



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO NATIONAL STATEMENT

**BY
SENATOR THE HONOURABLE DONNA COX,
MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY SERVICES OF
THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

**AT THE
62ND SESSION OF THE COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

ON THE PRIORITY THEME:

**‘Fostering social development and social justice through social policies to
accelerate progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable
Development and to achieve the overarching goal of poverty eradication’**

**UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
FEBRUARY 6, 2024**

Madam Chair,

Trinidad and Tobago aligns with the statements delivered on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago aspires to ensure that its society evolves into one in which no one is left behind, where all citizens, including women, young people, older persons, persons with disabilities, are afforded equal opportunity in every sphere of national life, including access to social services and decent work; where all citizens are cared for and treated with dignity and respect.

Theme I of our National Development Strategy that is, 'Putting People First', seeks especially to 'ground our society in the principles of social justice'. Trinidad and Tobago holds the view that SDG 1 on 'Ending Poverty in all its forms everywhere' through social development and social justice, sits at the heart of the 17 SDGs.

Madam Chair,

The eradication of poverty is one of the main objectives of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. In this context, permit me to highlight some of the measures implemented on a national level, through the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services, to minimize and roll back poverty and reduce inequality.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has been working in tandem with civil society organizations and other State partners to collaborate on a number of poverty alleviation initiatives within the social protection system. Additionally, we have employed robust measurement techniques to clinically assess the impact of the country's social programme interventions on multidimensional poverty and vulnerability reduction.

Efforts are currently underway to establish a National Register of Vulnerable Persons. It is anticipated that the Register would enhance the overall efficiency of the country's social protection system and facilitate the rapid response to adverse situations regarding vulnerable groups, by matching them against available programmes and services, as well as track their progress out of vulnerability.

Furthermore, Trinidad and Tobago is advancing towards the establishment of a National Poverty Reduction Strategy which has strategic implications for a number of policies and initiatives across the social sector.

Madam Chair,

Trinidad and Tobago also reaffirms its commitment to reducing socioeconomic inequality through the empowerment of our vulnerable citizens. Consequently, the Sowing Empowerment through Entrepreneurial Development programme provides a funding mechanism for recipients of social welfare who have shown interest in starting or improving their businesses but who are unable to gain access to funding of their own. These grants help to foster self-sufficiency and independent living.

Trinidad and Tobago continues to collaborate with its United Nations partners in the fight against poverty in all its forms. We have entered into a five-year cycle to establish a new cooperation agreement with the United Nations Country Team, known as the Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022-2026, which focuses on *Equality, Well-being and Leaving No One Behind*.

It is noteworthy that this sustained partnership has facilitated crucial support and assistance in addressing key national development priorities and catering to vulnerable segments of the population.

Madam Chair,

As we mark the thirtieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, we underscore that the family plays a pivotal role in shaping values, attitudes and behaviours of societies. By fostering an eco-social conscious family structure, we have formalized a number of comprehensive policy frameworks to strengthen and support the family and promote the health, well-being, and rights of the persons along the age spectrum.

The impact of the pandemic sought to uncover already widening gaps amongst our social classes. Committed to Leaving no one behind, Trinidad and Tobago has targeted its efforts to institutionalize digital technology to transform the social sector through initiatives such as the Integrated Social Enterprise Management System which will serve to connect the social protection system and streamline processes, promote interoperability and achieve more effective delivery of services.

Madam Chair,

In conclusion, I wish to underscore the commitment of Trinidad and Tobago to actively reduce multidimensional poverty and vulnerabilities by strengthening our social protection system, applying robust research data collection techniques, working along with our social protection partners to direct resources to those in greatest needs and ensuring that our social support services are efficient, targeted and effective.

Thank you and God bless you!