



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago  
**MINISTRY OF FINANCE**

For immediate release

July 2nd, 2023

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **The Ministry of Finance does not Approve or Condone Breaches of the Financial Laws and Regulations**

The Minister of Finance has taken note of statements attributed to Mr. Gary Griffith, former Commissioner of Police, and current Political Leader of the National Transformation Alliance (NTA), in the Trinidad Guardian Newspaper of Saturday, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 that the Government and/or Ministry of Finance “approved” various items of expenditure at the TTPS while he was the Commissioner of Police, some of which are now under query because of an audit.

Mr. Griffith’s statements were in response to the disclosure of an Audit Report, done by the Ministry of Finance, extracts of which were read out on a PNM political platform in St. James on Thursday, June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

The Minister of Finance is aware that the NTA is currently contesting several seats in Diego Martin and Port of Spain in the upcoming Local Government Election and as a result is reluctant to engage in any public tit-for-tat with Mr. Griffith on the expenditure of public funds. However, there are a few matters that must be addressed in the public interest.

Mr. Griffith, as the Accounting Officer for TTPS, which is a specific Head of Expenditure (Head 64), would have received his budgetary allocations over the period 2018 to 2021, like all other accounting officers within the public sector.

Mr. Griffith would also have received the usual appointment letter as an Accounting Officer, which is sent to all Accounting Officers within the public sector by the Minister of Finance, giving him guidance on his role, functions, and responsibilities with respect to matters of finance, and advising him to strictly comply with the requirements of the

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Exchequer and Audit Act Chap. 69:01, the Financial Regulations and all applicable financial laws.

Thereafter, Mr. Griffith would have proceeded to make his own decisions as Accounting Officer, manage his budget, incur liabilities, employ personnel, procure goods and services and award contracts. It would be expected that he would strictly comply with the financial laws and regulations in his capacity as an Accounting Officer, as stated in his letter of appointment as an Accounting Officer.

It could be inferred from Mr. Griffith's comments that the Ministry of Finance approved some or all the questionable contract awards that were highlighted in the Audit Report and disclosed at that PNM meeting on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

However, for the avoidance of doubt, no one at the Ministry of Finance – no public servant or Minister – approved any alleged breach by Mr. Griffith of the Exchequer and Audit Act, the Financial Regulations, the Central Tenders Board Act, or any other financial law, if such occurred during his tenure as Commissioner of Police.

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The Honourable Colm Imbert M.P.  
Minister of Finance