



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Minister Cox applauds the Opening of 'Inclusive Playground'

Port-of-Spain --- In keeping with the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services' drive to provide equal access to opportunities and resources for persons with disabilities, Senator the Honourable Donna Cox, Minister of Social Development and Family Services earlier today; attended the official handover ceremony of the Angostura sponsored 'Inclusive Playground', at the Princess Elizabeth Centre on Ariapita Avenue, Port of Spain.

Minister Cox was the feature speaker at the handover, which was attended by other dignitaries including His Worship, Alderman Joel Martinez, Mayor of Port of Spain and Lisa Morris-Julian, Minister in the Ministry of Education. Also in attendance were Terrence Bharath, Chairman of Angostura Limited, Ian Forbes, Ag. CEO of Angostura Limited, Rahim Mohammed, Executive Manager of Corporate Services, Angostura Limited and Professor Clement Imbert, Ag. Chairman of Princess Elizabeth Centre.

In her brief address, the Minister stated that today's event was a demonstration of the value of public-private partnership in providing much-needed support to vulnerable children in Trinidad and Tobago. According to Minister Cox, "The United Nations Convention on Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) to which our country is a signatory, endorses support to children with disabilities declaring that *"all necessary measures should be employed to ensure the full enjoyment by children with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children."*

As she addressed the audience, Minister Cox also noted that it is imperative that equality and equity is pursued and provided to all persons with disabilities, so that they too can continue to lead fulfilling and industrious lives as we continue along the journey of national development. Consequently, she gave the assurance that the Executive Team and staff of the Ministry are committed to providing effective social services delivery for persons with disabilities, including children.

Minister Cox also took the opportunity to commend Angostura for raising funds to assist in the construction of the specialized playground. The Centre has been in operation since 1953, catering for the various needs of the differently abled children under its care. Services include a modern operating theatre, outpatient clinic and an orthopaedic workshop. All equipment is specifically geared for children with disabilities. The Centre also offers primary schooling, occupational therapy, and speech therapy.

In closing, the Minister stated that this gesture adds significantly towards ensuring that children with disabilities have an opportunity to enjoy their lives in the midst of their challenges” she said.

Improvement of the overall quality of life for persons with disabilities is high on the Ministry’s agenda. At the end of the event, His Worship, Alderman Joel Martinez commended Angostura for their Corporate Social Responsibility, stating “Even in these times of financial challenges for business entities, Angostura was still willing to be generous, especially in this season of giving.”

The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services remains committed to maintaining partnerships in an effort to ensure that the most vulnerable are supported in their most critical time of need.

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Minister Cox and Rahim Mohammed, Executive Manager of Corporate Services, Angostura Limited try out the equipment at the Inclusive Playground



(l-r) Professor Clement Imbert, Ag. Chairman of Princess Elizabeth Centre, His Worship, Alderman Joel Martinez, Mayor of Port of Spain, Terrence Bharath, Chairman of Angostura Limited and Minister Cox discuss the way forward for children with disabilities



(l-r) Lisa Morris-Julian, Minister in the Ministry of Education, Ian Forbes, CEO of Angostura Limited, Minister Cox, Terrence Bharath, Chairman of Angostura Limited, Professor Clement Imbert, Ag. Chairman of Princess Elizabeth Centre and His Worship, Alderman Joel Martinez, Mayor of Port of Spain



Minister Cox delivers the feature address at the Opening of the ‘Inclusive Playground’ for children with disabilities

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