



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

**Ministry of Social Development and Family Services**



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Monday, 14 December 2020

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Priority: **HIGH**

### **Ministry of Social Development and Family Services meets with Representatives of the Supermarkets Association of Trinidad and Tobago**

*Port-of-Spain* --- Senator the Honourable Donna Cox, Minister of Social Development and Family Services (MSDFS) and members of her Executive met today with the President of the Supermarkets Association of Trinidad and Tobago (SATT), Mr. Rajiv Diptee, and the Vice President, Sunita Persad, at the Ministry's Head Office on St Vincent Street, Port of Spain.

The discussion focused on strategies to deepen the collaboration between the Ministry and the Association, in an effort to mitigate any concerns with two of the Ministry's most recent initiatives involving public interaction with supermarkets, grocers and merchants. These initiatives include temporary food cards distributed to Members of Parliament and the ongoing initiative to update existing food cards for recipients under the Food Support Programme.

Minister Cox further highlighted the importance of collaborating with the Ministry's stakeholders, as there are areas that require legislation for more transparency and accountability. She indicated "The Ministry is looking at different ways to get the job done efficiently and effectively. We have to minimize fraudulent activity as these have negative impact on the economy of Trinidad and Tobago. There is a strong need to put checks and balances in place to stop any misuse of the food card." In this regard, discussions on strategies to mitigate fraudulent activity as it pertains to Senior Citizens Pension cheques were also undertaken.

SATT President, Diptee, indicated that the Ministry plays a major role in supporting the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago and that the Association wants to continue working alongside the Ministry, to maintain and monitor adherence to the rules and regulations related to the various grants, inclusive of grocery items approved under the Food Support Programme. He gave the undertaking that his Association stands ready to provide all necessary support aimed at improving the efficiency of the Ministry's Food Support Programme.

Both parties agreed that ongoing discussions will take place in order to help, empower and transform the lives of vulnerable citizens.

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**For more information:**

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*Senator the Honourable Donna Cox and the President of the Supermarkets Association of Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Rajiv Diptee*



*Senator the Honourable Donna Cox, alongside her executive team and the President of the Supermarkets Association, Mr. Rajiv Diptee and Vice President, Ms. Sunita Persad*



*Discussion of strengthening collaboration taking place between Minister Cox and the Supermarkets Association of Trinidad and Tobago.*



*The Supermarket Association highlighting the need for collaboration with the MSDFS.*