurial capability;
- To establish an equitable and effective education system;
- To create and maintain relevant and responsive tertiary education and training systems;
- To empower civil society to participate individually and collectively in improving the quality of life;
- To promote education that fosters social harmony amidst diversity;
- To develop an education system that promotes attitudes, values and behaviours for a sustainable future;
- To build a National Innovation System (NIS) that encompasses all the existing and new STI institutions and mechanisms, both public and private so as to allow for an efficient, productive, symbiotic partnership between Government, the human resource development and training and research and development institutions, as well as the industrial and financial sectors, so as to build a competitive economy;
- To increase substantially public and private sector investment in research, development and innovative activities so as to promote industry competitiveness, sustainable development, social well-being and national capacity building in STI; and
- To engender a culture of Science, Technology, Engineering and Innovation at all levels of society.

and Science and Technology Sectors;

- Realigning technical and vocational education and training programmes of different Ministries to work with the Ministry of Science Technology and Tertiary Education to meet quality standards for education and training;
- Building the **National Accreditation System** to ensure that all post-secondary and tertiary level institutions and programmes meet Government quality standards;
- Approving and implementing a policy for STI and establishing the **National Council of Science, Technology and Innovation (NCOSTI)**;
- Furthering the development of occupational standards of competence for all key economic sectors to train the labour force in Trinidad and Tobago;



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- Analyzing the national labour market needs to signal occupational trends for human resource development; and
- Establishment of a **Tertiary Education Council** to advise on medium to long term strategies for the development of the Tertiary Education Sector.

In going forward, emphasis will be placed on life long learning and life skills that equip citizens with positive self esteem and social interaction and coping skills.

### Accreditation

In the period 2006-2008 the **Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT)** will focus on the policy areas of quality assurance, quality enhancement and regulations. To prepare for full legislative implementation of Act No. 16 of July 2004, several programmes and activities will be pursued during fiscal 2006, these include:-

- Development of Regulations for Act No. 16 of 2004;
- Promulgation of standards for registration and accreditation and development of quality criteria for tertiary educational institutions and qualifications;
- Development of linkages with international accreditation bodies;
- Development of a mechanism for specialised accreditation at the national and regional levels in collaboration with established professional bodies;
- Publication and dissemination of information and promotional material on ACTT and the services available; and
- Participation in regional initiatives and activities related to furtherance of the objectives of CARICOM and the CSME in the context of developing appropriate policies and procedures to facilitate the movement of skilled labour throughout the region.

In the area of accreditation, Government will provide reliable, accurate and up-to-date information to all

stakeholders to enable quality choices in the selection of institutions of higher learning. This will be facilitated by the creation of an effective **Accreditation Information System** that will be available to all stakeholders. Additionally, the Council will evaluate, monitor and improve the quality standards achieved and maintained by tertiary institutions.

To achieve quality assurance, the ACTT will ensure that its services comply with **International Quality Assurance Standards** and will establish links with foreign accrediting and regulatory bodies for tertiary/higher education. The competencies of administrators of tertiary institutions will be developed and enhanced to design, implement and evaluate internal quality assurance systems within the tertiary sector. Competencies in international benchmarking for quality assurance will also be strengthened.

### Policy Development

For 2005-2006, the **Green Paper on the National Policy on the Development of Tertiary Education Training and Distance and Life Long Learning Policy** will be published for public consultation.

The **Seamless Education and Training System** will remove all barriers to education and training and recognize learning achieved at all levels. A comprehensive review of the governance, administrative and legislative requirements is already being undertaken. Government remains committed to a seamless system and is working towards a draft policy that will be published for public consultation.

### National Council For Science Technology And Innovation (NCOSTI)

The Ministry of Science, Technology & Tertiary Education is considering a proposal for the establishment of NCOSTI. Some of the strategies that are being recommended include:-

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- Review of the existing draft legislation for NCOSTI and the establishment of NCOSTI as a legal entity;
- Initiation of preliminary activities to be undertaken with respect to establishing the contestable funds;
- Development of the 5-year priority areas for STI;
- Securing broad agreement on a **National Research and Development Agenda**; and
- Development of a **Policy on Biotechnology**.

### The University Of The West Indies

Over the medium-term, The University of the West Indies will pursue several key objectives including:-

- Increased on-Campus enrollment to at least thirteen thousand, nine hundred (13,900) students by 2005/06 and fifteen thousand (15,000) students by 2006/07;
- Increased opportunities for continuing professional education via the **Evening University**, by the phased expansion of the taught masters programmes;
- Expansion and strengthening of the Distance Education Programmes with a shift to asynchronous delivery systems;
- Continued expansion of physical capacity to meet demand;
- Continuation of measures to improve student centredness;
- Enhancement of quality of the programmes through the maintenance of accreditation of professional programmes, revision of its BSc. and MSc. Engineering Programmes to meet new chartered engineer status;
- Strengthening research capacity through selected niches based on existing research strengths and the development of research networks and clusters of research teams;
- Strengthening of the **Information Technology and Library Information Platform**; and

- Continuation of the institutional strengthening in terms of efficiency and effectiveness.

### The University Of Trinidad And Tobago (UTT)

Between 2006 and 2008, through the UTT, the public tertiary education system is expected to be better poised to facilitate meaningful economic development, social transformation and mobility. Over the period, the institution will focus on two (2) principal areas:-

- i. Establishment of the UTT Campuses; and
- ii. Development of high level research activities in areas relevant to the growth and expansion of local industries and the national community.

In pursuit of these objectives, the main strategies will be:-

- Continuation of the construction programme and expansion of operating campuses at O'Meara, Pt Lisas, Chaguaramas, Wallerfield, Mayaro and Tobago;
- Integration of the John S. Donaldson and San Fernando Technical Institutes and the appropriate programmes under the umbrella of UTT;
- Increased enrolment in the various categories of programmes;
- Involvement of local industry in UTT's committees in the design and development of its programmes; and
- Development of alliances and partnerships with recognized and relevant international universities and training organizations.

Additionally, the UTT's Research activities will focus on areas relevant to the Nation's industrial and economic development such as:-

- Asphalt and by- products;
- Process engineering and operations;

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- Manufacturing competitiveness and technology;
- Natural Gas downstream opportunities; and
- Downstream production and primary metals.

### College Of Science, Technology And Applied Arts Of Trinidad And Tobago (COSTAATT)

COSTAATT, as an evolving institution, is committed to expanding access and improving the quality of programmes and services in order to meet the needs of the health sector, business, industry, state and students. The strategies that will be pursued over the medium-term include:-

- Delivery of remedial education courses to enable academically under prepared students to meet college matriculation requirements;
- Development of distance education capacity to facilitate access by geographically remote students and working adults;
- Expanding access to tertiary education for physically disabled and learning disabled students;
- Provision of alternate access routes for mature students through introduction of challenge examinations and prior learning assessment;
- Strengthening of COSTAATT's research capability to inform programme development, upgrade and/or review activities;
- Upgrading of plant and equipment and establishing maintenance programmes; and
- Establishment of career guidance and job placement services at all campuses.

### Trinidad And Tobago Hospitality And Tourism Institute

Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute (THTI) is poised to become the premier hospitality and tourism institute in the region and to developing the human resources capable of delivering quality products and services at international standards of excellence.

Towards this end, THTI's major thrust over the 2006 – 2008 period will be towards implementation of its three-year Capital Development Plan.

This plan involves construction of additional classrooms and dormitories, a training hotel and sporting facilities for students. The additional classrooms and dormitories will cater to the increased demand for places at the institution from both local and regional clients. The training hotel will allow for supervised hand-on training, similar to that received at institutions of this type internationally.

### Skills Development And Training

#### National Training Agency (NTA)

The NTA will focus in the medium-term on the following strategies:-

- Development of a cohesive and coherent technical and vocational education and training system by reviewing training policies and certification procedures in order to standardize evaluation and certification procedures, such as the TTNVQ and also work on the creation of the **Caribbean Vocational Qualification**;
- Expansion of the recognition of the TTNVQ as one of the pathways to skills training by assisting training providers to become approved training centers;
- Management of the **National Apprenticeship Programme** by setting regulations and standards, and facilitating the transfer of the responsibilities of BIT to NTA;
- Implementation of a quality assurance system for technical vocational education and training, working with the ACTT; and
- Promotion of the use of **National Occupational Standards** as a competency based tool for the development of training for industry, generating job descriptions and other job related specifications.

## VI. Human Capital Development

### Multi-Sector Skills Training (MuST)

During the period 2006-2007, MuST will expand its offerings in the Construction, Hospitality and Tourism Sectors. It will also introduce work-based training in the Agricultural Sector.

### Retraining

The Retraining Programme will continue to promote lifelong learning by retraining persons who have been displaced. It will equip individuals with new and transferable skills and develop in them the competencies required to function efficiently and effectively in a dynamic work environment. It will offer new and different skills that are not offered by other programmes and pursue the certification of trainees under the TTNVQ system.

The programme aims to have one thousand, two hundred (1,200) beneficiaries, nine hundred (900) in Trinidad and three hundred (300) in Tobago on an annual basis.

### National Energy Skills Centre (NESC)

The main areas of focus for the NESC will be:-

- The establishment of a head office in Point Lisas, inclusive of a training centre for the delivery of specialised craft and industrial programmes and the establishment of an additional training centre in Ste Madeleine;
- The establishment and delivery of training programmes in heavy equipment operations and linesmanship;
- Upgrading of a mobile training workshop to provide remote areas with access to training opportunities;
- Training in insulation application and aluminum welding to be introduced in 2006 to cater to labour demands in the construction and operation of the **Aluminum Smelter Plant**; and
- NESC will strengthen partnerships with industry and professional bodies with a view to providing the requisite certification or retraining services for

personnel in heavy equipment maintenance and repair and industrial training.

### Metal Industries Company (MIC)

In order for MIC to continue its vital role in the national developmental thrust and to harmonise with Government's Vision 2020, the Company must reinforce its human and physical resources. Over the next three years a number of building and training initiatives will be taken by the Board and Management of MIC to fully satisfy its mandate. The initiatives include:-

- Development of a comprehensive plan for the development of technology and continuing education centres throughout Trinidad and Tobago;
- Establishment of new MIC/HYPE/NSDP Centres at Pleasantville and Diego Martin in the first phase; and
- Expansion of facilities at Ste. Madeleine and Macoya.

### On the Job Training

The Programme will continue to make efforts to increase its placement of trainees, especially in the Private Sector. There will be an upgrade of the monitoring and evaluation systems as well as its database system. A tracer study will be conducted to determine the impact of the programme.

### The Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (YTEPP)

In the period 2006-2008, YTEPP will continue to offer skills training at the post-secondary level. In order to enhance their offerings, YTEPP will achieving this goal include:-

- Improve the curriculum;
- Construct two (2) daytime centers; and
- Offer more programmes at Trinidad and Tobago National Vocational Qualification (TTNVQ) level II.

### Science And Technology

#### **National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST)**

NIHERST is currently in transition, with the ultimate goal of being re-engineered to allow Science and Technology and Science Education to underpin Trinidad and Tobago's transformation into a developed country by the year 2020. Central to this future vision is the establishment of **NCOSTI** and the establishment of a **National Innovation System**, in order to develop a Science & Technology literate and innovative population, competitiveness businesses and a healthy environment. A permanent **National Science Centre** in Trinidad and a satellite centre in Tobago are also being proposed.

At the exhibitions that are staged as part of the community science weeks and the Creativity Workshops, samples of new and innovative teaching methods will be utilized to reach individuals that traditional teaching methods have missed. Public awareness of excellence in Science Technology and Innovation will be done through the use of the **NIHERST Awards for Excellence**.

#### **Caribbean Industrial and Research Institute (CARIRI)**

CARIRI will continue its work in facilitating the policy agenda in the specific area of Trade and Investment, for the 2006 -2008 period. The major objectives identified in this regard include:-

- Reinventing/re-engineering domestic enterprises to respond to global challenges;
- Ensuring a safe and healthy work and hospitable environment;
- Strengthening both the Small and Medium Enterprise Sector (SME); and Trinidad and Tobago's position as the Manufacturing Centre of the Caribbean.

In assisting domestic enterprises on environmental issues, CARIRI will continue an **Industry Sensitization Programme** to promote the adoption of **Cleaner Production Technologies (CPT)** and work on enhancing local food safety standards. In the later case, the Institute will be working towards establishing the only accredited toxicology laboratory in Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean.

In response to increasing concerns about the effects of non-biodegradable materials on the environment, CARIRI will be enhancing its capability by establishing a biodegradability laboratory to provide technical and advisory assistance to local and regional organizations.

CARIRI will also continue its work on a baseline study of Sewerage Treatment Plants (STPs) in an effort to address growing issues with the operation and maintenance of these facilities in the country. A baseline study has also been proposed for monitoring the quality of effluent from service stations.

#### **Institute of Marine Affairs (IMA)**

During the period 2005-2006, the IMA will improve its remote sensing and geographic information systems, in terms of their overall capability and data management. The IMA will also develop numerical environmental databases.

The international accreditation of IMA's analytical chemistry laboratories to the ISO/IEC 17025 Standard is in progress in collaboration with the **Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS)**.

IMA's on-going research projects include, the Coastal Conservation Project, development and curation of the reference collection of marine fauna, and fish age and growth studies.

## VII. Health And Wellness

- a) Health Care Services
- b) Management of Chronic Diseases
- c) The Health Sector Reform Programme

### a) Health Care Services

Government remains focused on achieving the goal of creating a health service that will set new standards of health care in the region, thereby ensuring citizens can enjoy long and healthy lives. Over the last fiscal year, a number of critical programmes were initiated with a view to providing an enabling environment for achieving Government's stated goals in these areas.

#### Organ Transplant

The **National Organ Transplant Programme**, which was launched in January 2005, will initially address unmet demand for kidney and corneal transplants. The Programme is governed by the **Tissue Transplant Act 2000** and its Regulations which allows for transplants from non-relative donors through donations of tissue before and after death. To facilitate this, a registry of volunteer kidney and corneal donors has been established, identifying persons whose organs are to be donated after death. A technical and ethics committee has been established to advise on all matters relating to transplants and to develop treatment and other protocols. In addition, a **National Unit for the Procurement, Storage and Distribution of Tissues** will be established by 2006.

#### Surgery

Over the period 2006-2008 the remaining backlog of surgeries and waiting time for elective surgery in the country is to be eliminated. Significant inroads have been made in the reduction of waiting lists for cataract, orthopedic, hernia, fibroid, joint replacement and certain gynecological surgeries. Reduction of Waiting lists in other areas such as plastic surgery and vitreo-retinal surgery are being addressed. So that by 2006 the waiting time will not exceed (3) months for any elective procedure.

#### Decentralization Of Service Delivery

The decentralization of service delivery and management to the **Regional Health Authorities** will continue to guide sector policy for service delivery, as the Ministry of Health, remains committed to making health care more accessible to citizens. As a result, the construction and refurbishment of health care facilities will continue. The construction of the Point Fortin and Scarborough Hospitals and the **National Oncology Centre** are projected to be completed by 2007, as well as a new wing of the **San Fernando General Hospital**. Construction of the remaining primary care facilities is projected for completion by 2008. These will be located in areas including San Juan, Barataria, Diego Martin, Carenage, Petit Valley, Debe, La Romain and Ste. Madeline.

Government will continue to provide the necessary tools and up-to-date equipment for health care professionals which will contribute to bringing us closer to our vision of good health for all. The five (5) major hospitals have already received state of the art diagnostic imaging equipment, such as mammography and MRI machines, X-Ray machines, mobile C-arm, Fluoroscopic systems, Fiberscopes and CT Scanners. Tenders for additional machines are in various stages of processing and are to be installed and commissioned over the period 2006-2008. These include equipment for health centres and district health facilities as well as the National Oncology Centre.

#### Training

In an effort to enhance the quality of health services delivery, the Ministry of Health is working with the Regional Health Authorities to provide qualified personnel in adequate numbers to staff all public health institutions through recruitment and training. The University of the West Indies has started a **Bachelor of Science Nursing Degree in Advance Nursing Practice** in 2005 with an initial intake of thirty students. The annual scholarship programme for doctors at the St. George's University will also continue to provide additional trained medical doctors to supply public health facilities. Ongoing post-basic specialist training of registered nurses in areas such

as Oncology, Intensive Care and Neonatal Nursing will provide support for the expansion of services provision in these areas. In support of the efforts underway to modernize and upgrade the medical records system, a certificate and diploma in medical records is to be offered through COSTATT. The training of an additional 150 Enrolled Nursing Assistants will continue while a new training programme for 50 Pharmacists Assistants will commence in January 2006.

### b) Management Of Chronic Diseases

Government is committed to providing the best quality care to the population and comprehensively addressing the leading causes of illness and death, with emphasis on management and control of chronic diseases.

Following the expansion of the **Chronic Disease Assistance Programme** to provide universal coverage to the population in need of the drugs, the focus will now be on upgrading the information systems to adequately manage and monitor the programme. Therefore all participating private pharmacies are to be computerized in order to ensure timely management of claims, distribution and inventory control. NIPDEC has been assigned responsibility of project-managing the exercise to its expected completion in 2006. The project will allow for real-time management by NIPDEC of inventory flows to pharmacies, monitoring of consumption, quick processing of claims and generation of timely reports. It will also provide useful demographic information on the incidence of chronic disease by districts.

#### **Cancer**

Development of the **National Oncology Programme** is currently underway with the collaboration of Canadian experts to effectively address the high morbidity and mortality rates due to cancer. The Programme will put in place a comprehensive approach to cancer care, made up of a series of integrated clinical programmes

which will not only treat cancer but address prevention, screening, education, home care and palliation. The National Oncology Centre, which is projected to open in 2007, will be the location from which the National Oncology Programme will be coordinated.

#### **HIV/AIDS**

In 1983 Trinidad and Tobago was among the first of the Caribbean Countries to be impacted by the HIV epidemic. Driving factors include stigma and discrimination, multiple partnering, early age of onset of sexual activity and low levels of condom use. Transmission is mainly via heterosexual intercourse. The **National Surveillance Unit (NSU)** reported a total of fourteen thousand, eight hundred and forty nine (14,849) HIV infections from the onset of the epidemic to May, 2005.

The epidemic has affected both rural and urban dwellers, adults, youth and children, and cuts across socio-economic groups in the country. HIV/AIDS morbidity and mortality have negatively impacted development at individual, household, sector, and national levels. Women account for 37 percent of all new infections, and within the 15-24 age group females account for 69 percent of new infections.

The **National AIDS Coordinating Committee (NACC)**, under the Office of the Prime Minister, is the multi-sectoral body charged with the responsibility of coordinating and monitoring the nation's response to HIV and AIDS. In the past, the response to the epidemic was led by NGOs, the Ministry of Health, and regional and international agencies. In 2003-2004 the Government of Trinidad and Tobago developed the 5-year **National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan 2004-2008 (NSP)**, which is the action framework that provides the basis for coordinating the work of all partners, and established an internationally-recognized mechanism (the NACC) to ensure that the response to HIV is well-coordinated and multi-sectoral in nature.

## VII. Health And Wellness

Since 2002, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has been providing Antiretroviral (ARV) Drugs to those in need at no cost. Currently, there are two thousand, three hundred and thirty four (2,334) persons who are living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in treatment and care. Of this number, one thousand, four hundred and twenty three (1,423) are receiving ARV therapy at the Eric Williams Medical Science Complex (pediatric services), Cyril Ross Nursery (pediatric services), San Fernando General Hospital (adult and pediatric services), Medical Research Foundation (adult services), Scarborough Hospital (pediatric services), and Tobago Health Promotion Clinic (adult services). This has resulted in a decrease in the reported mortality and morbidity due to AIDS over the past three (3) years. Additionally, there have been other encouraging signs: the National Surveillance Unit reported a decline in new HIV infections for the year 2004. These early trends support a sustained comprehensive effort that must be expanded to involve the entire national community.

Trinidad and Tobago's success will be monitored via indicators outlined in the National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan 2004-2008 (NSP). The two (2) primary goals of the NSP are to reduce the incidence of HIV infections, and to mitigate the negative impact of HIV/AIDS on persons affected and infected. Programmes and initiatives to arrest HIV in Trinidad and Tobago have been developed along the five (5) priority areas identified in the NSP. These are:-

- i) Prevention;
- ii) Treatment Care & Support;
- iii) Advocacy & Human Rights;
- iv) Surveillance & Research; and
- v) Programme Management, Coordination and Evaluation.

The overall prevention goal is to reduce the susceptibility of the population to HIV infection. Programmes will focus on:-

- Implementing HIV/AIDS/STI awareness campaigns for the general population;
- Implementing behavior-change interventions targeting vulnerable and high-risk populations;
- Improving the availability and accessibility of condoms;
- Strengthening the prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) programme;
- Building the capacity and expanding voluntary counselling and testing throughout the country to include establishing youth-friendly VCT centers; and
- Establishing set guidelines and policies for post exposure services and ensuring those services are available.

Treatment, Care and Support Programmes will focus on:-

- Implementing a national system for the clinical management and treatment of HIV/AIDS and improving access to treatment and care;
- Purchasing drugs and equipment at reduced cost; and
- Providing appropriate economic and social support to PLWHA and those affected by HIV and AIDS.

The objectives to address Advocacy and Human Rights Issues are to promote openness and acceptance of PLWHA in the workplace and in the wider community, and to create a legal framework that protects the rights of PLWHA and those affected by the disease. Programmes will focus on:-

- Developing national workplace policies within the public and private sectors;
- Creating a legal framework that protects the rights of PLWHA;
- Establishing a system for effectively monitoring human rights abuses and the identifying avenues for redress; and
- Sensitizing and mobilizing opinion leaders on HIV/AIDS human rights issues.



### Box 7.1: The National Aids Coordinating Committee

The NACC has the key function of advising Government on the issue of HIV/AIDS, and serves to coordinate the national response to the epidemic toward implementation of the National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan 2004-2008. The formula for success involves the strengthening of sector programmes, the brokering of partnerships across the spectrum of implementers and the establishment of improved national, regional and international communications and sharing of best-practices. In pursuit of the Government's comprehensive strategy to combat the threat of HIV/AIDS, the Office of the Prime Minister will continue to provide timely and substantial support to the NACC and its Secretariat.

Surveillance and Research Programmes will focus on:-

- Improving the existing surveillance systems within the public and private sectors;
- Strengthening the existing national laboratory services; and
- Supporting effective clinical, behavioral, and epidemiological research on HIV/AIDS and related issues, the results of which will help guide the development of targeted HIV/AIDS education messages, intervention strategies and policy development.

One of NACC's primary objectives is achieving national commitment, support, and ownership of the nation's expanded response to HIV/AIDS. Initiatives will focus on:-

- Establishing HIV/AIDS focal points within Government Ministries and AIDS Coordinating Units to provide further support in developing and implementing the Ministries' HIV/AIDS work plans;
- Mobilizing adequate and sustained financial and technical resources to support the implementation of annual strategic work plans, such as ensuring

there is sufficient budgetary allocations each year for successful implementation of HIV/AIDS projects within the Public Sector;

- Finalizing a monitoring and evaluation work plan; and
- Continuing to build the capacity among critical stakeholders, such as the NGO sector.

### Mental Health

The provisions for restructuring and upgrade of mental health services outlined in the **Mental Health Plan** will continue to guide activities in this area. Through the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Health and Dalhousie University in Canada, initiatives in mental health will focus during the period on specialist training to equip health-care workers with the tools to recognize and treat persons with mental disorders. There will be transfer of knowledge and resources to local professionals to guide the plan for the treatment of mental illnesses using a community based approach. Preparations are also being made for the re-establishment of the Psychiatric Ward at Port of Spain General Hospital.

These programmes will be supported by the Ministry's ongoing focus on primary care and prevention. The Ministry will continue to adhere to the principles of the **1993 Caribbean Charter for Health Promotion** in addressing the health needs of the population. In addition, the prevention and management of chronic diseases will address risk factors such as obesity and smoking through integrated primary care programmes at the community level supported by National Policy.

## c) Health Sector Reform Programme

An important goal of the Health Sector Reform Programme is the improvement of the quality of services provided by the Health Sector. While steady progress has been made in this area, further improvement is

## VII. Health And Wellness

expected to occur following the implementation of a number of key quality management programmes. Over the period, operationalisation of the **Health Services Accreditation Programme** will be emphasized, including development of **National Health Services Accreditation** legislation and establishment of the **Health Services Accreditation Council**. In addition, the **Quality Management Programme** and the **Risk Management System** will be strengthened and the **Quality Audit System** institutionalized. The Ministry is also in the process of developing a Sector Policy and strategy on **Health Technology Assessment** to guide the evaluation of health technology that is appropriate and relevant to the health needs of the population.

The restructuring of the Ministry of Health as “purchaser” of health services will continue, with strengthening of its legislative/regulatory, policy, monitoring and evaluation functions. Management systems development and establishment of national and regional information and surveillance systems are to be facilitated by the strengthening of the IS/IT capabilities within the health sector and the creation of vital networking and information sharing systems. The development and administration of a Ministry of Health website is also expected to occur by 2006.

### **National Health Insurance**

The establishment of viable strategies for the financing of health care is a major component of the Health Sector Reform Programme. The Ministry of Health is committed to the establishment of the National Health Insurance System (NHIS) as the primary means of financing health care in a manner that ensures equity, affordability and accessibility to the entire population. The System as envisaged will mandate the participation of all citizens with contributions from the employed and self-employed, with provisions being made by Government to cover the needs of the indigent and unemployed.

A National Health Insurance Unit has been established within the Ministry of Health to provide technical support in the introduction and implementation of the new National Health Insurance System. During 2006, the Unit will produce proposals for the basic package of benefits, a policy brief to inform legislative changes and an implementation plan. Over the period 2006-2007 a number of other critical elements of the system will be developed. These include the development of programme guidelines, administrative structures and procedures, and procedures for registration and monitoring. In addition, the benefits and services lists and areas for supplementary insurance are to be defined. The Unit will also determine the most appropriate method of financing based on principles of equity and universal access to health services. To support the introduction of the NHIS, public education in the form of a number of stakeholder consultations and town meetings are to be conducted during 2006-2007.

### **Alternate Care**

As part of the strategy for the rationalization and upgrade of services under the Health Sector Reform Programme alternate care programmes are to be established for the elderly and disabled children in public health institutions. The **Community Care Programme** is expected to manage, support and monitor the transfer of such persons to centers established within the community for the purpose of housing them and providing appropriate care. The Ministry is completing a survey of community care facilities and expects to complete the transfer of persons in need of care already identified to community care facilities.

## VIII. Social Development

- a) **Social Sector Policy**
- b) **Sport And Youth Affairs**
- c) **Community Development**

### a) Social Sector Policy

Over the period 2006-2008, the overall objective of Social Sector Policy will continue to be the promotion of social progress by providing social conditions that are conducive to continuous improvement in the well-being of the population. In particular, focus would be given to building the foundation for the attainment of Developed Nation Status by the year 2020. This would include activities which are closely linked to the five (5) developmental priorities for the Vision 2020. The family, as the core institution in society will be singled out for attention.

Vision 2020 asserts that as a nation, *“Trinidad and Tobago will be a united, resilient, productive, innovative, and prosperous nation with a disciplined, caring, fun-loving society, comprising healthy, happy and well-educated people built on the enduring attributes of self-reliance, respect, tolerance, equity, and integrity.”* Vision 2020 is built on the imperative of improved access to high quality goods and services by the general public – *“A poverty-free, inclusive society with mechanisms to prevent and treat vulnerabilities and create ample opportunities for self-actualization.”*

The two major social development priorities that have been identified for achieving this vision are:-

- i. **Developing innovative people** - a highly skilled, well educated people aspiring to a culture of excellence that is driven by equal access to learning opportunities; and
- ii. **Nurturing a caring society** – a healthy society in a sustainable environment where citizens are well educated, embrace diversity, have their basic and

special needs adequately and consistently met, and in which the national development process is further informed by these well articulated needs.

### The Family

Central to the achievement of these goals is the recognition of the family as the basic unit of society which impacts on and is impacted by the larger societal framework. As the bedrock of the society, the family is seen as contributing significantly to the growth, development and stability of the national community through its role as the primary agent of socialization, providing physical and emotive care to its members, and as a distributor and producer of goods and services. It is for this reason that policy initiatives in all sectors will be directed towards ensuring that families are empowered with the requisite resources, skills and support systems for healthy functioning.

All Ministries will be responsible for developing programmes and strategies that are directly and indirectly geared towards strengthening the family unit in Trinidad and Tobago, reviewing existing programmes and strategies to ensure that they are family-sensitive, and making appropriate adjustments where this is not the case.

Precedence will be given to ensuring the development of a more focused and coordinated approach to treat with family issues. The Ministry of Social Development will be a key player in coordinating these efforts, having recently submitted to Cabinet a Report on the **Status of the Institution of the Family** inclusive of recommendations and an action plan on behalf of a Cabinet-appointed **Multi-Sectoral Committee**.

In this regard, priority initiatives that will be undertaken by the Ministry of Social Development in the upcoming fiscal year will include:-

## VIII. Social Development

- The formulation of a **National Family Policy** through a collaborative approach;
- The design of infrastructure to identify and case-manage individual families, including counselling and decentralising of services;
- The design of a **National Parenting Programme**;
- The development of community outreach programmes that would sensitize citizens about services available to families; and
- A media blitz on rebuilding positive societal values, with particular attention to healthy family life.

### Development Of A Caring Society

The attainment of a caring society would require collective effort on the part of a number of social sector Ministries, as well as private and non-governmental organisation sectors.

According to the **Draft National Strategic Plan**, a caring society is evidenced by:-

- Low levels of poverty and efficient social services;
- Full employment in positive work environments;
- Adequate income and social protection for all citizens;
- Improved health care, wellness and lifestyles through the continuous modernization and development of the Health Sector;
- Access to safe, clean attractive and affordable housing by all citizens;
- Increased attention to youth and sport development, recreation and the special needs of the aged;
- Sustainable communities and regional development;
- Increased participation of citizens in civil society groups which actively contribute to the development process, to foster increased social cohesion and vibrant communities; and

- Equitable access to and control of resources by both men and women.

Over the medium-term therefore, focus will be placed on advancing those initiatives which have already begun and which have the potential to make a significant impact on the attainment of the above objectives. These include:-

- The decentralisation of the social services delivery system;
- The conduct of a **Survey of Living Conditions** to provide adequate data for the measurement of poverty on a regular basis;
- Reform of the **Social Welfare System**;
- Establishment of a mechanism for effective relations between Government and the Non-governmental sector;
- The conduct of social research on a number of issues;
- The implementation of a monitoring and evaluation policy for the social sector; and
- The development and implementation of a number of social policies to guide programme development such as the:-
  - National Policy on Ageing;
  - National Plan of Action for Children;
  - National Policy on Deportees;
  - Policy on NGO/ Government Relations; and
  - Policy on Persons with Disabilities.

### Philosophical Rationale For Policy Positions

Initiatives undertaken in the Social Sector are guided by the philosophy that economic development alone cannot bring about the much needed improvements in the well being of the citizens of our nation. Moreover, market forces on its own would not facilitate the equitable distribution of the nation's wealth. Government intervention is therefore necessary to accomplish some measure of distribution.

Consequently, sustainable human development with a focus on people-centered approaches is the path to development which has been adopted by Government. This approach places high value on principles of dignity, equity, equality, participation and empowerment. In addition, a concerted effort is being made to ensure that an acceptable balance is maintained with respect to expenditure on rehabilitative and developmental programmes as opposed to remedial type initiatives, with significant investments in the building of social capital.

### Major Issues For The Medium-term

The major issues to be addressed over the medium-term include:-

- Empowerment of families through the adoption of family focused approaches to social programming at all levels of national planning;
- Poverty alleviation through the development and implementation of a **Poverty Reduction Strategy** that includes a structured approach for the measurement of poverty on a regular basis, to enable proper targeting of programmes and assessment of progress;
- Promotion of social integration and inclusion of vulnerable and at-risk groups including persons with disabilities, older persons, socially displaced persons, at risk children, ex-prisoners and deported persons;
- Improvement of the system of delivery of social services to communities;
- Improved targeting of social programmes and services;
- Establishment of a system for monitoring and evaluating social sector programmes;
- Establishment of a structured approach to the provision of social services by civil society organisations and the Private Sector;
- Conduct of research pertaining to vulnerable and at-risk groups including, persons with disabilities, older persons, socially displaced persons, at risk children, ex-prisoners and deported persons;
- Building the capacity of Social Sector Ministries through institutional strengthening activities;
- Fostering democracy, social harmony and a culture of peace through the promotion of alternative dispute resolution;
- Facilitating the development of the legal framework for attainment of social development objectives;
- Building sound social infrastructure for development;
- Development of a **Social Charter**; and
- Fostering of positive values and attitudes and behaviors amongst our citizens through education.

### b) Sport And Youth Affairs

Sport and Youth development form an integral part of Government's social policy agenda. A key initiative in this area was the creation of enabling conditions through policy development initiatives outlined in the **National Policy Agenda for Sport and Youth Development**.

Over the medium-term, the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs will continue to align its strategic direction towards the attainment of Developed Nation Status by facilitating the implementation of measures outlined in the National Sport and Youth Policies. This year's activities were focused on youth empowerment, total participation and excellence in sport. The newly established **Sport Company of Trinidad and Tobago** began to initiate suitable programmes and address policy implementation activities with the Ministry and its sport partners. Definitive actions were also taken toward the establishment of a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) to implement action plans outlined in the National Youth Policy.

## VIII. Social Development

### Youth

The implementation process of the National Youth Policy and its accompanying Strategic Implementation Plan was continued with the conduct of a number of initiatives which included obtaining national consensus on the role and structure of the proposed **National Youth Council (NYC)** through the hosting of three (3) consultations in Trinidad and Tobago. A proposal outlining the role, structure, resources etc. of the PIU to oversee the implementation of the fifteen (15) Courses of Action set out in the Strategic Implementation Plan has been developed and is to be submitted for Cabinet's consideration.

In addition, the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs has networked with other stakeholders in mobilizing efforts to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Activities included the conduct of fourteen (14) **Youth Health Caravans** and facilitation of the delivery of programmes outlined in the **Five-Year National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS**.

Over the medium-term, Government will move decisively to address current problems affecting young people such as unemployment, crime and HIV/AIDS through youth development initiatives. These initiatives will include a cadre of youth programmes offered mainly at the community level such as **"Youth Health"** and **"Save the Youth in Marginalised Communities"** and at the National level, through the formation of a National Youth Council which would provide a forum for the advocacy of sustainable youth development through youth participation in governance and decision-making.

In keeping with the strategic objectives of its various policy initiatives, the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs will continue activities towards facilitating implementation of the National Youth Policy, National Sport Policy and the planks upon which Vision 2020 is predicated. These activities will center on the pursuit of a restructured delivery system for youth via CBOs and NGOs, the establishment of a PIU, to give life to the fifteen (15) courses of action

outlined in the Strategic Implementation Plan. Government will also continue to support the work of three hundred and fifty (350) registered Community Based Organisations and fifteen (15) National Youth Organisations.

### Sport

With the interim formation of the **Sport Company** in September 2005, the implementation of the Sport Policy has been diversified. The Company will play a key role in the implementation process including the management and maintenance of facilities, formerly under Caroni (1975) Ltd and the delivery of specific programmes. A working arrangement is expected to be developed between the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs and the Company to define parameters of programme implementation activities during the period of transition, pending the establishment of the Sport Commission.

The agenda for Sport also includes programmes for Youth, the provision of facilities for total participation in Sport, a functioning local **Anti-Doping Commission**; outfitting and commissioning the Sport/Youth Facility at Mayaro; construction of a sporting complex including a cricket stadium at Tarouba as well as a programme of hard surface court installation throughout the country, developing regional recreation grounds and conducting remedial works to the sport plant to keep it fully functional. Government will also continue to lend technical and financial assistance to support the work of fifty four (54) National Sporting Organisations.

The implementation of the imaT Project<sup>1</sup> will also be continued with the establishment of its Headquarters and associated databases as well as four centers in Chatham, Los Bajos, Malick and Port of Spain.

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1 Information Made Easy Through Technology (imaT) Centres introduced in communities to facilitate training, distance learning and information and internet access.

### c) Community Development, Culture And Gender Affairs

The Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs is one of the frontline ministries responsible for the identification, formulation and implementation of strategies for the administration of Government's policies in the critical areas of Social Integration, Individual and Community Empowerment, Poverty Alleviation and Gender Equity and Gender Justice in Trinidad and Tobago.

In the international environment, globalization and the response of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago will influence the ways in which programmes, projects and service delivery strategies are selected and prioritized. The establishment of a comprehensive information technology system is well advanced and when completed will link the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs not only to the information gateways of the world, but also to the heart of our communities and the E-Government backbone.

As Government prepares for the imminent launch of the Caribbean Single Market and the Economy, the **Community Skills Bank** will ensure that a database of skills exists and could influence decisions on the movement of our skilled citizens. Officials of the Culture Division have also been participating in consultations relating to a common Caribbean position in cultural negotiations.

In the local environment, Government's Vision 2020 will be pivotal to the area of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs. It is within this vision that the Ministry's mission emerged: *To partner with our community to identify and satisfy their needs through the provision of gender sensitive quality programmes and services, thereby achieving improvement in their standard of living.*

As the Ministry which is closest to the communities and the people at the base level of society, the implementation of the recommendations of the Vision 2020 Sub Committee on Regional Development and Sustainable Communities require a significant input from the various units of the Ministry. Similarly, the Ministry is key to the success of the proposed Reform of the Local Government System. The legal status of village and community councils and the revival, strengthening and registration of community groups fall within the mandate of the Ministry.

Community empowerment therefore gives rise to a number of programmes, projects and strategies which operationalize the intent of the Vision 2020. The institutional strengthening activities and the capacity building initiatives are generally aimed at regenerating communities and ensuring that the leadership is in place for facilitating local democracy and people's participation in decision-making. Through the community empowerment policy, NGOs and CBOs will become more involved in programmes and projects which are currently managed by units of the Ministry.

Resource support will be provided to expedite the empowerment process. Physical infrastructure support will be provided through the **National Self Help Commission, Community Development Fund (CDF)** and **Community Centres Building Programme**, under which one hundred (100) community centres are targeted to be built in the new financial year. Funding for training activities will be available from the various units of the Ministry. The C.A.R.E. and **CDF Grant Window** will also make funds available for financing projects initiated by NGOs and CBOs.

Besides facilitating the empowerment of communities and community organisations, Government will intensify its efforts to encourage and support the empowerment of individuals, especially in the areas of job creation and attitudinal change. In a two-pronged approach, citizens will benefit from the general skills development training programme, while vulnerable female heads of household

## VIII. Social Development

can access specially designed programmes at the Export Centres and other units/agencies of the Ministry.

### Gender Affairs

The policy on Gender and the Empowerment of Women is sensitive to the Millennium Development Goals, international declarations and conventions such as the Beijing Declaration and CEDAW as well as Government's strategic direction relating to gender equity and equality.

A **National Gender Policy and Action Plan** is being developed to provide the framework for addressing gender issues and the specific needs of women. The products already delivered are:-

- Six (6) sector studies;
- A Situational Analysis;
- The Draft Policy Document prepared by the consultants – the Centre for Gender and Development Studies, UWI, St. Augustine;
- A proposed five-year Action Plan; and
- An abridged version of the Draft Policy.

The steps to be pursued are:-

- The Reshaping of the Consultants Report;
- Preparation and Circulation of a discussion paper for public comments;
- Public education; and
- Revision of the Draft for the approval of Cabinet.

The Gender Division of the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs will continue to design and implement projects and programmes to narrow the gender gap. Besides gender specific education and training the Division will continue the following initiatives:-

- i. The **Women in Harmony Programme** through which women between the ages of 26 – 50

are trained in Agriculture and Elderly Care;

- ii. The **Non-Traditional Skills Training for Women**, which exposes women to a range of construction skills leading to employment in the construction industry; and

- iii. The **Defining Masculine Excellence Programme** which focuses on training male leaders to address gender issues affecting males, including promoting greater gender sensitivity among males.

The **Domestic Violence Programme** of the Gender Affairs Division is being integrated into Government's response to the broader problem of crime and deviance. The

**Domestic Violence Hotline** will continue to provide support and advice to members of households who are subject to abuse and neglect. The services of Drop In Centres in communities will also continue to provide on-the-spot assistance to clients. The net of services to minimize and prevent the incidence of domestic violence is being widened with the development of linkages and synergies with the **Community Safety and Enhancement Programme** and the **Retirees Adolescent Partnership Programme (RAPP)**. The former seeks to encourage members of the community especially our youths to participate in improvement projects and crime prevention strategies to make their surroundings, including domestic households, safer and more secure. RAPP is also a preventive and developmental programme which engages community mentors to guide and educate vulnerable children of Junior Secondary School age. The strategy of street theatre has been effectively used to convey the message of non violence.

### Community Development

With respect to poverty and its predisposition to crime and deviance, the **Community Enhancement and Regeneration Programme** adopts a holistic approach to poverty alleviation. The Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs, partners with



vulnerable communities to provide physical amenities such as roads, water, electricity, and recreational and community facilities in a comprehensive package which also includes the provision of social services to meet specific community needs. Social Services delivery units of the Ministry are also part of the coordinated intervention process.

### Culture

The policy direction on arts and culture will be centred around a Cultural Policy which is in the initial stage of development. Documentation on previous attempts at the development of a policy and the culture policies of other countries are being reviewed as part of the information gathering process.

In the absence of an official Culture Policy, the national programme for the preservation and development of culture and the arts is guided by international conventions, regional consensus and Government's strategic inputs. The UNESCO-led drive for the preservation and protection of intangible culture products has provided an international pathway for expressing our desire to safeguard our rich performing arts, oral traditions and unique culture products such as the steelpan, chutney and calypso music.

The Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs is positioned to play a leadership role in the implementation of the recommendations of the Cabinet -appointed Committee for the Establishment of a Legal Structure of the Steelpan.

The exposure of members of the **National Steel Orchestra** to formal training, the use of their acquired knowledge at pan camps for children, the continuous pan development training programmes and the commitment to complete the headquarters for Pan Trinbago are all aimed at reinforcing the country's position as the birthplace of the steelpan and the premier location for genuine high quality steelpan music.

Similarly the programmes and initiatives of the **National Carnival Commission** and **TUCO** keep our country at the pinnacle of the Carnival arts. The construction of a Convalescent Home for Calypsonians and other artistes is noteworthy as a proactive initiative by TUCO.

Government will also pursue an active programme of providing high quality state of the art facilities for our local artistes. These include refurbishment and upgrade of Queen's Hall and Naparima Bowl, the construction of an **Academy for the Performing Arts** at the Princess Building Ground, Port of Spain and the construction of a **National Carnival and Entertainment Centre** to replace the Grand Stand and associated buildings in the Queen's Park Savannah, Port of Spain.

Heritage sites will also be restored and the refurbishment work on the **National Museum** will continue. Additionally, a new museum will be established in San Fernando and the museum services will be expanded to our communities.

Culture as a mechanism for social cohesion and promoting national identity is evident in the activities of the **Prime Minister's Best Village Programme** and the Anaculture Community Concerts. The Junior Best Village in particular contributes immensely to the cementing of social relations through education, training and research on the history and cultural practices of the different strands of our multicultural society.

# IX. Living Conditions

- a) Housing
- b) Transportation
- c) Infrastructure
- d) Drainage
- e) Public Utilities
- f) The Environment

## a) Housing

### The Accelerated Housing Programme

In fulfillment of its policy objective to provide affordable and adequate housing, Government will continue the implementation of its Accelerated Housing Programme via the Infill Lots, the Joint Venture Initiative and the Urban Renewal Programmes. It is anticipated that twenty four thousand, six hundred and three (24,603) housing units will be completed between fiscal 2005 and fiscal 2007.

#### **Infill Lots Programme**

The Infill Lots Programme facilitates the construction of housing units within existing Government housing estates where beneficiaries had made down-payments on lots under the first **National Settlements Programme** and up to the time of the launching of the Housing Programme had not constructed houses, as was stipulated under the terms and conditions of the Programme.

#### **Joint Venture Initiative**

The Joint Venture Programme is a partnership arrangement between the Ministry of Housing, via the **National Housing Authority (NHA)**, and the contractors/developers to construct low-cost houses which would be sold at pre-determined selling prices agreed to by Cabinet.

The contractors/developers would design, construct and finance the houses, while the design component would be supervised by the National Housing Authority's project managers. The Ministry of Housing, in collaboration

with the NHA, would identify the lands and pre-qualify beneficiaries who could then access mortgages.

#### **Urban Renewal Programme**

The Urban Renewal Programme focuses on the construction of apartments to provide units for rental by persons who cannot afford to purchase a housing unit. This Programme targets the low-income beneficiaries who are financially unable to service a mortgage.

#### **Rent-to-own Programme**

The current Housing Policy focuses on widening the range of alternatives for housing available to the poor, marginalised and disadvantaged groups in society. The Rent-to-Own Programme has been developed as one initiative to accomplish this and has received Cabinet's approval. It is anticipated that this Programme will ensure that individuals achieve, on a phased basis, their long-term goal of purchasing/acquiring a housing solution.

This Programme targets low-income and middle income beneficiaries who are financially unable to service a mortgage. Persons who do not meet the financial requirements to secure mortgage financing will be given consideration for rental accommodation based on their income levels.

The beneficiary is allowed to enter into occupation of a mortgage unit under the agreement of a License to Occupy for a period of five (5) years with the option to purchase. At the end of the five (5) years, two thirds of the rental payment will be applied as a deposit towards the purchase of the unit, and the rental tenancy will be converted to mortgage status.

Where units are maintained by the NHA, during the period of the Agreement, one third of the rent paid will be retained by the NHA to off-set maintenance expenditure. All other charges relevant to the property will be borne by the beneficiary.

### Home Construction Subsidy

It is intended that under the new Greenfield component of the **Inter American Development Bank (IDB) Loan Programme**, an up-front housing subsidy will be provided to eligible applicants selected through a transparent and automatic prioritization process. The subsidy will complement the individual's personal savings, and a home mortgage provided by a financial institution at commercial rates of interest. Subsidies of \$24,000 or \$36,000 would be issued to beneficiaries based on annual household income. The beneficiary could purchase or construct a new house via the housing programme or select a housing solution external to the programme.

In order to be financially eligible, applicants must open a savings account in a participating financial institution and meet the minimum savings requirements. The applicant must either have deposited the minimum savings requirement in a financial intermediary institution or own the land where the house would be built. In addition, applicants must be eligible to receive a pre-approved mortgage loan equal to the value of the housing solution less the combined value of the personal savings plus housing subsidy.

Currently, the operating procedure for this component is being reviewed and finalized.

### Sites And Services

In its continued efforts to make housing available to low and middle-income groups, the Ministry of Housing, through its agency, the **Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Committee, (SILWC)** will continue to provide serviced lots for its targeted clientele. For the period 2006-2008, it is anticipated that the SILWC would provide approximately fifty (50) such lots at Cedar Hill Housing Ext., Princes Town and La Fortune Ext., La Romain.

Further, the SILWC continues to issue to cane farmers housing loans for repair/construction purposes. The

SILWC will also continue to maintain the infrastructure in its existing housing settlements.

### Improvement Of Housing Conditions

#### Home Improvement Grant

As Government seeks to fulfill the demand for housing created by new household formation, it is important to maintain the existing housing stock. Accordingly, Government recognizes that there are persons who need financial assistance to enable them to bring their homes up to acceptable standards. The Home Improvement Grant Programme was launched in both Trinidad and Tobago and is geared towards assisting pensioners and the less fortunate in the society with repairs to their homes. This Programme provides homeowners with a maximum of \$10,000 to effect home improvements and does not require the beneficiary to have matching funds. It is funded solely by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

The main objectives of this Grant are to:-

- Improve the living conditions and quality of life of individuals whose houses are in dire need of repairs and require some measure of assistance to effect such repairs; and
- Promote the maintenance of the housing stock nationally and address the current state of dilapidation in some houses.

#### IDB Home Improvement Subsidy

Government, with the assistance of the IDB funding, has implemented the Home Improvement Subsidy Programme. This involves the provision of a matching subsidy (one dollar of grant money for every dollar contributed by the beneficiary) to assist qualifying families to undertake improvements, up to a maximum of \$15,000. The subsidy will be awarded to families whose income does not exceed \$30,000 annually. One thousand one hundred (1,100) families will be chosen randomly to benefit from this Programme.

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A total of two thousand and twelve (2,012) applications were received for this subsidy and of this amount, one thousand five hundred and ninety six (1,596) beneficiaries were randomly selected. To date, agreements for eighty (80) applicants have been signed.

### Urban Redevelopment Programme

Government has embarked on an Urban Redevelopment Programme designed to improve the quality of life in low and middle-income areas by reconstructing dilapidated Government housing units and addressing problems in the urban centers by providing improved services and infrastructure.

This programme is on stream at Beverly Hills, Laventille, Roy Joseph and San Fernando. It is intended that five (5) housing developments in the Port-of-Spain area would be targeted for the next phase of the Urban Redevelopment Programme. These sites are Almond Court, Morvant; Alexis Street, Morvant; Ramdial Mahabir Lands, Laventille; Dorata Street, Laventille and Barataria.

### Squatter Regularisation And Containment

The Squatter Regularisation Programme, currently being undertaken by the **Land Settlement Agency (LSA)**, seeks to improve living conditions and regularise the security of tenure for families living in squatter settlements. This includes the provision of basic services, communal facilities, and formal tenure documents to the families. All upgraded sites will have basic services such as water; electricity; waste water disposal either through connections to the public sewerage system or to septic tanks; basic road treatment; drainage and public lighting.

The LSA will utilize financial resources of the Inter American Development Bank's **National Settlements Programme Second Stage Loan**. The present loan caters for the upgrade of five thousand four hundred

(5,400) lots in squatter settlements eligible under the State Land (Regularisation of Tenure) Act No. 25 of 1998.

Physical construction activities have been completed on five (5) first cycle sites yielding approximately eight hundred and fifty (850) lots, in the period up to January 2005. Land-use Planning and engineering designs have commenced on twelve (12) second cycle sites, with construction activities started on two (2) sites and construction starts proposed for six (6) sites in 2004/2005. It is intended that two thousand four hundred (2,400) lots would be regularized in 2006/2007 and one thousand, eight hundred (1,800) lots would be regularized in 2007/2008.

The Land Settlement Agency (LSA) has received 22,527 applications for Certificates of Comfort. Due to the restructuring of the LSA and the consequent staff limitations, one thousand, two hundred (1,200) applications were processed, of these, ten (10) were recommended for the period 2004-2005. The LSA proposes to issue two thousand five hundred (2,500) Certificates of Comfort during 2006-2007, and three thousand (3,000) during 2007-2008 (Box 9:1).

#### Box 9:1 Certificates Of Comfort

A Certificate of Comfort is a document issued to persons who were in possession of State land prior to 1998. The certificate is issued in accordance with Act 25 of 1998 and is a statutory commitment to regularize the squatter, once the person is not in occupation of an environmentally sensitive area or the parcel of land is not required for a public purpose. After thirty (30) years has elapsed, the occupant can apply for a Statutory Lease and then a Deed of Lease.

### Creation Of Employment Opportunities

#### Employment of Small Contractors

The **Accelerated Housing Programme** utilizes a range of small, medium and large contractors. To ensure the continued viability of small contracting businesses, Government has taken measures to ensure that ten (10) percent of all contracts awarded for housing construction are given to small contractors within the area.

The present method of construction utilized by the Ministry of Housing in its housing development projects encourages on the job training by contractors. In addition, the **Helping Young People Earn (HYPE)** Training Programme is being used to supplement construction skills. The Ministry of Housing has also agreed to the use of **Multi-sector Skills Training Programme (MuST)** trainees in its housing development projects.

#### Construction of Multi-Purpose Complexes

Government has recognized the need for the construction of multi-purpose complexes on housing estates in order to minimize and to correct a proliferation of unplanned structures built by residents to conduct small business activities.

The commercial centers are designed to encourage a mixed range of activities to enhance the communities. The facilities would provide areas for food courts, barber salons, greengrocers, mini-marts, fitness facilities and variety stores among others. The micro-enterprise model, which involves the use of community labour and includes a training component, will be used to provide labour to construct these complexes. This system was successfully implemented to accomplish the commercial complexes at Maloney and La Horquetta.

The sod was turned at the Pleasantville Complex earlier this year and construction has commenced on the site. Multi-purpose complexes have also been proposed at Bon Air Arouca, Couva and Edinburgh 500.

#### Private Sector Involvement

In its continued efforts to widen the range of opportunities available for low income housing and make the transition to a more demand driven housing system, the strategy of encouraging Private Sector participation in the Housing Sector will be pursued.

The low production of housing units for low and middle income earners in Trinidad and Tobago has been largely attributed to financing and affordability issues. However, through the intervention of the Minister of Housing, negotiations to encourage the Private Sector to provide mortgage financing for the purchase of low-income homes, via a possible Consortium arrangement, were entered into with the local Banking Sector.

### Sector And Institutional Development

#### Institutional Strengthening

The sector and institutional development component of the IDB loan agreement supports activities that contribute to the modernization of the Ministry of Housing, and assist public and private institutions to make the transition to a demand driven housing system and adapt to their new roles. During the period 2005-2008, the Ministry of Housing will undertake institutional strengthening activities, sector development studies and initiatives aimed at modernizing the Ministry and addressing strategic bottlenecks. The Ministry has implemented organizational changes with a view to fostering Human Resource development and the expansion of the core units.

#### Sector Development

Under the IDB Loan Agreement, it is anticipated that sector development studies will contribute to the development of the Housing Sector by analyzing and developing appropriate responses to address effective housing demand, squatter regularization and containment in urban areas and Private Sector involvement in the construction and financing of middle to low income housing.

## IX. Living Conditions

### Box 9:2 – Restructuring Of The National Housing Authority

The Trinidad and Tobago Housing Development Corporation Bill, which is soon to be assented to, is intended to repeal the National Housing Act, Chap. 33:01 and the National Housing Authority (Vesting) Act, 2004 to vest the responsibilities of the National Housing Authority in the Trinidad and Tobago Housing Development Corporation.

The aim of the Corporation will be to facilitate the acceleration of the provision of good quality and affordable shelter and associated community facilities for low and middle income citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. The Corporation would also be responsible for implementing the broad policy of the Government as it relates to housing.

Using loan resources, significant progress has been made in the design and implementation of Information System to support the general needs of the Ministry of Housing and the specific needs of the programme, especially in the areas of beneficiary application and selection and project accounting.

## b) Transportation

### National Transportation Study

The comprehensive National Transportation Study (CNTS) commenced in January 2005 with a contractual period of eighteen (18) months. The project's mission is to develop a Strategic 20-year Comprehensive National Transportation Plan for Trinidad and Tobago comprising an immediate 2-year programme, two (2) successive 5-year programmes and an 8-year programme. The objectives are:-

- i. A **National Transportation Sectoral Policy** that is consistent with other public policies of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. The recommendations of the policy to take into account

all modes of transport, including existing modes and possible future modes.

- ii. Coordinated **National Transportation Plans** in the land, sea and air sectors that provide the Government with a national, systematic decision-making tool for investment in transportation infrastructure over the next twenty (20) years.

- iii. A plan for the training of counterpart personnel to continue the development and updating of the transportation sectoral policy and national transportation plans once the consultant's services have been completed.

The study is seen as one that will work in tandem with the National Physical Development Plan and it is expected that critical interim projects may arise. One project emanating thus far has been the need to conduct a mass transit system study. In this regard, the Consultants' services has been expanded to undertake the necessary studies, preliminary designs and related activities that will lead to the completion of documentation for inviting developers to submit proposals.

In the absence of clear recommendations emanating from the CNTS policies adopted in the Transportation sector will reflect the need to improve the well being of our citizens and our country in general, taking into consideration changes in the environment and our vision of achievement of developed country status by the year 2020.

### Air Transport

Over the last fiscal period, the two (2) major players in the aviation landscape, the **Trinidad and Tobago Civil Aviation Authority (TTCAA)** and the **Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (AATT)**, have remained committed to providing citizens with a safe, efficient and reliable air transportation system. The current achievement of United States Federal Aviation

Administration (FAA) Category 1 status, bears testimony to their efforts, however it critical that commitment to further development activities be made in order to sustain the category 1 status achieved. This commitment will continue over 2006 – 2008.

The AATT has continued to pursue its mandate to rehabilitate the physical airport infrastructure of our two (2) international airports. At Piarco, rehabilitation of new infrastructural drainage works and compactor relocation has commenced. Additionally, security standards have been enhanced by the total rehabilitation of the fence line surrounding the airport, as well as partial completion of the perimeter roadway which runs along the circumference of the airport. Works in these areas are expected to continue. Paving works are also expected to be undertaken on the taxiway, apron and ramp over the three-year period.

At Crown Point, the **Modification and Expansion Project** has commenced. Phase I (Apron Expansion) is expected to be completed in December 2005. Phase II of the project will entail the modification and expansion of the terminal building. It is also envisaged that the following activities will be included in Phase II of the project:-

- Installation of a 40,000-gallon/day-wastewater treatment plant;
- Multi-storey car park;
- Installation of a jet blast fence;
- Installation of an incinerator;
- New meteorological facilities; and
- Special security and passenger processing equipment.

This project is targeted for substantial completion in 2007.

The TTCAA has also continued with its drive to replace critical pieces of air navigation equipment, which have passed its efficient life cycle. Before the end of 2004/2005, the Reddig Node, a voice and communication system,

will be procured for use at the Area Control Center at Piarco. During 2006-2008, this focus will continue, with high emphasis being placed on the procurement of a new radar system, VOR/DME/UFS generator, tools and test equipment, and a non-directional beacon (NDB) for Piarco International Airport as well as replacement of other essential outdated items of equipment that have exceeded their life expectancy and have become or are on the fringe of becoming unserviceable.

The TTCAA also intends to improve its administrative infrastructure and accommodation. In 2006-2008, the Authority intends to replace the Area Control Center and Air Traffic Control Building at Piarco to allow for greater efficiency and effectiveness in their ATC operations.

### Sea Transport

#### Maritime Services Division

The Government is committed to making the waters of Trinidad and Tobago safer for ships. One of the ways to achieve this end would be to procure a new buoy tender to replace the ML BEACON. The ML BEACON is over twenty (20) years old and no longer serviceable. This vessel was utilized in exercises regarding the maintenance of navigational aids throughout the country. The new vessel will have the capability to adequately and efficiently provide the range of services required for example, buoy handling, oil spill recovery, cargo handling, salvage capabilities, fire fighting, diving and other work boat activities.

Additionally, in the fiscal 2006 period Government will continue to refurbish and upgrade the Nation's navigational aid structures by undertaking repairs to six (6) major land based beacons located at Galeota, Moruga, Erin, Gasper Grande, Las Cuevas and Tobago. The continued exercise of improving these structures will facilitate the safe navigation of ships within the waters of Trinidad and Tobago.

## IX. Living Conditions

### Port Authority Of Trinidad And Tobago

The process with respect to the restructuring of the Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago is ongoing. Three (3) of the major companies to be established have already been incorporated namely, the Port of Spain Infrastructure Company Limited (PoSInCo), the Port of Port of Spain Limited (PPOS) and the Trinidad and Tobago Inter-island Company Limited (TTIT). The eventual operation of these business units are intended to improve overall productivity and efficiency of the Port.

Overall productivity will also be boosted through the acquisition of cargo handling equipment such as, twelve (12) Tractor Trucks, five (5) Rubber Tyred Gantry Crane, one (1) Ship to Shore Gantry Crane and the construction of an Equipment Maintenance Complex over the medium term.

Government has recognized that passenger facilities at the Government Shipping Service is to an extent unacceptable. Towards this end, the construction of a new passenger terminal building at the Port of Port of Spain estimated at \$11 Mn. is planned for fiscal year 2006. Additionally, the passenger terminal at the Port of Scarborough is to be upgraded in fiscal year 2007. The undertaking of the aforementioned activities would result in a more comfortable, aesthetically pleasing and accommodating environment for the travelling public than what presently exists.

During the fiscal year 2004/2005 citizens experienced increased comfort and decreased travel time while travelling on the LYNX and the CAT fast ferries. Given the overwhelmingly positive response to this 'new' service, Government intends in the coming year, to continue with plans for the acquisition of a fast ferry to service the inter-island sea bridge, thereby improving the transportation links between Trinidad and Tobago.

### Public Transport Service Corporation

The Public Transport Service Corporation (PTSC) will continue to play a major role in the mobilization of people

for productive and other forms of social and economic endeavours towards national development.

In keeping with the importance of public transport as a mobiliser for various types of activities at the national level, a number of policy issues relating to the following will require attention:-

- i. The role of maxi taxis and other providers of public transport and the need to regulate their activities especially in relation to safety standards and increasing levels of road congestion.
- ii. The provision of public transport services in rural areas at a cost that would be affordable to users and in a manner that would be cost effective to the provider.
- iii. The development of modern transportation hubs in such centers as Sangre Grande, San Fernando, Scarborough, Chaguanas.
- iv. The consideration of public transport issues in the planning and development of new communities or the expansion of existing communities where such developments would create additional demands for public transport.

Over the period 2006-2008, the PTSC will undertake the following programmes/projects:-

- Redefine and re-organise public transport operations in a manner which produces the highest possible level of service delivery and customer satisfaction;
- Continuous review, development and implementation of operating systems and procedures;
- Introduction of additional mass transit vehicles to service the East/West and North/South Corridors and the reassignment of smaller vehicles to other routes;
- Introduction of electronic information devices for the guidance of passengers on service platforms and the dissemination of information to the general public;



- Introduction of CNG-powered buses;
- Upgrading of the South Quay premises and other locations for purposes of improving organizational image, passenger facilities and creating new income streams; and
- Reorganise vehicle maintenance practices in a manner which would result in improved service delivery and reliability.

### Traffic Management

The Traffic Management Branch is responsible for the management and control of traffic on the road network of Trinidad (over 8,320 km). The purpose of the Branch is to consider all forms of activity in an area, to establish priority of usage of existing facilities which is compatible with the overall transport policy and to develop measures to make the most efficient use of available streets.

It must be noted that traffic management is an activity, which concentrates on measures directed at the alleviation of symptoms of transportation problems, and are implementable in the short-term. Because of the intensify of traffic congestion in the east/west and north/south corridors, as well in the city and towns of Trinidad, the Traffic Management Branch must now focus on short to medium term traffic alleviation measures in these areas, other programmes scheduled for implementation over the medium-term include:-

- Installation of zebra crossings with flashing amber signals;
- Upgrading of intersections;
- Replacement of informative directional and safety signs along highways and main roads;
- Application of thermoplastic road markings;
- Installation of New Jersey Barriers on highway medians;
- Installation of raised pavement markers (cateries); and
- Establishment of transit hubs.

## c) Infrastructure

### Road Infrastructure

The **Comprehensive National Transportation Study (CNTS)** will steer the future direction of land transportation and consequently influence the overall policies and plans associated with the planning, design, construction and maintenance of related road infrastructure.

The CNTS is ambitious, in that it is expected to capture, among other sectors, the long-term vision for land transportation. However, in the intervening medium and short-term period, it would be necessary to ensure that there is uninterrupted development and maintenance of highways. In this respect, major emphasis would be placed on developing new highways where they are expected to align with the CNTS and reducing congestion and vehicle operating costs via the construction of alternative accesses, bypasses and additional lanes and undertaking other traffic management initiatives, while improving maintenance measures.

Major road infrastructure programmes include: -

- Improvements to the East-West and North-South Corridors with emphasis on the Churchill Roosevelt Highway, Uriah Butler Highway, Western Main Road;
- Construction of an overpass at the intersection of Churchill Roosevelt and Uriah Butler Highway;
- New Highway construction including extension of:-
  - (i) Diego Martin Highway to Diego Martin Main Road;
  - (ii) Churchill Roosevelt Highway to Sangre Grande;
  - (iii) Solomon Hochoy Highway to Point Fortin; and
  - (iv) A new highway from San Fernando to Mayaro;

## IX. Living Conditions

- The **Alternative Vehicular Access Routes Programme** which involve upgrading or construction of new roads to bypass congested areas;
- The **Programme for the Upgrade of Road Efficiency (PURE)** which involves the rehabilitation or reconstruction of roads and bridges, the repair of landslips, and undertaking of construction activities for traffic management measures;
- The **National Highway Programme** which includes rehabilitation or reconstruction of main roads and bridges, repair of landslips, design of new highways and institutional strengthening measures which include implementation of maintenance management systems that would lead to improved maintenance of roads and bridges.

Maintenance management of roads and bridges will be undertaken making use of the following system that is being implemented within the National Highway Programme.

- A Routine Maintenance Management System (RMMS) to budget, programme, and record accomplishments; it also allows for optimization of available resources;
- A **Bridge Management System (BMS)** for short and long-term planning of bridges; and
- A **Pavement Management System (PMS)** for short and long-term planning of road resurfacing and rehabilitation.

It is anticipated that these maintenance measures would positively impact the ongoing programmes for highway rehabilitation, bridge reconstruction and landslip repair.

It is anticipated that these maintenance measures would positively impact the ongoing programmes for highway rehabilitation, bridge reconstruction and landslip repair.

### Public Buildings

Government, in the pursuit of Developed Nation Status by the year 2020, will continue its programme of

reconstruction, restoration, refurbishment and upgrade of its cadre of public buildings. Focus will be placed on: -

- The restoration of historic public buildings to ensure the re-adaptive and economic re-use of these buildings, and to preserve the historical integrity of the buildings;
- The refurbishment and upgrade and extension of existing buildings to provide improved office accommodation for existing and additional staff of several Ministries; and
- The construction of new buildings to provide office accommodation for existing and additional staff for several ministries.

To date, refurbishment and historical restorative works are ongoing on a number of historic public buildings including: -

- President's Residence and Office;
- Queen's Royal College;
- Mille Fleur Building;
- Fort Picton; and
- Trinity Cathedral.

## d) Drainage

Government is committed to the provision of adequate drainage and irrigation infrastructure to alleviate the incidences of flooding and erosion throughout the country, as well as to facilitate higher levels of growth in order to contribute to an improved standard of living for the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago.

In this respect, the Drainage Division of the Ministry of Works and Transport will continue to undertake its **Comprehensive Drainage and Flood Control Programme** throughout Trinidad. During the period 2004-2005, the major projects undertaken under

this programme focused on improvement and flood mitigation measures including, Manzanilla Coastal Protection Works in the East, Caroni in Central Trinidad; and Cipero and Vistabella in the South. It is noted that of those projects Caroni River, Vistabella River and Cipero River are expected to be totally completed during fiscal year 2005/2006.

In addition to the ongoing projects, embankment works in the New Cut Channel in South Oroupouche, Caroni River Phase II, Cunupia River in Central, Blackman Ravine, Miss Gutter Ravine and Malick River in the North will also be undertaken during fiscal 2006.

Renewal emphasis will be placed on the maintenance of watercourses in fiscal year 2005/2006. A programme of works has been initiated that would seek to desilt all main watercourses as required.

Additionally, another programme that involves walling and paving of main water courses has been initiated. This programme is expected to lead to reduction or elimination of erosion, improved drainage and reduction in maintenance requirements for these water courses.

Coastal protection works will also be continued along the eastern coastline of Trinidad between Manzanilla in the North, and Point Radix in the South, an area which has been subjected to severe erosion and flooding over the years.

It must be noted that one (1) of the main drainage infrastructural works which will be continued in fiscal 2006, is the **Mamoral Dam and Reservoir Project**. This project is critical as it is the main component of the **Caparo River Basin Flood Mitigation and Water Resource Development Project**. The design phase of this project is expected to be completed in August 2005 and the construction phase will commence in fiscal 2006.

### e) Public Utilities

#### **National Social Development Programme (NSDP)**

Over the medium-term, the NSDP of the Ministry of Public Utilities and the Environment will continue to bring relief to deprived and underdeveloped communities, by providing and/or improving the supply of water, street lighting and electrification to communities, residences and community facilities. The Programme will also continue to encourage and complement self-help initiatives aimed at improving community centres, sporting and recreational facilities and other community amenities in order to raise the standard of living and enhance the quality of life of the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

#### **WASA**

To date, under NSDP, WASA has completed over three hundred and fifty (350) pipe laying projects stretching some 260 km. They have constructed fifteen (15) booster stations, installed over one hundred and twenty five (125) communal water tanks and drilled four (4) wells.

This work under NSDP has created over sixteen thousand (16,000) new customers and impacted the lives of approximately one hundred and fifty (150,000) citizens.

In the new fiscal year WASA will continue to pursue its major objective of improving the water supply to the population throughout Trinidad and Tobago, in particular, bringing relief where the level of service is less than forty eight (48) hours per week and in areas without a water supply. The Authority will also further intensify its efforts to bring pipe borne water to deprived communities over the three-year period.

Another area of focus during the 2006-2008 period will be the continuation of improvements in supply to communities where the supply is currently irregular. This, in many instances will depend on improvements

## IX. Living Conditions

made through the larger **WASA Development Programme**.

### **T&TEC**

To date the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) has installed over ten thousand, five hundred (10,500) street lights; completed over two hundred and fifty (250) electrification projects; supplied electrical power to over fifty five (55) recreational facilities and twenty (20) WASA new installations. These projects have benefited some two thousand, seven hundred and twenty (2,720) households directly and generally impacted the lives of over fifty thousand (50,000) citizens.

In the period 2006-2008, T&TEC will continue to pursue its major objective to improve the social and economic welfare of the less fortunate sectors of the population by the provision of a safe, reliable and economical supply of electricity. The focus will be on: electrification to residences; electrification and/or lighting to recreation grounds; and the supply of power to WASA projects. Inherent in the electrification projects is financing the non-refundable costs that are beyond the means of low income individuals

## **f) The Environment**

Environmental management, protection and conservation are key responsibilities of the Ministry of Public Utilities and the Environment. The maintenance of the environmental integrity of Trinidad and Tobago is vital to the overall socio-economic growth and health of our citizens. The environment impinges on every aspect of our lives, from the quality of the air we breathe, to the water we drink. Sustainable development encompassing the protection and conservation of the environment continues to be a major plank of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago long-term strategic plan of attaining developed country status by the year 2020.

Towards this end, the Ministry has sought to put in place an appropriate institutional and legal framework for the protection of the environment. Major initiatives taken in the areas of policy development, legislation and institution building included the enactment of the Environmental Management Act which established the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) in 1995 and the Environmental Commission which became operational in 2000; the development of a National Environmental Policy in 1998 and; the enactment of subsidiary legislation pertaining to environmentally sensitive areas and species, certificates of environmental clearance and noise pollution.

### **Pollution Reduction And Prevention**

#### **Water Pollution**

Water pollution is an area of major concern given that Trinidad and Tobago is one of the most industrialized countries in the region. The negative impact of industrial effluents on the water resources of the country is predominant along the foothills of the Northern Range and the western coast of Trinidad. Effluents from oil and sugar cane refining affect particularly the rivers in south Trinidad. Other areas of the country are also affected by waste from petroleum products, which are discharged into the watercourses from leaking tanks and improper disposal of waste oils.

Other contributors to the pollution of our waterways include, the improper disposal of sewage and farm wastes, discharge of chemicals from industrial and household activities, non-functional sewage treatment plants and the disposal of domestic refuse and solid waste.

The Environmental Management Authority has finalized the Draft Water Pollution Rules and the Water Pollution (Fees) Regulations and has submitted them for Cabinet review. These Rules will establish a regime which will seek to regulate and reduce the introduction of water pollutants into our natural environment. The ultimate objective of these pieces of legislation is to protect the

integrity of the country's supply of drinking water and our water resources. The EMA will further undertake to draft legislation to mandate laboratory certification programmes.

The Institute of Marine Affairs will be conducting investigations on the various land-based sources of pollutants of the Caroni River Basin.

### **Air and Noise Pollution**

Air and noise pollution occur in most areas of Trinidad and Tobago especially in the more densely populated communities. Industry, transport and housing along the western coast and foothills of the Northern Range are primary sources of these types of pollution. With the significant increase of the motor vehicle population within recent years, pollution from emissions from motor vehicles has become a cause of great concern. The production of green house gases, particularly carbon dioxide and ozone depleting substances also adversely impacts on the quality of our air environment. Seasonally, across most of the country, there has also been air pollution problems associated with bush fires and the sugar cane harvest in the dry season.

The problem of air pollution is being addressed through the strengthening of the legislative framework and a programme to reduce toxic vehicular emissions. Within the coming fiscal year, efforts will also be made to enact Air Pollution Rules, which are currently in draft form and will significantly contribute to the reduction of emission of pollutants into the atmosphere. The EMA also proposes to install air quality monitoring stations at various strategic locations throughout Trinidad and Tobago. The data collected from these stations would enable the EMA to determine the best strategies to combat air pollution issues in Trinidad & Tobago as well as establish links between air quality and the incidence of respiratory and other health problems in problem areas. One such station had already been established at Pt. Lisas.

The phase-out of lead in gasoline in April 2004 was a major step in eliminating a major source of air pollution that has serious health implications ranging from neuro-developmental problems in children to cardiovascular problems in adults.

The principal sources of noise include the use of heavy machinery, aircraft and motor vehicles, Carnival fetes, sporting events, musical and cultural events. The enactment of the Noise Pollution Rules significantly strengthened the regulatory mechanism for the control of this form of pollution and includes the designation of three zone categories: residential, commercial and industrial. For each noise zone, there is a corresponding standard which sets out the permissible level of noise in such zone. Exceeding such maximum levels, results in punitive or regulatory action being taken by the EMA. The EMA will be reviewing the implementation of these Rules over the medium-term with a view to identifying weaknesses or loopholes which could reduce their effectiveness.

# X. Employment and Wealth Creation

## a) Labour Market Conditions b) Poverty Reduction, Employment And Wealth Creation

### a) Labour Market Conditions

Through the development of a comprehensive employment policy, Government will pursue an integrated approach to employment generation to facilitate the maximum participation of the nation's human resources in advancing national development. Government is therefore committed to the attainment of full employment within the shortest possible time by maximizing the creation of employment opportunities for the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. Towards this end, focus will be placed over the medium-term on the following six (6) objectives and the accompanying key strategies for their achievement:-

#### 1. Facilitation of labour market equilibrium by:-

- Development of a comprehensive National Employment Policy;
- Provision of timely labour market information and analyses to guide policy and programme interventions; and
- Bridging the gap between job seekers and employment opportunities through the **One Stop Career Resource Centers (OSCRC)**.

#### 2. Promotion of opportunities for poverty reduction, employment and wealth creation through:-

- Continuous development of the Cooperative Sector;
- Research activities aimed at the improvement of conditions of disadvantaged workers such as women, youth and persons in the informal economy;

- Ongoing institutional strengthening of the Friendly Societies Movement;
- Development of a policy environment to facilitate the development and sustainability of small and micro enterprises (SMEs); and
- Strategic intervention to increase the participation of young persons in the economy and their access to decent work.

#### 3. Promotion of the application of the principles of decent work in the workplace through:-

- Monitoring and implementing the eight (8) fundamental ILO conventions;
- Implementing an **Occupational Safety and Health Framework** for the workplace;
- Support for the development and implementation of a National Workplace Policy on HIV/AIDS;
- Development and application of a mechanism for monitoring the impact and effectiveness of the Minimum Wage;
- Developing and implementing measurement tools for decent work;
- Strengthening the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development (MLSMED), particularly the inspection units such as Labour Inspectorate and the Factory Inspectorate, to better monitor and enforce decent work practices and other workplace standards;
- Supporting and advocating mechanisms to promote the employment of persons with disabilities;
- Adoption and implementation of a policy to prohibit and eliminate child labour; and
- Strategies to ascertain the extent of observance of the principles enshrined in the fundamental ILO Conventions, namely, equal pay for work of equal value, discrimination in employment, forced labour, child labour, freedom of association and collective bargaining.

#### **4. Promotion of industrial peace in the national economy through:-**

- Promoting the integration of labour issues in the development and implementation of policies and programmes at all levels, national, sectoral, enterprise, industry etc.;
- Enactment of a comprehensive menu of labour legislation;
- Enhancement of tertiary training through labour market signaling; and
- Engaging the social partners in effective social dialogue on labour issues

#### **5. Enhancement of the capacity of the MLSMED to undertake an expanded role in formulating and implementing national development goals and strategies through:-**

- Ongoing modernization of the structure of the Ministry;
- Continuous development and enhancement of the skills of the staff; and
- Leading in labour education through the development of the **Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies** as the primary provider for training in labour relations, co-operative development, enterprise development and other related areas.

#### **6. Management of Government's regional and international commitments and responsibilities with respect to the Labour Market Agenda, in particular, the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour and the International Labour Organization through:-**

- The dissemination of timely and relevant information on the impact of regional, hemispheric and global activities on labour markets;
- Timely submission of reporting requirements to the International Labour Organization (ILO);
- Effective and articulate participation and follow up of activities to be undertaken by Government's

## **X. Employment and Wealth Creation**

representatives in labour and employment sessions at regional, hemispheric and international fora;

- Publication of bi-annual labour market bulletins and regular papers on labour market issues; and
- Promoting the integration of labour issues in all fora that impact on national development.

### **The National Human Resource Management Information System (NHRMIS)**

Through the MLSMED, Government will continue to play a critical role in co-ordinating national human resource planning to adequately meet the emerging needs of the labour market, by examining those aspects of human resource planning which address the level of manpower preparation required to adequately meet the demand for and supply of labour over the 2006 – 2008 period.

The provision of timely and relevant labour market information, via the NHRMIS, is critical to the human resource planning and development process especially as it relates to the development of active labour market policies to respond to the constantly changing labour market. When this system is fully developed the main labour market database would form the core of the **Labour Market Information System** and will provide a platform for the integration of the labour market information producers and users.

The NHRMIS will act as a repository for all labour market data sourced from both internal and external providers. The external sources would comprise such agencies as the **Central Statistical Office**, the **National Training Agency** and the Ministry of Education. The NHRMIS will facilitate the input and processing of the data retrieved from the labour market information producers, which would be used for analysis and dissemination to the end users. Such disseminated information would include quantitative and qualitative information on situations and trends of labour supply and demand and on factors causing distortions at sectoral, occupational or national levels.

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The NHRMIS is also critical to ensuring that labour market needs of the various sectors are met. Increasingly important in this globalised environment is the need for countries to have an adequate number of workers with the skills necessary to compete in the global economy, thereby ensuring sustainable economic development. Labour market signals are crucial to the development of appropriate training programmes that will ensure that there is sufficient trained manpower to meet the current and future demands of employers.

### The National Employment Service (NES)

Government views manpower development as critical to effecting the optimal utilization of human resource and employment opportunities. The National Employment Service (NES), with a network of seven (7) exchanges in Port-of-Spain, San Fernando, Chaguanas, Sangre Grande, Point Fortin, Siparia and Tobago, plays a critical role in facilitating this process. Government's vision for the NES is to transform all exchanges into One Stop Career Resource Centers (OSCRC), in order to bridge the gap between labour market supply and demand, by providing jobseekers, potential employers, researchers and human resource professionals, with a package of services including job counselling, placement, career planning, and business advisory services, in a more customer friendly environment. To date, five (5) out of the seven (7) exchanges have been transformed.

These stationary OSCRC are, however, insufficient to cater adequately to the needs of the population, particularly those in remote or financially depressed communities whose members may be unaware of the services of the OSCRC. The NES will therefore introduce a mobile OSCRC to provide services to such communities. The fully equipped mobile OSCRC would increase the public's awareness of the services being offered through outreaches targeted at communities, schools and businesses. The mobile service will also

facilitate the registration of the unemployed on the NES website, thereby increasing their opportunities for employment.

## b) Poverty Reduction, Employment And Wealth Creation

One of Government's key strategies for the generation of wealth and prosperity in the wider society is the promotion of employment opportunities in the Non-oil Sector. Government's thrust toward the development of small and micro enterprises, the entrepreneurial spirit, cooperatives, regulation of the informal economy and friendly societies will be a critical element in achieving poverty reduction, employment and wealth creation, especially among the vulnerable groups such as youth and women.

Government will continue to improve workplace conditions and achieve productive, sustainable employment through the utilization of the ILO decent work agenda, and the integration of the four (4) pillars of decent work, namely, fundamental rights at work, employment and income opportunities for women and men, social protection and social dialogue and tripartism in the strategic development of the workplace.

### The Co-operative Sector

Government is in the process of reviewing draft legislation aimed at regularizing the Cooperative Sector. As part of this exercise the MLSMED is currently revisiting the policy towards co-operative development, prior to the development of an Action Plan. In this regard, the MLSMED recently embarked on a series of regional consultations on a **National Co-operative Policy**, and it is anticipated that through these consultations a new impetus would be given to the **Co-operative Movement**.



## X. Employment and Wealth Creation

### Building The Entrepreneurial Spirit

Government, having recognized the significant contribution of small and micro enterprises to employment creation and poverty elimination, has embarked on a path of development that will provide a clear policy direction and enabling business environment for small and micro enterprises. This will help to improve their performance, the quality of their products and integrate them into the production process, more specifically into the export process.

In Trinidad and Tobago, it is estimated that between twenty thousand (20,000) to thirty thousand (30,000) incorporated and unincorporated small businesses, provide employment to some fifty-five thousand (55,000) to sixty-five thousand (65,000) individuals, and contribute five (5) percent to ten (10) percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). These are, however, underestimations since they do not include establishments found in the informal economy, where women in particular, are engaged in activities such as food preparation and preservation and street and market vending.

To facilitate the development of small and micro enterprises, Government recently established the **Enterprise Development Division (EDD)** as a policy unit within the MLSMED, to examine and give guidance on the potential for entrepreneurial development. The EDD will serve as the advocate for the development of the Sector and will be responsible for the development of future policy and legislation for the Sector.

In commemoration of the significant contribution that micro credit institutions have played in the development of Trinidad and Tobago, the EDD, in collaboration with the **National Entrepreneurship Development Company (NEDCO)** hosted a symposium on micro credit in observance of the International Year of Micro Credit (2005). Arising out of the symposium, new strategic interventions on using micro credit for economic development have been proposed. These will

be considered with the aim of both reducing poverty and increasing commercialization of small and micro businesses.

Since its inception in 2002, NEDCO has assisted over seventeen thousand (17,000) persons through training in various aspects of small business management and loans for the establishment of small and micro enterprises.

### Friendly Societies

Government remains committed to the creation of a well-developed and modern Financial System with a variety of financial institutions and instruments for the mobilization of savings.

Friendly Societies perform a special role within the Financial System through their promotion of the principles of thrift, brotherhood and harmony within communities, and the financial services they offer in the form of grants and soft loans, which assist in alleviating poverty and assisting individuals in times of distress.

Government will seek to strengthen the Friendly Societies Movement by amending the Friendly Societies Act to modernize its provisions; continue the marketing drive which commenced in 2005; as well as training of the management teams of Friendly Societies and staff of the Friendly Societies Division of the MLSMED.

### Decent Work In The Workplace

Today, the challenge facing countries is that of being competitive in the global market and doing so, mindful of the interests and welfare of their workers and the other more vulnerable groups in their societies. The provision of opportunities for decent employment for citizens is the most important factor in giving citizens the wherewithal to develop their full potential, thereby contributing to society more effectively.

## X. Employment and Wealth Creation

### Standard Setting

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago is committed to the promotion of decent work in the workplace and recognizes that Trinidad and Tobago's development agenda must be viewed within the context of the regional and international environment and its various commitments and obligations.

Through its **Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work**, the ILO in 1998, outlined to Member States the importance of creating a set of international labour standards which can be viewed as minimum working conditions and form an important step towards the achievement of decent work in the workplace. Trinidad and Tobago has ratified all of the ILO's eight (8) core conventions namely:-

- No. 87 - Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, 1948;
- No. 98 – Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining, 1949;
- No. 29 – Forced Labour, 1930;
- No. 105 – Abolition of Forced Labour, 1957;
- No. 138 – Minimum Age, 1973;
- No. 182 - Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999;
- No. 100 – Equal Remuneration, 1951; and
- No. 111 – Discrimination (Employment and Occupation), 1958.

The last outstanding convention, Convention No. 138 on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, 1973 was ratified by this country in September 2004, at which time sixteen (16) years was declared as the minimum age of admission to employment in Trinidad and Tobago.

### Occupational Health And Safety

Government recognizes that ensuring a safe and healthy working environment free from accidents, injuries and exposure to hazardous equipment and chemicals is central to decent work. In this regard, an **Occupational**

**Safety and Health Advisory Council** was established in January 2004 and has recommended the establishment of a **National Occupational Safety and Health Policy, Occupational Safety and Health Codes and Regulations**, and the proposed structure of an Occupational Safety and Health Agency.

With respect to the Occupational Health and Safety Act No. 1, the institutional framework for effecting its mandate is being reviewed. Additionally, a review of the legislation is being undertaken.

### Minimum Wages

The **National Minimum Wage for Trinidad and Tobago** was raised from TT\$8.00 to TT\$9.00 per hour in March 2005. Government will continue to review the impact of this increase on the labour market and on the economy of Trinidad and Tobago and will develop mechanisms for both monitoring the ongoing impact and projecting the potential impact of a National Minimum Wage, including when it should be adjusted.

### Elimination Of Child Labour

Following a 2002 ILO study which found incidences of the worst forms of child labour in two (2) landfill sites in Trinidad, the ILO has initiated an intervention for the rehabilitation of some of the children involved. The project seeks to withdraw and prevent children from working in these landfill sites and is currently being implemented by the **Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)**.

A Cabinet-appointed **National Steering Committee on the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour** in Trinidad and Tobago, was established in August 2004 with broad responsibility for addressing child labour issues in Trinidad and Tobago. The National Steering Committee is in the process of developing a **National Child Labour Policy and Action Plan**, which would direct all future national activities in this area. The Committee also has responsibility for monitoring and

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evaluating the implementation of all projects relating to child labour.

### Industrial Peace

Government recognizes the importance of the social dialogue machinery as an important tool in the national development agenda and in the promotion of industrial peace. Government is therefore committed to strengthening the existing institutions as well as promoting the use of the social dialogue machinery for all national, social and economic decisions.

Towards this end, in March 2005, Government convened a **National Conference and Consultation on Industrial Relations in Trinidad and Tobago** which brought together local, regional and international experts on industrial relations. The Conference and Consultation produced a number of recommendations on how the industrial relations system in Trinidad and Tobago could be improved. To facilitate the implementation of these recommendations, Government is in the process of establishing a Tripartite Committee to both develop a Plan of Action and monitor its implementation.

Construction also continues on the expansion of the **Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies** and is expected to be completed during 2006. Through the physical upgrade, the College will increase its intake capacity, as well as, develop its potential to be the primary agency providing labour education in Trinidad and Tobago.

### International Commitments

Government recognizes that as it fulfills the international and regional labour market commitments arising out of its membership in international and regional organizations, this country will become better equipped to manage the impact of global and regional integration on the local labour market.

Accordingly, Government continues to fulfill its membership obligations and strengthen its participation in organizations such as the **Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour (IACML)**, the **International Labour Organization (ILO)**, the **Organization of American States (OAS)** and **CARICOM**.

In June 2005, Trinidad and Tobago secured a Deputy Seat on the Government Benches of the Governing Body of the ILO, and will utilize this new position to promote the special needs of small island economies. Trinidad and Tobago has also expressed its interest in assuming chairmanship of the Fifteenth Meeting of the IACML in 2007.

## XI. Personal Safety and Security

- a) National Security
- b) Police Service
- c) Defence Force
- d) Prison Service
- e) Fire Service
- f) Disaster Preparedness

### a) National Security

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has demonstrated its commitment to creating an environment in Trinidad and Tobago, which ensures public safety and national peace through the maintenance of law and order. In this regard, the Ministry of National Security has maintained its primary role in establishing and maintaining systems and strategies to effectively reduce crime and fear of crime in our country. Its Institutions (the Protective Services in particular) have been strengthened in terms of research, project planning and procurement. Additionally, as the criminal element adapts to out maneuver enforcement, specialized agencies have been established to ensure that the Ministry's response remains relevant. Among the newly established agencies are: The **Inter-agency Task Force**, the **Incident Coordination Centre**, and the **Transit Police Unit**. Systems have also been implemented to ensure a secure organizational environment in which the Ministry can conduct its business.

These initiatives are consistent with Government's vision of making Trinidad and Tobago a Developed Nation by the year 2020. Government envisages that by the year 2020, Trinidad and Tobago will be a democratic society, free of the fear of crime, in which citizens are highly respectful of the law and have full confidence in the ability of the State to provide public safety and security.

To achieve this objective, the Ministry of National Security has developed three 5-year plans covering the periods 2005 to 2009, 2010 to 2014 and 2015 to 2019. The

period of this SEPF 2006 to 2008, therefore coincides with the Ministry's first five-year plan.

During this period, the Ministry will continue to work assiduously at improving the capabilities of its Divisions, so as to enable them to deliver the required quality service to enhance this country's national security and public safety objectives. Specific emphasis will be placed on finalizing and implementing a new **National Security Policy** for Trinidad and Tobago; restoring public confidence in all the law enforcement and protective agencies; transforming the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service into a well-managed highly professional and effective organization; and establishing a highly effective **Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management**.

During the past year, emphasis was placed on initiating and advancing projects and programmes aimed at recruiting, training, retraining and development of staff of the entire Ministry. Members of the varying arms of the Protective Service engaged in specialist training both locally and internationally and training will continue on an ongoing basis over the period. The upgrading of physical accommodation will continue as well as the acquisition of the necessary vehicles and equipment to ensure that the authorities remain abreast of technological advancements. In keeping with this approach, the Ministry of National Security will pursue the completion of its **Passport Automation Project**, which will ensure that the travel document of citizens of Trinidad and Tobago is consistent with international standards and so positively impact security at all national ports of entry. Steps are also in train to formulate and adopt a new **Immigration Policy** as well as, to construct a new building to accommodate the Headquarters of the Immigration Division.

Crime detection will be further enhanced with the development and implementation of measures aimed specifically at reducing violence and homicides, involving illegal firearms and drugs, as well as the incidence of

## XI. Personal Safety and Security

kidnappings. Surveillance cameras will be installed in urban and other strategic areas. In addition to the Police Transformation initiative being undertaken by Professor Stephen Mastrofski and Partners, aimed at improving Police performance, the **Forensic Science Centre's** operational capacity is being modernized. In this regard, an **Integrated Ballistic Identification System** has been procured. Additionally, a new DNA lab will be constructed in 2006 at which time DNA testing will commence. The current DNA legislation is being reviewed in consultation with the Ministry of the Attorney General with an aim to introducing new legislation later this year. New staff is being recruited to remove the back log at the Forensic Centre, thus facilitating completion of court cases. Significant air and maritime assets, as well as, specialized surveillance and security systems of intelligence gathering have been acquired in order to monitor and maintain security both internally and externally.

Government's commitment to youth development, as exemplified through the implementation of Programmes such as the **Civilian Conservation Corps**, the **Military Lead Academic Training Programme (MILAT)**, the **Military Led Youth Programme of Apprenticeship and Reorientation Training (MYPART)** and the **National Youth Service (NYS)**, will be sustained over this period, as the Ministry continues in its efforts to direct the energies of the youth into more productive and uplifting activities. Expansion of the Trinidad and Tobago Cadet Force, is another component of the youth focused initiatives, which are currently ongoing. Additionally, the Ministry of National Security will continue to work in partnership with the Ministry of Education in the formulation and execution of a **Joint Action Plan on School Discipline**, the main objective of which, is to create, within our secondary schools, a safe, secure and productive environment for teaching and learning.

Another major area of focus will be that of eliminating overcrowding in all the Prison facilities. This is to be achieved by the ongoing transformation of the Prison Service of Trinidad and Tobago from a retributive to a

rehabilitative and restorative mode. The establishment of a dedicated **Transformation Unit**, introduction of a **Parole System** and the movement to full occupancy of the Maximum Security Prison, are elements of this project that are among those scheduled for full implementation during this period.

### b) Police Service

The **Trinidad and Tobago Police Service Data Communication Network** infrastructure is now firmly in place, allowing the Police Service maximum use of the technology in the short term, while laying the groundwork for a system that will meet the medium and long term needs of the Service.

As the computerization project progresses, the Police Service will be further enhanced through the installation and upgrade of additional computer systems and network equipment, further networking of Stations, expansion of the **Automated Fingerprinting Identification System (AFIS)** and the **Live Scans Systems**. A system will also be introduced to allow for data transmission between Licensing Department and Patrol Officers, an automated ticketing system and acquisition and installation of a **Geographical Information System**, as well as analytical, statistical and management reporting tools. This will allow for a more efficient exchange of data within and among the Divisions and other relevant agencies and a timelier processing of matters.

In improving the capabilities of the Police Service, close attention would be paid to implementing the following initiatives of Professor Stephen Mastrofski and Partners for the transformation of the Police Service:-

- Reorganization and strengthening of the Police Complaints Division;
- Training of Police personnel in, inter alia, Computer Statistics (COMPSTAT), Crime Control, Fraud Investigation, Crime Scene Technology, and Blood Stain Evidence;

## XI. Personal Safety and Security

- Implementation of the results of Integrity survey of police officers;
- Reform of the Performance Management System; and
- Strengthening of the legal framework to promote greater effectiveness of the law enforcement agencies.

The procurement of appropriate equipment and vehicles will be pursued and efforts to upgrade the physical accommodation for police officers will continue with the refurbishment and reconstruction of police facilities. The **Police Training College** will be refurbished and upgraded into a modern **Police Training Academy**, with purpose built facilities aimed at transforming the Police Service into a highly competent, effective and professional organisation.

### c) Defence Force

The Defence Force has become an integral part of the Ministry's crime eradication efforts, both at sea and on land. Consequently, the provision of appropriate staff and up-to-date technology are critical factors in enabling the Division to perform its required functions. Steps have been taken therefore, in addition to upgrading the **Global Maritime Distress and Safety System**, to enhance the search and rescue and surveillance capability of the Coast Guard. The Ministry of National Security is taking steps to acquire three (3) Offshore Patrol Vessels, six (6) Coastal Patrol Vessels, three (3) Inland Interceptors, nineteen (19) Armoured Patrol Carriers and two (2) Helicopters.

The Defence Force will advance its computerization thrust with the purchase of additional computers and network equipment and provision of the requisite training opportunities. Steps will be also be taken to upgrade and refurbish the existing facilities and to establish an Air Base at Carlsen Field to facilitate the newly established **Air Guard Unit** which replaces the **T&T Coast Guard Air Wing**.

Further, the Ministry will continue its community-focused approach as a fundamental part of its crime prevention effort, as it seeks to adequately equip the Engineer Corps of the Trinidad and Tobago Regiment with vehicles and health and safety equipment to enable it to support the **Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM)** in disaster relief operations.

The Regiment's contribution to youth development will continue with the implementation, in September 2005, of the MILAT, MYPART and NYS programmes, in addition to its ongoing involvement in the Civilian Conservation Corps Programme.

Additionally, efforts will continue to ensure the provision of appropriate physical accommodation and refurbishment of the serviceable vehicles and vessels in the fleet of the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force.

### d) The Prison Service

The transformation of the Prison Service, from a retributive mode to a rehabilitative and restorative one, will continue in fiscal 2006, with the staffing and commencement of operations of the **Prison Transformation Unit**. The introduction of a **Parole System**, which is another component of the transformation process will also be implemented in 2006.

Concurrently, work on the **Maximum Security Prison** was undertaken and is almost completed, with a view to bringing that facility up to full occupancy, and by so doing, relieve the overcrowding problem that currently exists at the Nation's prisons. Among the planned works, are the refurbishment of the electronic security/electrical systems and the construction and equipping of the Sewage Treatment Plant. In anticipation of the increased staff requirements that would arise from such an undertaking, the Ministry of National Security has also taken steps to recruit additional staff, so as to ensure that the Prison is adequately manned.

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Improvement and reconstruction works are ongoing at a number of other prison buildings, including the Administration Building and Workshop at Golden Grove, the Carrera Convict Prison and the Gymnasium at the Youth Training Centre are ongoing. It is also proposed, during this period, to review the training programme for recruits to allow for the introduction of best practices and to promote the use of state-of-the-art technology. Plans are also in train to establish a "Prison Industry" where inmates could work and earn money to support their families while in prison and allow for a start on exit.

### e) The Fire Services

This Ministry of National Security, having been charged with the responsibility to provide safety from fire in the areas of fire protection, suppression and other emergency services, will continue its programme of construction and refurbishment of Fire Stations across the country and the acquisition of vehicles and equipment necessary to achieve that objective. Most of the vehicles and equipment have already been acquired.

Among the areas earmarked for construction of new Fire Stations are San Fernando, Sangre Grande, Couva, Black Rock/Plymouth and Mayaro, while those earmarked for refurbishment include Rio Claro, Point Fortin, San Juan, Siparia and Belmont.

It is expected that the increased manpower requirements that will arise from the above constructions will necessitate the recruitment of additional firefighting staff, and efforts to meet that need have already been put in train, with the creation by Cabinet of five hundred and thirty four ( 534) positions for firefighters in 2005.

Upgrading of the **Salt Water System** has been approved by Cabinet for implementation in two phases. In addition, Cabinet's approval was obtained for the refurbishment and upgrade of equipment and facilities in downtown Port of Spain and environs to enable the effective supply of

water for firefighting. This programme of refurbishment is to be undertaken in two phases commencing in August 2005.

The Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service will also continue to benefit from its ongoing computerization project and the specialized training courses, which were undertaken and are still ongoing.

### f) Disaster Preparedness

The Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM), is committed to initiating and supporting activities related to disaster management in Trinidad and Tobago. Over the last year, the Office has been focusing on developing procedures and instituting measures that would serve to maximize preservation of life and protection of property in times of disaster.

With the appointment of its Chief Executive Officer, ODPM will continue its intense public education programmes, aimed at equipping members of the public with the knowledge that would allow them to respond to emergencies and disasters in a timely and appropriate manner. ODPM's capacity will be further strengthened by the implementation of training programmes for emergency service providers and first responders.

At the same time, ODPM will pursue the development and implementation of a **National Building Code**, and a **Nationwide Early Warning System** to deal with natural and man-made disasters as well as a **Disaster Management Policy** with a view to preventing the impact of disasters. The Engineering Battalion of the Trinidad and Tobago Regiment will be tasked to provide manpower and equipment to support the work of the ODPM.

## **XII. Key Economic Sectors**

- a) Energy And Energy Industries**
- b) Tourism**
- c) Agriculture**

### **a) Energy And Energy Industries**

The Energy Sector continues to lead the way in terms of contribution to the growth and development of the national economy. The sector has undergone a fundamental shift towards the predominance of natural gas instead of oil as the leading sub-sector. This has led to a number of strategic decisions, which are being implemented, by the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries in order to ensure maximum returns to Trinidad and Tobago from the exploitation of its natural resources. The Ministry is pursuing initiatives on several fronts to maximize returns to Government from the successful monetisation of the nation's oil and gas resources.

The sheer volume and range of activity in the Trinidad and Tobago Energy Sector has begun to outstrip the capability of the administrative machinery to monitor these developments in a timely and efficient manner. Recognising this, Government is actively engaged in a process of equipping the relevant agencies with the necessary resources such that they are capable of continuing to perform their required functions professionally and expeditiously. In this regard, the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries is in the midst of a restructuring exercise that will see a significant increase in its human resources to cope with the broadening mandate of the organization.

One of the key decisions taken by the Government relating to the issue of local value is that new project proposals in the downstream Natural Gas Sector should include a value-added element. Government has taken a policy decision that proposals for the production of first stage chemicals such as ammonia and methanol must

include an element whereby these outputs are utilised to produce a value-added product that can be either exported for higher value or used in local processes.

### **The Competitive Bidding Round 2003**

In 2003, the Competitive Bid Round 2003-2004 was initiated. The Bid Round put ten offshore blocks up for bidding. Government received a total of eighteen (18) bids for these blocks.

Arising from this, several of these bids were selected for further negotiation with the various bidders. Negotiations were successfully completed for six blocks during 2005; discussions are ongoing with respect to three blocks while the remaining block will be awarded in a new bid round in 2005. Government has subsequently signed six production sharing contracts that will result in the drilling of thirteen (13) exploratory wells over the next 24 months as part of the mandatory obligations of the various contractors.

### **Local Value Added**

Trinidad and Tobago is the number one exporter of ammonia and methanol. In this regard, Government has taken the view that it should not entertain further expansion of these industries unless they bring significant further value added to the country.

Specifically, in respect of downstream natural gas projects Government has indicated that its preference is for projects that include a component that takes the primary product of manufacture into another process thereby creating a value added product. In this connection plans are being progressed to establish plants to produce melamine, urea-ammonia nitrate and acetic acid.

### **Petrotrin Refinery**

The Government is aware that Petrotrin's Pointe-a-Pierre Refinery is currently facing major challenges with respect



## XII. Key Economic Sectors

to ageing, obsolete and, in some cases, undersized equipment. The Government has agreed to a proposal for a Gasoline Optimisation Programme and upgrade of ancillary utilities to be implemented over the next four years at Petrotrin, to improve the quality of gasoline production to high-end market specifications.

The Scope of Works includes, inter-alia:-

- An FCCU Upgrade,
- A new Alkylation Unit / Acid Plant,
- A new Prefabrication Unit / Isomerisation Unit, and
- A new Continuous Catalytic Regeneration Reforming Unit.

Upon completion of the programme, Petrotrin will be well placed to be the premier supplier in the region of high quality, environmentally friendly gasolines. Some of the main benefits arising from this programme will be as follows:-

- An increase in the gasoline yield from 24.7 percent to 30.7 percent through a reduction in unfinished gasoline and fuel oil;
- Improvement of the gasoline pool quality;
- Improvement in energy efficiency and environmental compliance; and
- Maintenance of refinery throughput at 168,000 barrels per calendar day.

### New Fiscal Regime For Oil And Gas

A new fiscal framework is of pressing importance as the exploration and production part of the Energy Sector has shifted towards greater production of gas than oil. The Government has recently completed its review exercise with respect to taxation issues on crude oil production. The Bill to amend the relevant legislation (Finance Bill 2005) was recently laid in the House of Representatives and was enacted in July 2005. This Bill included measures to correct anomalies in the legislation that governs the taxation of crude income. Investment incentives and

discounts will no longer be used in the computation of Supplemental Petroleum Tax [SPT].

The First Year Allowance will no longer be allowed as a deduction for the computation of Petroleum Profits Tax, which will be computed on a current-year basis and will continue to be payable in quarterly installments.

Cabinet has approved new fiscal frameworks for deep-water and natural gas operations. The relevant legislation is expected to be finalized in the near future. The legislative amendments in the Natural Gas Sub-sector will ensure that Government gets a fair share of the proceeds from the sale of natural gas.

### Local Content

The Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries has established the **Permanent Local Content Committee** and distributed several copies of its Local Content and Local Participation in the Energy Sector Policy and Framework. It is expected that the next fiscal year will see this committee provided with the resources and implementation framework to make its policy statement become a reality through the establishment of a Local Content Unit at the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries.

Progress is already underway in the industry that demonstrates the possibility for greater local content. Many of the artificial barriers to increasing local content and participation are being removed. One notable example is the Government's success in platform construction as companies have been persuaded to make use of the infrastructure provided by Government's investments in platform fabrication facilities at La Brea.

The fabrication yard at La Brea has so far seen the construction of two offshore platforms, the Kairi-1 Platform for BHP Billiton and the Cannonball platform for bpTT. There is another platform under construction for EOG Resources and bpTT is scheduled to begin work on a second platform by the end of 2005.

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The utilization of this facility by the companies operating in the country takes the Government another step closer to the realization of maximizing local value added.

### **Iron And Steel Proposals**

Government is currently giving consideration to two proposals aimed at the revitalization of the iron and steel industry. In one instance NUCOR has expressed an interest in setting up a Mega-Module Midrex plant to produce 1.5 million tonnes per annum of Hot Briquette Iron (HBI) at the company's original site in Point Lisas. The International Steel Group (ISG) purchased the assets of Cleveland Cliffs and Associates (CAL) and now intends to restart the plant and bring it to commercial levels of production. ISG's expansion plans call for increasing production in Trinidad and Tobago to 1.5 million tonnes. Both companies have taken initiatives and made commitments that could lead to opportunities for the establishment of plants producing downstream products based either on cast-steel or cast-iron.

### **Aluminium Smelter Proposals**

Government is at present in receipt of proposals for the construction of two aluminum smelter plants at two new industrial estates, which are presently under development. One plant will be located at Cap-de-Ville, Point Fortin, and the other at Union Industrial Estate, La Brea. Critically, Government has indicated to both of the potential investors that its overarching policy regarding downstream projects requires the inclusion of a value-added element to the production of aluminum. In response, one of these proposals has clearly outlined plans that would see the utilization of 100 percent of the produced aluminum in downstream facilities that will be located in varied locations in Trinidad.

The Cap-de-Ville proposal envisages the construction of a 341,000 metric tons per annum plant. The other proposal for La Brea incorporates a 125,000 metric tons per

annum plant in an integrated aluminum complex catering for a number of downstream facilities. A Development Centre is currently being established at Wallerfield, which will undertake research and development work and the production of aluminum based products downstream the proposed plants.

### **Atlantic LNG Train 4**

The shareholders of Atlantic LNG are currently close to completion of a fourth liquefaction train (Train 4). Train 4, with the capacity to produce 5.2 million tonnes of LNG per annum (mtpa) from an inlet gas capacity of 800 million cubic feet per day, will become the largest single LNG train in production. Start up of Train 4 will increase total gas utilization for LNG production to 2.3 Bcf/d and the total output from the Atlantic LNG facility to 15.1 mtpa, further positioning Trinidad and Tobago as one of the leaders in LNG production in the world.

### **LNG Value Chain**

At present, Government's interest in LNG production in Trinidad and Tobago is represented by the NGC's 10 percent shareholding in ALNG Train1 and its 11.11 percent share in ALNG Train 4. These shares in Atlantic LNG are held by two subsidiary companies as follows:-

- NGC Trinidad and Tobago LNG Limited which holds 100 percent of NGC's 10 percent equity in Train 1; and
- NGC LNG (Train 4) limited which holds all of NGC's equity (11.11 percent) plus supply and marketing rights in ALNG Train 4.

Government has recently approved a new institutional structure for the LNG industry of Trinidad and Tobago. The existing subsidiary of NGC, NGC LNG (Train 4) Limited has been given the twin mandate to actively manage Governments assets and investments in the LNG sector and to promote and develop business opportunities in the LNG industry both locally and internationally in conjunction with the Natural Gas Export Task Force.

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In consideration of the tremendous profitability of the global LNG business, especially those projects that sell their output to the US market, the Government's has articulated a new policy initiative, which seeks to explore investment opportunities in other elements of the LNG value chain. This includes shipping, regasification facilities, distribution and marketing to the final consumer.

In response, several potential partners have submitted proposals for investments along the entire LNG value chain. Government is currently reviewing these proposals with a view to selecting the most attractive and strategic options.

### Pipeline System Expansion

The National Gas Company is very close to completion of two major pipeline projects that will significantly increase the company's capability to deliver increased volumes of natural gas to new projects as and when needed. Being built at a cost of TT\$1.7 billion, the 76.5 kilometer 56-inch Cross Island Pipeline (CIP) will have a transmission capacity of 2.4 billion cubic feet per day (Bcf/d), and will initially service the Atlantic LNG Train 4 expansion, and possesses significant spare capacity to serve the needs of future LNG expansions and new gas based industries to be developed at the Union Industrial Estate at La Brea.

In addition, the TT\$980 million Beachfield Upstream Development (BUD) pipeline, which will see a 36-inch offshore line completed, will help to increase gas deliverability from offshore processing facilities.

The Beachfield Upstream Development (BUD) project entails the construction of a 63 kilometer, 36-inch offshore gas pipeline from bpTT's Cassia B platform off the south-east coast of Trinidad. The BUD project will increase NGC's transmission capacity to Point Lisas Industrial Estate from 1.4 Bcf/d to 2.0 Bcf/d to meet the increased gas demand for the M5000 methanol plant and the future growth in natural gas utilization.

During the second half of 2005, all three of these mega-projects, Atlantic LNG Train 4, NGC 56-inch Cross-Island Pipeline and the 36-inch BUD pipeline will be brought on stream.

### The Quarry Industry

In reviewing plans for the sector Government has recognized the need to release more material to market. In this regard a policy decision has been taken to liberalize the market to allow the import and export of aggregate without restriction. Government has also recognized the need to eradicate the incidence of illegal quarrying and to ensure that correct royalties are paid to the state.

Government is therefore proposing a plan of action to regulate and bring order to the Quarry Industry. The plan would include the following:-

- Regularization of current quarry operations on State lands,
- Allocation of quarry lands in Tapana,
- Installation of a public Weighbridge System to quantify production, and
- A baseline EIA survey in quarry areas, both virgin and areas currently worked, to define quarry zones.

The Minerals Act and Regulations, which is currently being revised with the aim to have it presented in Parliament during the third quarter 2005, will govern activities in the sector. Legislation will be enacted to establish a **Quarries Authority** to administer the industry and a Geological Survey to conduct all exploration work in Trinidad and Tobago.

### Power Generation Expansion

There is now an urgent need to advance the process of providing additional capacity for T&TEC to meet the rapidly growing electricity demand in the country.

The steadily increasing domestic demand coupled with

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the rapidly growing industrial demand are two of the key drivers. On top of this, the potential for additional steel production and the possibility of an aluminum smelter project have added impetus for the Government to seek an expansion in the country's power generation capacity.

Based on responses to a request for proposals, T&TEC is in negotiations with a selected provider to have additional generation capacity installed and operational by the year 2006.

### b) Tourism

Government will continue to pursue initiatives to enhance the contribution of the Tourism Sector to the country's Gross Domestic Product and to employment generation through increased visitor arrivals. Integral to this process would be the strengthening of partnerships between private and public sector stakeholders with responsibility for development, marketing and management of the Tourism Industry. With its rich eco and other natural resources, Tobago will continue to be positioned as an ideal "leisure" destination and Trinidad as a major "conference and event market".

Very significant to Government's tourism development thrust has been the establishment of a new company in 2005, the **Tourism Development Company Limited**, dedicated to the development of the nation's tourism product and to the marketing of Trinidad and Tobago to international visitors.

Over the medium-term, Government's vision for the development of the Tourism Industry will include the following:-

- **Integrated Resort Development:-** Upgrade of Trinidad and Tobago's existing room stock to acceptable international standards, and the establishment of a critical mass of new rooms led

by the 5-star end of the market and supported by a full range of accommodation options to enhance Trinidad and Tobago's reputation in Tourism;

- **Infrastructure Development:-** Positioning of Port-of-Spain as the Meetings and Conventions Capital of the Southern Caribbean, in support of its existing status as the business center of the sub-region and through the establishment of a Tourism Industrial Park and rehabilitation of the Port-of-Spain Waterfront;

- **Product Development:-** Positioning of Trinidad and Tobago as the destination with the warmest welcome and highest quality service in the Caribbean and the ensuring that all aspects of Trinidad and Tobago's supporting infrastructure which are necessary for sustainable growth are provided in a timely fashion;

- **Marketing:-** Ensuring that in every principal tourism source market Trinidad and Tobago is a recognized tourism destination that provides the highest quality and best value for money experience. Ensuring also that all major markets are adequately served with competing carriers, with convenient schedules and competitive fares; and

- **Investment:-** Instituting of investment incentives supported by efficient enabling procedures to guarantee that Trinidad and Tobago's tourism sector becomes an exciting, risk reduced investment opportunity for international and domestic investors alike.

To support this vision, the following major tourism initiatives will be carried out in the medium-term:-

- Expansion of the hotel room stock through the effective administration of attractive investment incentives;
- Strengthening of the regulatory framework;
- Pursuance of a targeted and dynamic overseas marketing and promotion campaign;
- Branding of Trinidad and Tobago as a preferred tourism destination;

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- Increased airlift into the islands;
- Enhancement of industry standards and quality service through a process of human resource development and on-going industry training;
- Upgrade of selected major sites and attractions;
- Development of various facets of our uniquely differentiated tourism product;
- Generation of a higher level of tourism awareness among the population; and
- Strengthening of Lifeguard Services.

The drive towards establishing a **Tourism Satellite System of Accounting** will also be accelerated with a view to more effectively measuring the contribution of the Tourism Sector to the economy, thus facilitating planning and decision-making. (Box 12:2)

### Spanish As The First Foreign Language

The Ministry of Tourism will also continue its lead role in advancing the national initiative of making **“Spanish as the First Foreign Language” (SAFFL)** in Trinidad and Tobago. The SAFFL initiative is a practical response

#### Box: 12:1 – The Tourism Satellite System Of Accounting

Internationally, there is increasing awareness of tourism’s role as a productive activity and its potential to generate value added, employment, government income and other benefits whether directly or through induced effects in the economy. In many countries, including Trinidad and Tobago, the true economic significance of tourism has however often been underestimated.

The Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) is an internationally recognized statistical instrument, a “satellite” revolving around the concepts, definitions and aggregates of the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA). The TSA will, among other things, make it possible to make valid comparisons with other industries, as well as between countries or groups of countries.

to the reality that Trinidad and Tobago is located in a hemisphere in which the majority of the population is Spanish speaking. It will facilitate a new learning environment through which an increasing number of citizens of Trinidad and Tobago will learn and adopt Spanish as their first foreign language by 2020, thereby ensuring that the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago speak the language that is increasingly driving trade in our Region. The SAFFL initiative will therefore lead to improved communications with the Latin American Market and make this country more attractive to our Spanish speaking neighbours.

### c) Agriculture

The Agriculture Sector is critical to the nation’s goal of achieving Developed Nation Status by 2020. Specifically, Government envisages that by the year 2020 Agriculture will be competitive and will possess the capacity to sustain that competitiveness by becoming more resilient, adaptive and market driven as well as by adopting suitable technologies. The Sector will also provide for sustainable livelihoods in the Rural Sector as well as the food and nutrition security needs of the Nation.

The overarching developmental policy objectives informing the Vision 2020 mission for the Sector are to:-

- Improve agriculture production and productivity while sustaining the country’s renewable natural resources and ecosystems;
- Increase the contribution of the Agriculture Sector to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP);
- Improve the Nation’s food security and food sovereignty;
- Facilitate competitiveness and improve profitability in Agriculture, as well as encourage Private Sector investment in Agriculture;
- Increase the involvement of youth in Agriculture and facilitate adequate succession planning within the Sector;

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- Pursue a sustainable rural development agenda, including the development of agro-industries as sources of employment;
- Promote the sustainable development of the Fisheries Industry as a critical mechanism for employment generation, rural development, agro-processing and export earning; and
- Develop an adequate and reliable **Agricultural Information System** to provide readily available data on all components of the Agriculture Sector.

As the main Government agency for formulating Agricultural Policy and providing support to the Sector, the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources will be the prime mover in fulfilling Government's vision for the sector. To facilitate the performance of its task, the Ministry recently embarked on a strategic planning process and has developed an action plan to transform itself into a performance driven organization.

In this regard, the following key strategic priorities will steer the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources over the medium-term:-

### **Improvement and strengthening of stakeholders' needs and relationships through:-**

- Rapid Response to the needs of agricultural stakeholders;
- Improved access roads, better physical infrastructure;
- Farmer incentive programmes;
- Improved services for veterinarians, artificial insemination, diagnostic and testing, analytical laboratory services, provision of planting material and improved breeding stock (goat, sheep, cattle etc.);
- Research and Development and technology transfer;
- Provision of extension support to stakeholders;

- Land tenure and land distribution for agriculture;
- Support to reduce praedial larceny; and
- Legislation to support new international trading arrangements for agricultural produce.

### **Improvement of the performance systems of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources through:-**

- Increasing technology usage and adaptation;
- Improved staff competencies and leadership;
- Effective leadership which gives direction with integrity;
- Improved management supervision;
- Improved human resource development – training, motivation, recognition, rewards;
- Provision of extension support; and
- Re-alignment of the Ministry's organizational structure by restructuring Divisions to become more relevant to current and future needs.

### **Improvement in information and technological infrastructure to enhance information flow and decision-making.**

Consistent with the Strategic Objectives and the Action Plan of the Ministry, Government will focus in the medium-term on the following Programmes:-

- Development, repair and maintenance of agricultural access roads;
- Implementation of adequate and appropriate water management programmes including irrigation and drainage initiatives;
- Implementation of programmes to bring additional agricultural lands into active agricultural production;
- Intensification and expansion of agriculture education and training programmes;
- Development of the Fisheries Sub-Sector;
- Improvement of the collection, analysis, storage and retrieval of agricultural data;

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- Revitalization of targeted regions and strategic sub-sectors in agriculture: cocoa, small ruminants, rice, apiculture and poultry; and
- Improvement of the competitiveness of locally produced agricultural commodities in the domestic and export markets.

### Agricultural Access Roads

Government acknowledges that it must continuously upgrade the infrastructure of the Agricultural Sector in order to facilitate the Sector's accomplishment of its vision of contributing towards Developed Nation Status. Access roads are particularly essential to facilitate easy transport of supplies to and produce from agricultural establishments and bring additional agricultural lands into production. In the light of the crucial role that access roads perform, Government will expand its programmes in the medium-term to maintain and repair existing agricultural access roads, as well as, intensify its efforts to develop new agricultural access roads through a plan of action which includes developing a **Geographic Information System (GIS)** database to evaluate the usage of existing and prospective access roads and developing specifications for the design and maintenance of these roads.

### Water Management

Water management is another facet of Government's recognition of the need to develop the infrastructure for the Sector. Emphasis will be placed on irrigation to address instances of water deficit, including bringing idle land under production and to control flooding and improve drainage in areas of excess water to ensure that production is not hampered. To achieve this, among other things, Government will maintain the existing water infrastructure and develop a master plan for drainage and irrigation.

### Land Resource Management

In its efforts to improve the productive capacity of the Sector as embodied in the Vision 2020 objective, Government is placing priority on the effective use of the nation's land resources. This is considered as being essential to sustainable agriculture development.

Government's medium-term programme will therefore address the issues that hinder the effective utilization of land resources, namely, the lack of effective enabling legislation, the lack of an institutional framework for land management and insecurity of tenure. These will be addressed through :-

- The **Land Adjudication and Registration Project**;
- Development of the **Agricultural Land Information System** and inventory of state lands;
- Revision of geographic/topographic database;
- The production of medium-scale mapping for large scale digital mapping; and
- Accelerated land distribution.

### Agricultural Education And Training Programmes

Government recognizes that in order to increase agricultural production and productivity, agricultural operators must build-up their productive capacity through the use of appropriate agricultural technologies. These technologies however cannot be effectively employed without a well trained agricultural workforce. Government will therefore, expand and intensify its agricultural education and training programmes with particular emphasis on the **Youth Apprenticeship Programme in Agriculture (YAPA)**. The main aim of the YAPA programme is to equip young entrants to the Agricultural Sector with the technological knowledge and skills required for agribusiness.

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The YAPA programme was introduced by Government in response to the aging of the farming population and the stagnation of entrepreneurial activity at the entry level of the sector. In addition to its technological focus the programme will provide for the support of the new entrants in the area of land and credit facilities. In YAPA's current planning period emphasis will be placed on:-

- Orientation or Awareness - Trainees will be exposed to various aspects of agriculture for a period of eight weeks; and
- Intensive Training - graduates will be exposed to agricultural production and farm management practices for a period of nine (9) months.

YAPA is a work in progress that will achieve accelerating levels of success in the coming years.

### Fisheries

Special programmes are being implemented by Government to achieve its strategic objective of sustainably managing the nation's renewable marine and other fisheries resources. Priority is currently being given to the establishment of **HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point)** compliant Fishing Centres at selected locations throughout the country, through the repair and upgrade of existing centers to HACCP Standards. Government will also be conducting a comprehensive assessment of the country's fish stock and special attention will be placed on continuing appropriate fishery research and development programmes and on implementing an ecosystem approach to the management of our marine resources.

In addition, the Fisheries Sector will benefit from programmes aimed specifically at ensuring a sustainable fishery, including:-

- The establishment of a monitoring surveillance unit and expansion and maintenance of an effective system of data collection;
- Ensuring effective fishery resource management systems and regulations; and
- Training of fisher folk and marketers.

### Computerisation Of Records

In recognition of the country's need for timely and reliable agricultural information and data, Government has prioritized the establishment of an **Agricultural Communication/Telecommunication Infrastructure** which will include services such as the internet. This programme will focus on:-

- Upgrading telecommunication land and mobile equipment;
- Establishment of an **Information Technology Unit**;
- Providing network capabilities;
- Acquisition of enabling software; and
- Establishment of a record and information management system.

### Development Of Strategic Agriculture Sub-sectors

Government will continue to support efforts to revitalize the Cocoa Sub-sector to enable it to contribute to Government's sectoral objectives of employment generation and increased foreign earnings capacity through:-

- The development of commercial varieties;
- Purchasing of laboratory equipment;
- Construction of irrigation ponds; and
- Refurbishment of the facilities of the **Cocoa Research Unit**.



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Consistent with the Vision 2020 objective for the development of the Sector, the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources will support programmes to ensure that the Sector increases its contribution to food and nutrition security by increasing self-sufficiency in the following strategic foods by 2020:-

- Rice (20 percent);
- Root crops and tubers (80 percent);
- Small ruminants (25 percent);
- Aquaculture (10 percent); and
- Dairy (15 percent).





