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I. INTRODUCTION

The Trinidad and Tobago economy has continued to register strong positive growth given the continued buoyancy of the Energy Sector and strengthening performances in the Manufacturing, Construction and Financial Services Sectors. While unemployment recorded a marginal increase (0.1 percent) in 2003, core inflation has continued its declining trend, registering 3.8 percent for calendar year 2003.

In spite of prevailing uncertainties in the global arena, the outlook for the next three years is for continued growth in real GDP and low inflation. In addition, projections for all the other key economic indicators remain positive underscoring the resilience of the economy.

This notwithstanding, a major challenge of Government lies in ensuring social equity and robust expansion of the Non-oil Sectors, which present the greatest possibility for employment generation and wealth creation for the vast majority of the citizenry.

The Social and Economic Policy Framework (SEPF), which was developed in collaboration with all Ministries and Agencies of Government, is a comprehensive representation of the social and economic policies and strategies of Government for the period 2005-2007.

The document outlines the external and domestic environment, which places Government's medium-term socio-economic policies and strategies in context and outlines sectoral policies and principal strategies for attaining the Vision 2020 objective. The key medium-term objectives for the period 2005-2007 include:-

- Promoting an equitable society by eradicating poverty and reducing imbalances in the society;
- Developing a human resource base to produce a competent, productive and knowledgeable workforce;
- Sustaining robust economic growth by pursuing sound macroeconomic management and targeting key economic sectors toward higher value-added activities;

- Enhancing competitiveness to meet the challenges of globalization and liberalization;
- Adopting environmentally sustainable development strategies to ensure long-term growth; and
- Promoting a more cohesive, tolerant and harmonious society.

II. GLOBAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

- **INTERNATIONAL**
- **REGIONAL**

• **INTERNATIONAL¹**

GROWTH

Global economic growth is currently estimated at 4.6 percent for 2004, a significant improvement over the 3.9 percent recorded in 2003. Current estimates for 2005 indicate a moderation in global economic expansion to 4.4 percent. Notwithstanding the overall expansion however, the pace and nature of the recovery varies significantly from region to region, being most apparent in Emerging Asia², where GDP growth is projected to remain at 7.2 percent in 2004, the highest level since the crisis of the mid-1990s. Buoyant growth in China, underpinned by rapid increases in investment and exports has provided strong support to activity in

Euro Area, which is still struggling with weak consumption. (Table 2.1).

In Latin America, while GDP growth, most notably in Brazil, remained weak in 2003, the recovery is expected to consolidate in 2004, mainly on account of stronger domestic demand, higher commodity prices and the overall global recovery. (Table 2.2)

In the Middle East, lower crude oil production has contributed to lower-than-expected growth, following the relatively high levels of 2003. While oil prices are presently favorable, the medium-term outlook remains a key risk, especially given difficult fiscal situations in a number of countries. (Table 2.2)

Among the poorest countries, GDP growth in Sub-Saharan Africa (excluding South Africa) jumped to 4.4 percent in 2003, aided by surging oil production in Nigeria. Overall growth for the region is expected to strengthen further in 2004, reflecting a combination of

TABLE 2.1: ADVANCED ECONOMIES: REAL GDP, CONSUMER PRICES, AND UNEMPLOYMENT

	Real GDP			Consumer Prices			Unemployment		
	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005
Advanced Economies	2.1	3.5	3.1	1.8	1.7	1.7	6.6	6.4	6.3
United States	3.1	4.6	3.9	2.3	2.3	2.2	6.0	5.5	5.4
Euro Area	0.4	1.7	2.3	2.1	1.7	1.6	8.8	9.1	8.9
Japan	2.7	3.4	1.9	-0.2	-0.4	-0.1	5.3	4.9	4.9
United Kingdom	2.3	3.5	2.5	1.4	1.6	1.8	5.0	4.9	4.9
Canada	1.7	2.6	3.1	2.7	1.4	1.9	7.6	7.4	7.1

SOURCE: IMF WORLD ECONOMIC OUTLOOK, APRIL 2004

countries both within and outside the region. GDP growth in India, aided by favorable rainfall and low domestic interest rates and currently projected at 6.8 percent for 2004 has also exceeded expectations.

Among the Industrialized Countries, the recovery is led by significant productivity improvements in the United States, with a projected GDP growth of 4.6 percent in 2004. Recovery is however less well established in the

improving macroeconomic fundamentals, higher commodity prices, better weather conditions, rising oil prices and increased gas production in several countries. (Table 2.2)

As the pace of global economic activity gained momentum, during the second half of 2003 and early 2004, the overall Index of Primary Commodity Prices increased by about 20 percent. This included both

¹ Source IMF World Economic Outlook, April, 2004

² Includes, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand

II. GLOBAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Energy and Non-energy products. (Box 2.1)

INFLATION

Notwithstanding a projected increase in commodity prices, inflation in the Developed Countries is expected to remain subdued in 2004. This is reflective of continued excess capacity, weak labour markets and limited producer pricing power in the face of strong domestic and global competition. Inflation is also expected to be similarly moderate in the major Emerging Markets and Developing Countries. This notwithstanding, concerns about deflationary pressures are abating, reflecting growing confidence in the sustainability of the recovery, rising commodity prices and specific undertakings by several monetary authorities to aggressively address deflationary pressures. (Table 2.1)

Box 2.1: Crude Oil

The global recovery, combined with currency developments, has fed through to commodity prices with crude oil prices rising steadily during the second half of 2003 and early 2004, climbing to \$40 a barrel, over \$10 a barrel higher than had been implied by futures quotations in April 2003, in the aftermath of the war in Iraq.

The main factors accounting for the unanticipated increase in crude oil prices appear to be delays in restoring Iraq's oil production and exports, a faster than expected pickup in oil consumption and continuing low commercial oil inventories. The depreciation of the US dollar against other major currencies also contributed to the rise in the dollar price of crude oil.

TABLE 2.2. SELECTED ECONOMIES: REAL GDP, CONSUMER PRICES, AND CURRENT ACCOUNT BALANCE

	Real GDP			Consumer Prices			Current Account Balance		
	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005
Mercosur ¹	1.9	4.0	3.7	14.4	6.1	5.8	1.8	0.6	-0.4
Andean Region ²	1.2	5.1	3.5	10.2	8.9	9.3	2.7	2.3	1.3
Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean	1.5	3.0	3.5	5.9	5.6	3.8	-1.8	-2.2	-2.4
China	9.1	8.5	8.0	1.2	3.5	3.0	2.1	1.6	1.9
India	7.4	6.8	6.0	3.8	4.3	4.1	0.5	0.2	0.3
EU Ascension ³	4.4	4.5	4.4	9.5	7.1	5.6	-3.8	-3.8	-3.5
Middle East	5.4	4.1	5.0	8.6	8.9	8.1	7.3	6.0	3.4
Middle East Oil Exporters	6.3	4.2	5.2	10.4	10.4	9.8	8.8	6.9	4.1
Africa	4.1	4.2	5.4	10.3	8.6	6.7	-0.7	-1.3	-2.0
Sub-Saharan Africa	4.4	5.1	7.0	17.9	14.8	9.2	-4.0	-4.3	-5.0

SOURCE: IMF WORLD ECONOMIC OUTLOOK, APRIL 2004

1: Includes: Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Bolivia and Chile

2: Includes: Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela.

3: Includes: Turkey, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Malta and Romania.

II. GLOBAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

INTEREST RATES

Global interest rates are very low, and emerging market countries have taken advantage of the favorable financing conditions to improve the structure of their liabilities. However, in this low-interest environment, there is a danger that future interest rate increases could lead to financial market volatility and thereby impact negatively on the emerging recovery.

REGIONAL ³

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

The economies of Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole grew by 1.5 percent in 2003 contrasting favorably with the 0.4 percent reduction in GDP registered in 2002. The regional economy is expected to grow by 3.5 percent in 2004. For the first time since 1997, no Latin American economy has a negative growth forecast. In spite of this, per capita income is still 1.5 percent below the 1997 level.

Unemployment remains high at 10.7 percent and poverty encompasses almost 44 percent of the region's population.

Overall economic activity in the Caribbean improved during 2003 leading to some level of recovery following a few years of sluggish growth. This was largely attributable to the combined effects of the overall economic recovery of the USA and Japan, the official end of the Iraq War, continued expansion of the Chinese economy and the containment of the SARS outbreak.

Also contributing to the economic upturn in the Caribbean in 2003 was the improvement in tourism, remittances and, to a lesser extent activity in Financial Services and Construction. Manufacturing and Agriculture experienced declines however.

Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada, Belize and Anguilla recorded the highest growth rates, in the region. Growth in most of the other countries, however, ranged from 1

percent to 2 percent. Regional inflation was fairly stable despite higher oil prices. Exchange rates, with the exception of Jamaica, showed little movement.

Barring further external shocks, the outlook for the Caribbean Region in 2004 is positive. The forecast is for improved economic growth as consumer and business confidence grows. Tourism will continue to play a vital role in the continued recovery of the region, followed by financial services and construction.

Some other relevant issues are the deepening of economic integration and the importance of health, as there is a critical link between these issues and economic development. The stemming of the spread of HIV/AIDS and reduction of its impact on the people and the economy of the region is a major issue. Regional security, poverty alleviation and increasing crime rates are also of growing concern throughout the region.

SELECTED COUNTRY PERFORMANCE

Barbados

The Barbados economy registered a moderate growth rate of 2.5 percent in 2003 reflecting mainly the recovery of Tourism, as most other sectors stalled or grew only moderately. Tourism is expected to continue its recovery in 2004. The overall balance of payments was positive and inflation (as measured by the Consumer Price Index) increased from 0.2 percent in 2002 to 1.3 percent in 2003.

Job creation initiatives in the Tourism, Commerce, Transportation and Communication Sectors were more than offset by job losses in other spheres of economic activity. This resulted in an increase in the unemployment rate from 10.3 percent in 2002 to 11.7 percent in 2003. Even so, the 2004 outlook for Barbados is favorable with continued moderate growth and a consequently positive outturn in the Government accounts.

³ Source: Preliminary Overview of the Economies of the Caribbean and Latin America - United Nations, 2003

II. GLOBAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Jamaica

The Jamaican economy grew by a marginal 1 percent in 2003. This was mainly due to the robust performance of the Agricultural Sector, where output expanded by 4.2 percent, largely on account of favorable weather conditions throughout the year.

Inflation rose by over 15 percent during the year, with the contributing factors being the devaluation of the Jamaican dollar, increased costs of fuel and transportation and adjustments in the minimum wage. Unemployment fell slightly, reflecting the minor improvement in economic activity.

Guyana

Guyana's economy, reflective of the overall trend in the Region, registered a modest 1 percent growth in GDP in 2003. Major contributory factors included a less-than-credible performance of the major economic sectors as well as the country's onerous external debt liability. A combination of higher fuel prices, stable international prices, steady nominal exchange rate and slight overall expansion resulted in a 6 percent increase in inflation.

Employment contracted in the public sector due to a hiring freeze and cutbacks but increased in the areas of livestock rearing as well as in the Transportation and Communication Sectors. The economic outlook for 2004 is particularly sober, given Guyana's macroeconomic imbalances and sectoral stagnation.

Suriname

In 2003, economic activity in Suriname grew by 3.5 percent (from 1.2 percent in 2002 and 1.3 percent in 2001). The major contributor to the economic expansion was the Mining Sector, which has benefited from foreign investment inflows. The inflation rate remained high, though not reaching its 2002 level. In spite of this, the authorities managed to turn the budget position from a deficit in 2002 to a surplus in 2003, through prudent

expenditure management and consolidation in the area of tax revenue.

With the introduction of a new currency in January 2004, a shrinking current account deficit as well as an improved budget position, the overall economic outlook for Suriname is positive for 2004.

Organization of Eastern Caribbean Countries (OECS)⁴

The OECS economies recorded an overall growth rate of 1 percent in 2003 and was largely driven by the improved performance of the Tourism Sector. An active advertising campaign and an increase in airline services contributed to the upsurge in activity in this Sector.

Despite the fact that inflation was contained at a moderate 1.3 percent, it was still higher than the figure recorded for the previous year and has been partially attributed to increased airport fees in Anguilla and higher telephone charges in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

In 2004, the outlook for the OECS-member countries is fair, based on continued positive improvements in Tourism and tighter fiscal policy by the authorities.

⁴ Comprises Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Monsterrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, Grenada, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

III. REVIEW OF DOMESTIC CONDITIONS

- **ECONOMIC**
- **SOCIAL**

ECONOMIC

THE REAL ECONOMY

The Trinidad and Tobago economy grew in real terms at the unprecedented rate of 13.2 percent⁵ during 2003. This surge in growth was propelled by continued rapid expansion of the Energy Sector, brought about by the commencement of production from Atlantic LNG Train III in April 2003. Improvements in the Services and Manufacturing Sectors also boosted the economy's performance during 2003. The subsequent leveling off of production from Train III, in conjunction with a weaker expansion of the Services Sector during 2004 is expected to reduce real growth this year to 6.2 percent.

The unemployment rate rose slightly to 10.5 in 2003 from 10.4 percent in 2002 due mainly to the voluntary separation of Caroni workers during 2003. Unemployment however has since resumed its declining trend leveling off at 10.2 percent during the last quarter of 2003 and the first quarter of 2004.

Inflation was recorded at 3.8 percent for calendar 2003, a continuation of the declining trend begun in 2002. During the first seven months of fiscal 2003/2004 inflation decreased to 3.3 percent from 3.9 percent for the similar period one year earlier.

FISCAL OPERATIONS⁶

The Central Government's Overall Fiscal Balance is anticipated to record a significant overall surplus of \$437.1 million or 0.6 percent of GDP. Similarly, the Current Account is also projected to register a substantial surplus of \$1.9 million or 2.8 percent of GDP. This is a considerably improved position compared to the originally budgeted deficit of \$312.3 million on the Overall Balance and a surplus of \$843.4 million on the

Current Account. Robust international oil and gas prices, strong petrochemical exports, continued efforts by Government to strengthen revenue collections, and manageable expenditure levels all contributed towards the surpluses on these balances. Total Expenditure is expected to increase from \$16,591.6 million in fiscal 2000/2003 to \$19,755.5 million in 2003/2004. This mainly reflects higher outlays to the Social Sector, transfer payments to State Enterprises and Statutory Boards and an increase in allocations to the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP).

STATE ENTERPRISES

Profits from Non-financial State Enterprises are projected to increase by 60.5 percent to \$615.3 million, consequent upon higher intakes by the National Lotteries Control Board and a rise in receipts from other State Enterprises. In contrast, profits from Financial Enterprises are projected to decline to \$105.8 million.

The operating performance of the State Enterprises is forecast to improve by 1.6 percent to \$2,672.6 million, reflecting operating surpluses from PETROTRIN (\$1,891.5 million), the National Gas Company (\$860.9 million), and TRINGEN (\$79.4 million). With regard to the Utilities, the estimated operating surplus of \$780.6 million for TSTT will be offset by operating losses from the other Utilities. The overall operating deficit for the Utilities however, is expected to decline to \$333.5 million.

DEBT

Gross Public Sector Debt is projected to increase from \$35,491.0 million in 2002/2003 to \$37,125.0 million or 52.7 percent of GDP in fiscal 2003/2004. Central Government Debt is also anticipated to increase to \$21,842.0 million or 31 percent of GDP. Contingent Liabilities, which includes both Guaranteed Debt and Letters of Comfort is expected to reach 21.7 percent of GDP. Central Government External Debt is anticipated to decrease to \$9,444.0 million or 13.4 percent of GDP. The Central Government Debt Service as a percentage

⁵ Central Statistical Office 2000=100 re-based figures.

⁶ Percentages of GDP in this Section are based on GDP calculated for the Fiscal Year, October to September.

III. REVIEW OF DOMESTIC CONDITIONS

of exports of goods and non-factor services are projected at 5.7 percent.

THE FINANCIAL SECTOR⁷

Central Bank Operations

After reducing the Repo rate by 25 basis points to 5 percent in September 2003 the Central Bank maintained this rate into the second quarter of 2004. This decision was made within the context of moderate growth in commercial bank credit, an inflation level that remained relatively low and a positive outlook for economic growth fuelled by expansions in the Energy Sector. At the end of June 2004, the Central Bank maintained the Repo rate of 5 percent as domestic conditions had not significantly changed.

During the review period, the financial system continued to experience high levels of liquidity, a trend prevailing since 2002. Net fiscal injections accounted for most of the liquidity in the financial system. In October 2003, the Central Bank lowered the reserve requirement for commercial banks from 18 percent to 14 percent and eliminated the 5 percent secondary reserve requirement. As a result of the 4 percent reduction in the reserve requirement, an estimated \$640 million, previously sterilized at the Central Bank was released to commercial banks. By the end of September 2004, an additional \$520 million in bonds is expected to be issued to accommodate further reductions in the reserve requirement. These special issues of government securities serve to absorb the excess liquidity in the financial system resulting from changes to the reserve requirements.

The Bank continued to intervene actively in the domestic money market. For the period January to June 2004, the Bank issued a net amount of \$679.3 million in open market treasury securities. These financial developments were necessary to stem a rapid expansion in domestic liquidity arising from central government fiscal operations.

In July 2004, the Government introduced a new auction system for government securities. This new regime, which will be administered by the Central Bank, will take initial steps to promote a secondary market for government securities. These initiatives, along with the reduction in the reserve requirement, are aimed at improving the efficiency of the Central Bank monetary policy. Under the new system, the Government placed its first issue of \$300 million on the market in August 2004. The next issue is expected to be in September 2004.

Money Supply

On average, data for the period October 2003 to May 2004 indicate that the narrow money aggregate increased by approximately 20 percent to \$7,887.6 million from \$6,543.4 million for the comparative period a year earlier. Similarly, broad money (M2) exhibited a rising trend for the eight-month period and increased by 11.6 percent to \$18,841.2 million from \$16,878.5 million for the same period in 2002/2003.

Liquidity

For most of 2003 and continuing into 2004, the financial system was highly liquid and the Central Bank managed this liquidity through open market operations. The excess liquidity was largely associated with the expansion in Government Expenditure which resulted in a cumulative injection of \$1,645 million into the financial system during October 2003 - January 2004. The excess liquidity and low stable interest rates on fixed income financial instruments that prevailed over the period, prompted the more sophisticated investor to switch funds into higher yielding investments outside of the Banking system.

At the beginning of the financial year the amount outstanding on Open Market Operation (OMO) Bills was \$785 million and by the end of July 2004 this amount increased by approximately 13.3 percent to \$890 million. In addition, maturities of OMO Bills (Redemptions) for the 10-month period totalled \$1,760 million and the total face value of OMO Bills issued amounted to \$1,865 million. As a consequence, the amount outstanding to

⁷ Source: Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago

III. REVIEW OF DOMESTIC CONDITIONS

the end of July 2004 increased by \$105 million. The discount rate for Bills issued averaged 4.93 percent compared with 4.44 percent during the period October-July 2002/2003. The use of OMOs is consistent with the growing trend in many developing countries to move away from a reliance on reserve requirements as a direct instrument of monetary policy to more market based instruments.

Credit and Interest Rates

Concomitant with the maintenance of the Repo Rate by the Central Bank and the reduction in the reserve requirement, commercial banks' lending rates have declined with the prime lending rates falling by 200 basis points from 11.50 percent in September 2003 to 9.50 percent by 2003. At the end of April 2004, this lower rate was maintained unchanged by the commercial banks. Similarly, mortgage interest rates also declined from 12.50 percent in October to 9.50 percent in April 2004. The average discount rate on 90-day Treasury Bills ranged between 4.78 percent and 4.85 percent within the review period October 2003 to March 2004.

The reduction in lending rates has been accompanied by rising levels in private sector credit demand. In the six-month period ended March 2004, commercial bank credit to the private sector increased by 15.5 percent to \$19,988 million from \$17,308 million at the beginning of the period.

Bank deposit rates for the review period have also exhibited a downward trend since the reduction of the reserve requirement became effective. The weighted average 6-month deposit rate declined from 2.91 percent in October 2003 to 0.84 percent in April 2004. Consequent on these trends, the spread between the prime lending rate and the weighted average 6-month deposit rate varied from 8.59 percent in October 2003 to 8.66 percent in April 2004, an upward shift of 7 basis points.

⁸ Source: The Central Statistical Office (CSO)

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

POPULATION⁸

Population growth in Trinidad and Tobago for the seven-year period 1998 to 2004 averaged less than one percent. Data from the Central Statistical Office revealed that for the period 1998-2004 the largest increases in the average rates of growth were in the age groups 15-19 (2.35 percent), 60-64 (2.17 percent) and 65 and over (1.44 percent) while the smallest rate of growth was recorded in the 20-24 age group (0.29 percent). Births per 1,000 persons averaged a steady rate of fourteen (14) persons since 2002 while death rates averaged 7.7 persons per 1,000 persons for the same period.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

The 2004 Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) ranks Trinidad and Tobago as fifty-fourth (54th) among one hundred and seventy seven (177) countries. Trinidad and Tobago's **Human Development Index (HDI)** has consistently improved from 0.791 in 1990 to 0.793 in 1995 to 0.801 in 2002. Currently, this country's HDI is above

Box 3.1: The Human Development Index

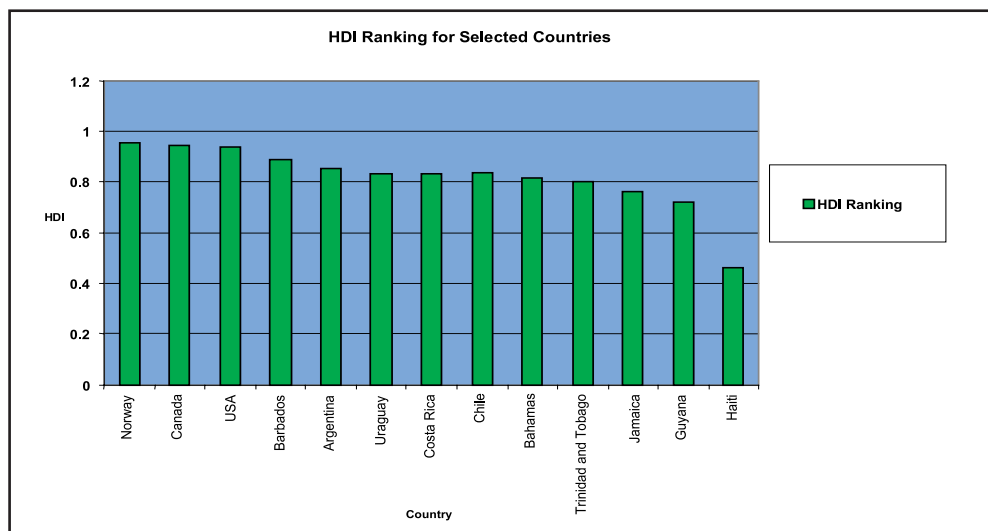
The Human Development Index (HDI) is a summary measure of three basic dimensions of human development:-

- Long and healthy life, as measured by life expectancy at birth;
- Knowledge, as measured by the adult literacy rate (with two thirds weight) and the combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio (with one-third weight); and
- Standard of living, as measured by GDP per capita (in US\$)

the average for Developing Countries (0.663) and for Latin America and the Caribbean (0.777). (Box 3.1 and Figure 3.1)

III. REVIEW OF DOMESTIC CONDITIONS

FIGURE 3.1: HDI RANKING FOR SELECTED COUNTRIES



SOURCE: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2004

Under the HDI classification Trinidad and Tobago’s level of human development is comparable to those of several highly developed countries including, Norway, the United States of America, Australia and the United Kingdom. (Figure 3.1)

Box 3.2: The Life Expectancy Index

The Life Expectancy Index measures a country’s relative life expectancy at birth. It is calculated by taking the country’s life expectancy (Trinidad and Tobago=71.8 years) in relation to maximum and minimum life expectancies of 85 and 25 years respectively.

The 2004 Human Development Report estimates Trinidad and Tobago’s Life Expectancy Index, as 0.77. This compares favorably with other Caribbean and Latin American Countries, including Jamaica (0.84), Panama (0.83), Honduras (0.73) and St. Kitts and Nevis (0.75). (Box 3.2)

POVERTY

For the period 1990 to 2002, approximately 12.4 percent of the population earned less than US\$1 per day and 39 percent earned less than US\$2 per day. According to the 2004 Human Development Report, Trinidad and Tobago ranks eighth in terms of the **Poverty Index**

(HPI-1) for Developing Countries, lower than Barbados, Uruguay, Chile, Costa Rica and Cuba which are ranked first to fifth respectively.

EDUCATION

Trinidad and Tobago presently enjoys an adult literacy rate of 98.5 percent and a youth literacy rate of 99.8 percent. This is reflective of the country’s net primary school enrolment ratio, which has increased from 91 percent in 1990 to 94 percent in 2004 and a net secondary school enrolment of 68 percent.

Public expenditure on Education as a percentage of total Government expenditure increased from 11.6 percent in 1990 to 16.7 percent in 2001. This rate ranks favorably with those of several highly developed countries including Finland (12.2 percent), Norway (16.2 percent), and Germany (9.9 percent).

III. REVIEW OF DOMESTIC CONDITIONS

AIDS AND HIV DISEASE⁹

The treatment and prevention of HIV/AIDS has become a priority issue for the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. Accordingly Government established a **National AIDS Co-ordinating Committee (NACC)** to ensure adequate focus on the issue and to inform and guide its efforts in the fight against AIDS.

At the end of the first quarter of 2004, there was a recorded two hundred and seventy four (274) new cases of HIV. This represents a 28.3 percent reduction in the incidence of new HIV cases when compared to the figure for the corresponding period of 2003. In the first quarter of 2003 there were eighty nine (89) cases of AIDS compared to forty one (41) cases for the same period in 2004, a reduction of forty eight (48) cases or 53.9 percent. Three hundred (300) HIV non-AIDS cases were recorded in 2003 as compared to two hundred and thirty six (236) in 2004, a reduction of 64 cases or 21.3 percent. While there were fifty two (52) deaths in the first quarter of 2003, there were only 9 deaths in the first quarter of 2004, a decrease of 43 deaths or 82.6 percent.

Demographics for the 2003 and 2004 periods indicate that there are more males than females afflicted with HIV disease (in the case of males, one hundred and eighty eight (188) in the first quarter of 2003 and one hundred and fifty one (151) in the first quarter of 2004, for females one hundred and eighty five (185) in 2003 and one hundred and eleven (111) in 2004). Data also indicates that more females are being tested for the disease and that there were more deaths among males than females in both 2003 and 2004. For both years, new positive cases account for the majority of cases among all patients living with HIV/AIDS.

The county of St. George (East, Central and West) accounted for two hundred and four (204) HIV/AIDS cases in 2003 and one hundred and fifty three (153) in 2004 and by comparison is greater than the cumulative figure for all other counties one hundred and seventy nine (179) in 2003 and one hundred and twenty two (122)

in 2004. The largest number of cases falls within the 20-49 age group, two hundred and seventy (270) persons or 71 percent in 2003 and one hundred and seventy seven (177) persons or 64.6 percent in 2004.

LABOUR FORCE¹⁰

The labour force increased from five hundred and fifty eight thousand and seven hundred (558,700) in 1998 to five hundred and ninety six thousand and five hundred (596,500) in 2003, an increase of thirty seven thousand and eight hundred (37,800) over the period. The number of employed persons increased by fifty four thousand and eight hundred (54,800) from four hundred and seventy nine thousand and three hundred (479,300) in 1998 to five hundred and thirty four thousand and one hundred (534,100) in 2003, with a steady decline in the overall unemployment rate to 10.5 percent in the same period. There was also a decline in the unemployment rates for both males and females. The unemployment rate for males decreased from 11.3 percent to 8.3 percent while the rates for females decreased from 18.9 percent to 13.8 percent.

The overall participation rates increased slightly from 61.2 percent to 61.6 percent. Female participation rates increased from 47.0 percent to 49.0 percent and male participation rates decreased from 75.3 percent to 74.2 percent. Overall, the male participation rate continues to be higher than that of females.

⁹ Source: Chief Medical Officer, Ministry of Health

¹⁰ Source: Central Statistical Office

III. REVIEW OF DOMESTIC CONDITIONS

CRIME¹¹

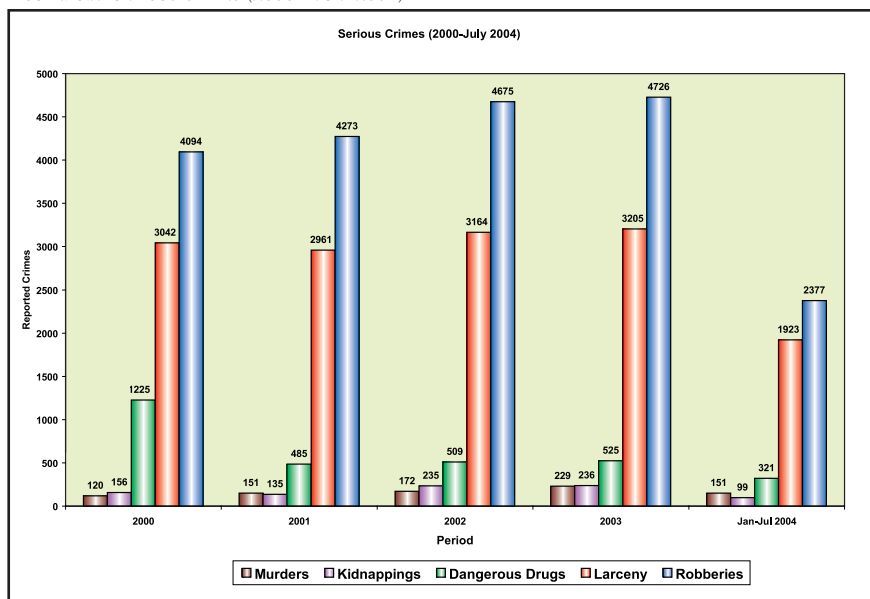
Following a 6.9 percent increase between 2001 and 2002, the total number of serious crimes reported increased marginally by approximately 1 percent from sixteen thousand, eight hundred and ten (16,810) in 2002 to sixteen thousand, nine hundred and seventy four (16,974) in 2003. There were five thousand and twenty-two (5,022) arrests and eight hundred and forty three (843) convictions in this period.

Subsumed in this figure was a 33 percent increase in murders from 172 in 2002 to two hundred and twenty-nine (229) in 2003 with one hundred and four (104) arrests and one (1) conviction. The amount of kidnappings reported remained relatively unchanged from two hundred and thirty-five (235) in 2002 to two hundred and thirty six (236) in 2003.

INFORMATION AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS¹²

ICT continues to expand in Trinidad and Tobago with a growing prevalence of cellular devices and computer usage associated with the Internet. To date, there are approximately five hundred and fifty thousand (550,000) local mobile phone users in this country and one hundred and thirty (130) cellular sites, which has improved the reliability of the network. In 1990 there were approximately one hundred and forty one (141) telephone mainlines, per thousand (1,000) people. In 2002 this figure increased to two hundred and fifty (250). Additionally in 2002 there were two hundred and seventy-eight (278) cellular customers and one hundred and six (106) Internet users per one thousand (1,000) people. International competition and the rate of technological obsolescence have contributed to the decline in the prices of these devices and the subsequent

FIGURE 3.2 SERIOUS CRIMES (2000 – JULY 2004)



SOURCE: MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY

Data compiled for the period January to July 2004 by the Ministry of National Security indicate that for this period 9,594 serious crimes were reported representing 151 murders, 99 kidnappings and 1,923 reports of larceny. (Figure 3.2)

wider usage. Traditional channels of communication including telephones cable networks, radios and newspapers, remain primary sources of information however.

¹¹ Source: Ministry of National Security

¹² 2004 UNDP Human Development Report

IV. FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY OBJECTIVES

- **THE MEDIUM-TERM OUTLOOK**
- **FISCAL POLICY**
- **MONETARY AND FINANCIAL POLICY**
- **STRUCTURAL ISSUES**
- **THE STATE ENTERPRISES SECTOR**
- **TRADE AND INVESTMENT**

THE MEDIUM TERM OUTLOOK

Over the medium-term the economy is expected to maintain a favourable growth path. Economic growth is projected at 6.2 percent in 2004/2005 and is expected to average 7.2 percent over the period 2005/2007. Increased output from the Energy Sector is expected to be the main contributor averaging 9 percent. The Non-energy Sector is forecast to grow by about 4 percent annually over the period. The strengthening of world economic growth 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 closely in line with those of our major trading partners, averaging 3 percent over the medium-term. As a result, unemployment is expected to reach single digits within the same period.

The external account is projected to continue to record large surpluses reaching 9.5 percent of GDP by 2007. This activity will be largely supported by increased exports in both the Energy and non-traditional sectors. Imports of capital goods are projected to peak in 2005, but would remain substantial over the medium-term with a corresponding inflow of FDI. Over the period gross official reserves is expected to remain strong, increasing from 5.2 percent of prospective imports in 2004 to about 8 percent in 2007.

The public sector external debt stock is programmed to decline from US\$1,632 million in 2003 to US\$1,370

million by 2007 as a result of extensive amortization over the period. Consequently, the country's debt service ratio is expected to fall from 3.5 percent to 2.2 percent while the interest service ratio will reduce from 1.9 percent in 2003 to 1.3 percent in 2007.

FISCAL POLICY

DEBT MANAGEMENT

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

Over the medium-term, Government's Debt Management Strategy will involve:-

- Identification, assessment and management of risk associated with foreign currency and floating rate debt;
- Achievement of an optimal level of debt that offers fiscal sustainability; and
- Careful monitoring and management of contingent liabilities.

Plans are underway for the establishment of a new **Debt Management Unit**, with a structure that is more conducive to modern debt management practices with front, middle and back offices separated by way of accountabilities and transparent reporting framework.

The debt management activities of the Ministry of Finance will also be supported by a management information system known as the **Debt Management and Financial Analysis System (DMFAS)**. This system was designed by UNCTAD and will facilitate accurate debt recording and reporting. This will result not only in the timely payment of debt service obligations, but will also improve the quality of budgetary reporting and the transparency of Government financial accounts. The first phase of the installation of the

IV. FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY OBJECTIVES

DMFAS was concluded in July of 2004. It is expected that the DMFAS System will be fully operational by the end of 2004.

FINANCIAL SECTOR REFORM

Financial Sector Reform is one of the most critical projects of the Government as it aims to achieve Developed Nation Status by the year 2020. To this end, a **Green Paper on Financial Sector Reform** was developed and Government invited public comments on a range of proposals for comprehensive reform of the various sectors and institutions of the Financial System including:-

- The Banking Sector;
- The Capital Market including:-
 - The Trinidad and Tobago Securities and Exchange Commission; and
 - The Trinidad and Tobago Stock Exchange;
- The Insurance Industry;
- The Pension System;
- The Mutual Fund Industry;
- The Credit Union Sector; and
- The Venture Capital Incentive Programme.

Subsequently, a White Paper, which sought to refine and strengthen the Green Paper was developed and laid in Parliament in July 2004. The vision of the White Paper is to make Trinidad and Tobago the **Pan-Caribbean Financial Center of the ACS Region**. This Center will be globally competitive, well diversified, responsive and market-driven and would provide the widest possible range of financial products and services to cater to the needs of international and regional business, domestic and regional small and medium-sized enterprises as well as the general public and private sector. This Center will be supported by a modern information technology architecture that delivers a high quality and cost-effective menu of financial services options. Most importantly, this Pan Caribbean Financial Center will be regulated by a single regulatory authority.

The financial architecture of this Center would comprise: -

- A well-diversified range of multifaceted and flexible financial institutions which provide rapid real-time delivery of the entire spectrum of financial instruments and services and which are well integrated with the rest of the world;
- An efficient and effective payments system;
- Adequate, reliable and timely information to enable borrowers and investors to monitor and diagnose financial performance and hence to allocate resources effectively;
- A strong legal and prudential regulatory infrastructure that emphasizes financial soundness and stability and the application of rules and a code of conduct that is consistent with international best practices;
- A modern information technology environment that enables delivery of cost effective services; and
- A well-educated, skilled and flexible cadre of professionals with training in finance, economics, accounting, law, regulation and information technology that is internationally recognized.

Government's role in the development of this Pan-Caribbean Financial Center, is essentially two-fold, that of a facilitator and a developer. In its role as facilitator, Government will adopt a proactive approach to the establishment of the legal and regulatory and institutional infrastructure.

In its role as developer, Government will participate in the market under special circumstances and conditions especially where the market is unable to meet particular social needs, where there are market imperfections or where there might be significant market risks.

Such participation may take different forms, including the establishment and nurturing of innovative institutions as was the case with the **Trinidad and Tobago Unit Trust Corporation** and the **Home Mortgage Bank** or the provision of incentives to facilitate market and institutional development in specialized areas.

IV. FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY OBJECTIVES

REFORM OF THE PROCUREMENT SYSTEM

The current legal and regulatory framework governing public procurement, is limited to the tendering stage, whereby offers of supply are invited and contracts are awarded. However, public procurement should also include the prior design stage in which needs are identified, scope of works determined, costs estimated and bid packages prepared as well as the implementation stage where the performance of the contract is managed.

In 2003, Government established a **Procurement Reform Committee** to review procurement policy and processes and make recommendations for improving the procurement regime. In seeking to fulfill its mandate, the Committee identified the imperatives for reform, reviewed the current system and legislative background, and identified the weaknesses of the system.

The Committee recommended that Trinidad and Tobago adopt the operating principles of Value for Money and Transparency and Accountability as a first step in meeting the current best practice in public procurement. The preferred model for Trinidad and Tobago is the **Principle Model**, appropriately adapted to our economic, social and political environment to reflect the current trend of best practice in procurement. (Box 4.1)

The Report of the Committee has been accepted by the Cabinet and is ready to be laid in Parliament in the form of a Green Paper.

PENSION REFORM

The main objective of the Cabinet-appointed Pension Committee is the reform of the pension system for Trinidad and Tobago, key features of which include full portability and transferability of pension benefits.

Over the medium-term, the ongoing Pension Reform process will provide for:-

- The full harmonization of the NIS Retirement Pension and the Old Age Pension (OAP);
- The administrative integration of the NIS and OAP;

Box: 4.1 The Principle Model

In this model the law prescribes the operating principles underlying procurement that promote best procurement practice. There is a central regulatory agency that formulates operating policies and guidelines that amplify these principles, showing in general terms how the principles are to be applied in all transactions involving public funds. The central agency develops for the purchasing agencies procedure manuals for specific types of transactions.

However the prime responsibility for procurement in all its stages rests with the decision-makers in the purchasing agencies. They are required by law, under pain of sanction, to comply with the principles, policies and guidelines.

- A guaranteed level of income maintenance in retirement;
- An appropriate integrated regulatory and supervisory framework for the pension industry; and
- Integration and consolidation of the various laws and regulations governing the pension industry.

THE STATE ENTERPRISE SECTOR

In the context of Government's pursuit of its "*Vision 2020*" objectives, the State Enterprise Sector is expected to play an important role in light of the fact that this sector contributes significantly to the expansion of the domestic economy through employment, capital investment, foreign exchange earnings and government revenue.

Government will therefore continue to monitor the State Enterprise Sector to ensure that the considerable state resources vested in this sector are optimally utilized. While Government acknowledges that State Enterprises have made significant contributions to the economy, it is also recognized that continuous reform of this Sector must be a deliberate policy initiative, the main objective being to boost economic efficiency and improve resource allocation.

IV. FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY OBJECTIVES

Review of Existing Portfolio

In the review of the State Sector, Government is revisiting the roles and functions of State Agencies responsible for industrial development activities in Trinidad and Tobago, with a view to ensuring clear delineation of these roles and functions and the elimination of areas of duplication.

Some of the significant activities that will be pursued in the sector over the medium-term include:-

- Implementation of the Government's plan of action to ensure productive and sustainable economic activities on the lands formerly owned by Caroni (1975) Ltd, which entails the development of housing, light manufacturing, agricultural, and commercial estates; and
- Restructuring of the Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (PATT).

With regard to the activities to be undertaken on former Caroni lands, the **Estate Management and Business Development Company Limited (EMBD)** has been mandated to manage these lands on behalf of the State and to develop housing, agricultural and residential estates and commercial complexes. Four (4) agricultural estates have been earmarked for development in Waterloo, Reform, Exchange and Caroni.

Evolving Technologies and Enterprise Development Company Limited (e-TecK) has been given the mandate for industrial development in Trinidad and Tobago. In this regard, Government has agreed to transfer parcels of land formerly owned by Caroni at Debe and Tarouba to e-TecK for that purpose. E-TecK will also have responsibility for developing an e-TecK Park at the Old Racing Complex at Caroni.

Further, the company is actively involved in development of the major e-TecK Park at Wallerfield where the main building of the University of Trinidad and Tobago will also be located.

New Investment

The Minister of Finance, as Corporation Sole, is responsible for managing Government's Investment

portfolio and as such, will periodically evaluate the deployment of assets in the State Enterprise Sector.

In December 2003, Government approved a revised Dividend Policy for the State Enterprise Sector to ensure that profits from the sector are utilized for the benefit of the Shareholder. Profitable State Enterprises are now required to pay dividends of a minimum of 100 percent of distributable profits, unless otherwise determined in collaboration with the Minister of Finance. Discussions will be held with the Minister of Finance to ensure that funds, which are retained, are invested in accordance with Government's policy.

Government recognizes that there are instances in which state investment is required to catalyse development of a specific industry. Such investment is considered vital for stimulating growth that is required to allow Trinidad and Tobago to attain developed country status.

The Ministry of Finance will enhance its institutional capability to allow it to make appropriate recommendations for investments to ensure that fiscal revenues and surpluses are used to the maximum benefit of current and future generations.

Divestment

Notwithstanding the above, the Government's policy continues to be that the traditional State Enterprise sector must be examined and rationalized with a view to maximizing State resources to the benefit of all citizens. Accordingly, Government will retain or acquire equity in the State Enterprises sector only where such ownership is integral to the achievement of policy objectives for the sector in which the enterprise is located. Government will concentrate on providing facilitatory mechanisms, including the removal of constraints to investment and the establishment of the appropriate institutional, regulatory and incentive framework.

Government recognizes nonetheless, that there may be instances where state equity participation is necessary, or may become necessary, where the private sector is not willing to take the risk in the absence of the State's direct participation, especially with respect to the promotion of

IV. FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY OBJECTIVES

fledgling industries. It is not envisaged, however, that such participation should be long-term in nature and Government will seek to ensure that such enterprises are divested to the private sector as soon as this becomes feasible.

There are a number of options available to Government in respect of the divestment of State Enterprise including full divestment (i.e. the sale of 100 percent shareholding), sale of assets and partial divestment. In respect of partial divestments, Government is given the opportunity to invite private sector participation into the ownership and operations of the State enterprises, with the private sector contributing capital, relevant industry experience and technology.

There are currently ten (10) non-operating companies which are in varying stages of liquidation. In this regard, the Ministry of Finance is taking steps to resolve within an acceptable time frame all outstanding legal, financial and other matters pertaining to those companies in order to facilitate the timely liquidation.

Corporate Governance

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

As such, the **Central Audit Committee** has been strengthened with additional staff and this Unit is expected to redouble its effort to promote greater transparency and managerial accountability in the Sector.

Beginning October 2003, State Enterprises were required to publish in at least one major daily newspaper, a summary of the audited financial statements, within four (4) months of the end of their financial year. State Agencies have also been mandated to publish a summary of the un-audited half-yearly statements within two (2) months of the mid-year date. These requirements are expected to improve considerably the accountability of State Enterprises.

Government will continue to facilitate the training of members of Boards of Directors of the Sector in matters relating to good governance practices. Additionally, Government intends 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.

The **Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative**, which was launched in South Africa in 2002 with the intention of increasing transparency in the extractive sector is also engaging Government's attention. Given that a number of multinationals that currently operate in Trinidad and Tobago also subscribe to this Initiative, it signifies a major step in setting governance standards in the local private sector.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Among the major projects planned for the medium-term in the area of Financial Management is the implementation of an **Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS)**. The IFMIS will integrate the entire cycle of budgetary activities including: budgetary planning, preparation, and production of budgetary documents as well as budget execution and review. The new system will replace the manual Vote Book System of recording and approving expenditure and integrate it with the releases and estimates of expenditure to automatically monitor the implementation of the budget over the financial year.

Output Management is another major project scheduled for implementation over the medium-term. Output Management represents a fundamental change in the way Government does business particularly in terms of budget preparation, presentation, implementation and monitoring 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 when those services were actually delivered. Output Management

IV. FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY OBJECTIVES

entails 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.

The new system will provide a mechanism to link Government's strategic priorities to the departmental objectives and strategies.

It will focus public sector managers 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 the Community - output focused as opposed to being internally focused on maintenance of Ministry's operations;
- Ensuring that these services are delivered in a financially efficient, resourceful and accountable manner; and
- The utilization of all resources - asset management as against only cash.

TRADE AND INVESTMENT

In furtherance of Government's objectives of diversification and growth of the economy, the transformation, development and expansion of the Non-petroleum Sector will remain in focus over the medium-term with continuing emphasis on the Manufacturing, Services and Agricultural Sectors.

Current trends internationally reflect changing global industrial structures, with greater emphasis being placed on the knowledge-based economy. Cognizant of this fact, Government will increase its investment in upgrading the skills base of its human capital stock, as well as its technological and information base to strengthen its innovative capacity and enhance the country's competitive advantage.

To this end, Government will continue implementation of the institutional strengthening component of the

Trade Sector Support Programme to more effectively administer its portfolio and thereby, improve the international trade performance of Trinidad and Tobago.

The Programme will therefore seek to strengthen not only the human resource capacity of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, through its specialized technical training components and the creation of a **Trade Information Network**, but also the country's technical and institutional capacity to formulate and implement trade policy and to participate more effectively in trade negotiations and enterprise development.

In addition, policies and strategies will be implemented in fiscal 2005 to engender a more competitive and resilient manufacturing and services sub-sectors in light of the challenges attendant with trade liberalization. The objective is to position Trinidad and Tobago as the manufacturing center and commercial, trans-shipment and financial hub of the Caribbean and gateway to Latin America. These initiatives will also stimulate the innovative and entrepreneurial potential of our people, thereby contributing to the realization of the Vision 2020 objective of Government.

THE TRADE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

Over the medium-term, Government will implement the **Trade Assistance Programme**, a component of the **Trade Sector Support Programme**. This Programme will assess the impact of trade liberalization on the business community and develop an adjustment programme to address the specific needs stemming from globalization. Based on the assessment of the Manufacturing Sector, the programme of assistance will allow firms to reengineer their operations to better equip themselves for survival in the increasingly more competitive global environment. It is expected that a comprehensive **Business Expansion and Industrial Restructuring Programme** will be developed and implemented in collaboration with the private sector. The Trade Sector Support Programme also aims at promoting exports and attracting investment.

IV. FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY OBJECTIVES

INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

Sector Development Initiatives

In pursuit of Government's diversification thrust, strategies aimed at developing and expanding the Manufacturing and Services Sub-sectors will include sector development initiatives which seek to assess and identify the future competitive advantage of targeted sectors. Concomitantly, Government will develop an enabling environment for business which will provide a more accommodative climate in which they can be nurtured. These initiatives will be spearheaded by the **Standing Committee on Business Development**, which will also focus on the further advancement of entrepreneurial development in this country. The sectors earmarked for development over the medium-term are: -

- The yachting industry;
- The fish and fish processing industry;
- The merchant marine industry;
- The music and entertainment industry;
- The film industry;
- The printing and packaging industry; and
- The food and beverage industry.

Research and Development

Over the medium-term, Government will establish a **Research and Development Fund** to develop the local research environment. This intervention is seen as imperative to strengthening the research capability of the country and stimulating innovation and investment in research and development in the Non-petroleum Sector.

Financing

In terms of finance, the **SCDC Leasing Company Limited**, a subsidiary of the **Business Development Company (BDC)** will continue to provide access to alternative sources of funding through the **Loan**

Box 4.2: Development of a Bi-lingual Society

As Trinidad and Tobago seeks to be integrated into the Latin American economy, Government will proceed with the development of its bi-lingual society initiative. During 2005, the Ministry of Trade and Industry together with other stakeholders will implement activities such as the official transformation of the road network, seaports, airports and public buildings with the use of english and spanish signage and labeling. Partnerships will be pursued with major supermarket chains in an effort to have dual language signage within these establishments. Assistance will also be provided, in the form of sponsorship to members of the public and private sectors wishing to pursue courses in spanish proficiency. Student exchange programmes with Venezuela, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic and Cuba will also be part of this initiative.

Guarantee Programme (LGP) for working capital and plant expansion and financial leasing for the purchase of machinery and equipment for plant modernisation and upgrading.

Over the medium-term, the **EXIMBANK of Trinidad and Tobago** will pursue an aggressive marketing and advertising campaign to highlight its services. The company, in collaboration with agencies such as **NEDCO** and **NAMDEVCO** will execute an outreach programme to the Small Business Sector providing information on market access as well as financing options for export markets.

In addition, the EXIMBANK will pursue its new **Hold-harmless Endorsement** initiative that is a cash collateral policy for loans advanced by commercial banks to exporters. This policy will mitigate the risk of the lending banks that in turn would pass on these benefits through a reduction in the rate of interest on advances to exporters.

Trade and Investment Development

In a bid to promote economic diversification via the expansion of the export industry over the medium-term, Government will seek to develop an **Export Strategy**

IV. FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY OBJECTIVES

Box 4.3 : The FTAA

The FTAA is a Free Trade Agreement among thirty four (34) democratically elected Governments in the Western Hemisphere with the objective to progressively eliminate trade and investment barriers on virtually all goods and services. The proposed FTAA will comprise a combined population of 757 million people with a combined GDP of over fourteen (14) trillion US dollars. This economic block is expected to lead to an increase in trade flows with a consequent boost for investment, employment and income for all participating countries.

The FTAA will provide opportunities for Trinidad and Tobago to expand and diversify its export capacity into high value-added products and knowledge based services including, high tech manufacturing, financial services, information technology and other professional services. Potential also exists for profitable industries in food and beverages, petrochemicals, leisure and marine activities, metal processing, printing and packaging and speciality tourism.

for Trinidad and Tobago. Accordingly, the **Business Development Company** will conduct market access research on several countries regionally and extra-regionally to provide exporters with an up-to-date market intelligence database on the entry requirements for various markets.

Additionally, steps will be taken to establish a **Trinidad and Tobago Trade Facilitation Company** in Cuba. This company will promote increased trade and investment activities between the two countries and minimize some of the problems encountered in penetrating the Cuban market.

Evolving Technology and Enterprise Development Company Limited - eTeck

In 2005, Government will commence the first phase infrastructure development of the Eco-Industrial and Technology Park at Wallerfield. **Evolving Technology and Enterprise Development Company Limited – eTeck** (formerly PIDCOTT) will pursue its mandate to deliver this state-of-the-art development which will serve as the campus of the **University of Trinidad and**

Box 4.4: CSME Membership

The CSME will comprise fourteen (14) members with a combined population of fourteen (14) million persons. The member states are: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Monsterrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

Tobago, as well as home to high-value light manufacturing and knowledge based industries.

This development will be the first Eco-Industrial Park in the region and will integrate the concepts of ‘smart’ and ‘green’ building in its facilities.

The Wallerfield Project will facilitate the development of a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship and lifelong learning. The Project will cater to the need for the formation and growth of new businesses as new market opportunities arise. Knowledge based industries to be located at the site include outsourcing/back office (medical transcription) and data center operations.

The University of Trinidad and Tobago will provide the trained and skilled labour force required to spur the growth of these targeted industries, which will result in significant job creation throughout the successive phases of the development.

INVESTMENT AND SERVICES

Concurrently with the enterprise expansion thrust, Government will seek to stimulate greater flows of investment both foreign and local into this country for the continued development and fortification of our productive capacity. In this regard, particular emphasis will be placed on information and communication technology, development of the human resource capital and research and development upgrades.

ENABLING FRAMEWORK FOR COMMERCE

In 2005, an **Investment Policy for Trinidad and Tobago** will be developed to set the parameters and

IV. FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY OBJECTIVES

Box 4.5: The CTS Programme

Operations of the CTS Programme are set to commence before the end of 2004.

The Programme is run by a Management Committee, which comprises an Administrative Committee, a Credit Committee and a Facilitation Committee.

The Administrative Committee has oversight responsibility for the Programme, including the approval of technical assistance loans to client firms. This Committee has been convened and comprises senior representatives of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Planning and Development, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Central Bank.

A register of local consultants is currently being compiled to provide a pool of available expertise to advise and assist client firms in the planning and implementation of their business development projects. The intention is to expand the register to include consultants from the Region.

priorities for the conduct of investment in this country, as well as further simplify the approval processes.

In addition, a **Services Trade Policy** will be developed to guide future developments for the sector.

Government will also seek to advance the legislative framework to under gird commercial activities locally. In this regard, the new **Foreign Investment Act** will be finalized in the medium-term. The amended Anti-dumping legislation and Fair Trading legislation will be enacted. Safeguard legislation to promote fair competition for the survival of all businesses will also be developed.

THE FREE TRADE AREA OF THE AMERICAS (FTAA)

Trinidad and Tobago has been a key participant in CARICOM's strategy for the FTAA. In this regard, CARICOM has negotiated as a 15-member trade bloc in order to gain greater leverage, as well as in pursuit of provisions of special and differential treatment for

smaller economies in the various facets of the agreement. (Box 4.3)

Negotiations for the FTAA were expected to be completed by December 2004, however progress has been stalled since the attempt to introduce a two-tiered structure of negotiations in November 2003. The arrangement envisages the development of a common and balanced set of rights and obligations applicable to all countries in the nine (9) negotiating areas and the establishment of a procedure for plurilateral negotiations by those countries that wish to go beyond, to the second tier.

In the interim, CARICOM continues to work toward institutional strengthening and building capacity through the **Consultative Group on Smaller Economies** and the national capacity-building strategies and action-plans of the proposed **FTAA Hemispheric Cooperation Programme (HCP)**.

THE CARICOM SINGLE MARKET AND ECONOMY (CSME)

As the deadline for the full implementation of the CSME draws near, Government is committed to complete all legislative and administrative reforms to ensure full implementation of the CSME in 2005 (Box 4.4). The CSME is an arrangement among the CARICOM States for the creation of a single enlarged economic space through the removal of cross-border restrictions resulting in the free movement of goods, services, persons, capital and technology. It also confers the right on CARICOM nationals to establish business in any CARICOM Member State and to be treated in the same manner as a national of the State. Central to the effective functioning of the CSME is the establishment of a new institutional structure which will include: the **Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ)**; the **Fair Trade Commission**; a **Regional Standards and Quality Organization (CRSQO)**; a regional **Intellectual Property Officer** and a **Development Fund**.

IV. FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY OBJECTIVES

THE CARICOM TRADE SUPPORT PROGRAMME

Also in the medium-term, Government will continue the implementation of the CARICOM Trade Support Programme, the establishment of which also involves both the local private sector and the **Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce (CAIC)**. (Box 4.5) This initiative aims at alleviating the adverse impact of the recessionary conditions experienced by CARICOM Member States by building capacity to improve and expand their production and export capabilities, especially to this country and extra-regionally.

The Programme will be supported by a revolving fund of TT\$100 million. It will provide technical assistance through interest free loans and direct investment from local firms, including joint ventures and/or strategic alliances. Some of the expected benefits of this Programme will be improvement of the competitive capabilities of CARICOM Member States, increased employment and social stability. The Programme will also seek to ensure the mutuality of benefits between LDCs and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, in terms of collaboration in various socioeconomic and political spheres.

BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

Within the context of globalization and trade liberalization in the international market place and the commitment to establishing the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), one of the strategies adopted by CARICOM involves the coordination of external trade policies among Member States and the promotion of the export of internationally competitive goods from within the Region. To this end the Community undertook a number of negotiations of external trade and economic agreements from the early 1990's and has continued the process of jointly negotiating access to export markets. Trinidad and Tobago has been at the forefront of this effort.

To date, Trinidad and Tobago as part of CARICOM has signed trade agreements with Venezuela, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic and Costa Rica. These agreements are currently being implemented and plans are afoot to enhance these agreements. In addition, some of the markets with which CARICOM intends to pursue trade agreements include: Central America, Canada, the United States of America and MERCOSUR.

V. FACILITATING THE POLICY AGENDA

- **NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING**
- **LAW AND JUSTICE**
- **FOREIGN POLICY**
- **PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**
- **LOCAL GOVERNMENT**
- **CONSUMER AFFAIRS**
- **REGISTRATION**

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

The process of National Development Planning has been engaged by the Government as a critical tool for guiding the course of economic management as well as providing the framework for sustainable growth and balanced development. In recognition of the fact that the pace and quality of development over the years, have been marked by the persistence of certain structural problems, an imbalance in regional development and the incidence of pockets of poverty, efforts have been made to change the planning framework in order to improve the effectiveness of the planning function.

Moreover, with the acceptance that National Development Planning is seeking to address the emerging challenges and opportunities brought on by a competitive world environment, rapid changes in information technology and telecommunication, the formation of new trading blocs and trade arrangements as well as population and development issues, Government has made a strong commitment to meaningfully chart and advance along a course to developed country status by the year 2020. Essentially, the principal aim of Government's strategic development planning initiative to the year 2020 is to improve the quality of life of all our people.

Accordingly, the Ministry of Planning and Development is currently engaged in the preparation of a **National Strategic Planning Framework** which will outline a course for sustainable national development to the year

2020. This exercise is also placed within the context of Government's obligations with respect to the achievement of the **Millenium Development Goals (MDG's)**. (Box 8.1)

The implementation of the Vision 2020 Plan will be supported by specific Sector Studies in strategic areas which have been identified for further research. A **National Manpower Study** will also be conducted with the objective of identifying the national human resource requirements for achieving stated national development objectives as identified in the **Strategic Development Plan 2020**.

In recognition of the imperative for adequate, relevant and timely data provision to inform policy formulation, strategic decision-making, and monitoring of performance indicators, the institutional strengthening of the **Central Statistical Office** will be a priority element of public sector modernization.

Government also recognizes that Urban and Regional Planning are essential components of a sustainable development agenda, particularly for guiding decision-making on land use and development. Urban and Regional Planning provides the context for relevant planning legislation as well as establishment of land use planning guidelines, development control standards and facilitates the implementation of urban development projects. Accordingly, with the aim of putting in place an overall urban and regional planning framework that will facilitate the objectives of strategies of Vision 2020, the **National Physical Development Plan** will be initiated. In addition, enhancing the existing capability and institutional infrastructure in support of urban and regional planning and development is an ongoing effort, which will also be strengthened.

At the level of national investment priorities, emphasis will also be placed on improving the management monitoring and review of public sector investment, while enhancing the mobilization of resources and access to coordination and allocation of loans, grants and technical cooperation from Multilateral Institutions in support of national institutions and civil society.

NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK (VISION 2020)

The National Strategic Planning Framework (Vision 2020) will articulate an agreed Vision for the country's future development to the Year 2020. The strategic direction for development will identify the short, medium and long term goals through consultation, specifically with key stakeholders and at the broader level through the participation of the national community. The Planning Framework will identify the projected levels of development to be achieved in relation to economic, social, technological and institutional performance required for Trinidad and Tobago to attain a standard of living comparable to the developed countries. It will establish the priorities and provide the parameters for the **Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP)**, guide investment in the private sector as well as the mobilization of international financial and development support. The Framework will also inform the development of sectoral reform initiatives by Government Ministries and Agencies to address deficiencies. The Plan will propose institutional arrangements for implementation, monitoring, review and adjustment in light of changing realities.

Sector Studies

In the process of Plan development and implementation a research agenda will be developed for analysis of economic, social, technological and institutional trends and issues at both the macro and sectoral levels. This will inform the design, implementation and monitoring of policy objectives as well as the response to changing conditions. It will also facilitate review and assessment of the impact of policies, programmes and projects to ensure the timely identification of potential bottlenecks and the formulation of appropriate recommendations.

National Manpower Study

The systematic and continuing process of analyzing the country's human resource requirements under changing conditions will be initiated as a prerequisite for the determination of priority areas for human

resource development, the number of persons and the levels of training required for achieving the national development objectives, and strategies of the Vision to the Year 2020.

Survey of Living Conditions

The data from the Surveys of Living Conditions conducted in 1992 and 1997 are useful components in the development of a time series in the analysis of living standards in Trinidad and Tobago. These Surveys provide comprehensive, high quality data on many aspects of household welfare. The analysis and use of these data will ensure that efforts to reduce poverty are better targeted through the use of quantitative information on the levels, causes and consequences of poverty.

Institutional Strengthening of the Central Statistical Office

The Central Statistical Office (CSO) will be one of the priority agencies to benefit from the IDB-assisted **Public Sector Reform Initiation Programme**. In this regard, an appropriate model for the institutional strengthening of the CSO will be identified along with a comprehensive plan of action for transformation of the CSO into a modern and relevant institution empowered and positioned to cost-effectively provide information and information services to users.

Agricultural Census 2004

Information is the key to targeting strategic initiatives for development, monitoring of performance, review and adjustment of development actions in the quest for success. One objective of the Agricultural Census which is being conducted in 2004 is the development of a database of all commercial and home use agricultural holders by region, community and enumeration district. This Census will provide up to date relevant information on food and agricultural production, and the use of land and water resources for agriculture. The Census will be facilitated by the establishment of a processing system for data capture using image scanning technology.

V. FACILITATING THE POLICY AGENDA

As a follow-up to the Agricultural Census 2004, surveys of small ruminants and food crops will be undertaken in Tobago, with the objective of providing short-term indicators to improve monitoring efficiency and measure the level of food security on the island.

Re-engineering of the Trade Statistics System

In the current global environment encompassing new Trade Agreements, rules and conditional ties, there is a growing requirement for adequate trade statistics, thereby dictating a revision of the classification systems and the development of a correlation table to ensure consistency with the revisions that have been made in the international systems as well as to satisfy requests for trade data. There is also need for the design and development of a new report format for the analysis of Trinidad and Tobago's international trading relations. Over the medium-term, the production and presentation of Trade Statistics will be guided by these factors.

Millennium Development Indicators

The Millennium Development Goals now guide much of the interaction of developing countries with developed countries and development assistance agencies. These Goals serve as a compact among all members of the global community to promote sustainable development. The Resolution of The Millennium Declaration is the pursuit of poverty reduction by setting global targets for the year 2015 in respect of poverty reduction and achieving sustainable development. In Trinidad and Tobago a new range of Social Statistics and Indicators will be developed to monitor progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Revised Index of Retail Prices

The implementation of Monetary Policy, which is the jurisdiction of the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago, will be supported by the more expeditious production and publication of the Index of Retail Prices. Toward this end, a collaborative effort between the principal agencies will be undertaken for the production of the RPI. As a tool for accuracy in measurement of the monthly movement of a specified basket of goods and

services, the timely production of the Retail Price Index facilitates the Cost of Living adjustments of employees and serves as an input to the collective bargaining process in both the private and public sectors. It will also satisfy the requirements of the international economic monitoring lending agencies including the International Monetary Fund and the Inter-American Development Bank.

Refinement of the Re-based Gross Domestic Product

The methodology for the re-basing of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to the base year 2000, which updated the measurement of the goods and services produced in the national economy, will be further refined in preparation for the new re-basing exercise to the base Year 2005.

Assessment and Analyses of the 2000 Population and Housing Census

The statistics generated from the 2000 Population and Housing Census will be assessed and statistical analyses of the data will be undertaken to provide the basis for policy formulation and decision-making in various sectors. A **Population and Development Unit** to be established in the Ministry of Planning and Development, will carry out the assessment and analysis.

Urban and Regional Planning

The Town and Country Planning function and environmental management will be strengthened by the establishment of an overall **Strategic National Physical Development Planning Framework to the Year 2020**. This Framework will articulate in spatial terms the land use planning and physical development requirements for achieving the priorities of the National Vision to the year 2020. The **Town and Country Planning Framework** will also be enhanced by the completion of targeted development planning projects, planning studies and land use surveys. Policy formulation in respect of hillside development and land use in Caroni as well as policy reviews for other areas are envisaged. An Area-Wide Environmental Impact

V. FACILITATING THE POLICY AGENDA

Assessment to inform decision-making on essential elements of development proposed for South East Trinidad is under active consideration. Steps will be taken towards preparation of a **West Coast Master Plan** focusing primarily on the issue of land reclamation between Chaguaramas and Port of Spain. In addition, the establishment of a **National Land Information System (LIS)/Geographic Information System (GIS)** will facilitate the integration of a wide range of relevant geographic land, environmental, demographic, socio-economic and infrastructural data for analysis and decision-making. Acquisition of national topographic and cadastral maps will also be completed. In addition, the **Small Buildings Code** has been completed and is ready for publication and widespread dissemination. This new code will provide to the public documented, updated standards for the construction of small buildings.

IMPROVING THE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF PUBLIC INVESTMENT

The achievement of the country's national development objectives is supported by the efficient implementation of the Public Sector Investment Programme in the context of public sector investment priorities. In this respect, providing support to implementing agencies, effective interaction and negotiation with external financing institutions timely mobilization, efficient and effective management of resources monitoring and review of the achievement of development programmes and projects will continue to be in focus.

ENHANCING ACCESS TO EXTERNAL RESOURCES

European Development Fund

The European Development Fund Unit of the Ministry of Planning and Development coordinates and facilitates the implementation of the **National Indicative Programme** agreed between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the European Commission. The Programme is funded by grant resources under the European Development Fund (9th EDF) and the focal areas of tertiary education and HIV/AIDS are being

addressed in the context of national development priorities. Support is also being provided to **Caribbean Business Services Limited** for professional and managerial support to enhance the productivity and competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises. A **Poverty Reduction Programme** and a **Rural Electrification Programme Phase II** will also be implemented with EDF resources. In addition, a Technical Cooperation Facility funded under the EDF will facilitate and support the implementation of the National Indicative Programme including studies, seminars and statistical data collection, analysis and dissemination.

Technical Cooperation

As the national focal point for interfacing with Governments, Regional and International Agencies on technical cooperation, and facilitating exchanges towards sustainable development, Government will continue to coordinate initiatives among donor Agencies and formulate programmes and projects to ensure compatibility with national development priorities. As well, there will be ongoing dissemination of information on technical cooperation opportunities to Public Sector Agencies and Civil Society. Cooperation between Trinidad and Tobago and other developing countries will continue to be promoted.

ENHANCING ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS OF INTERNATIONAL DONOR INSTITUTIONS

Over the medium-term, the National Library will participate in an IDB-resourced project on the development of a **Trinidad and Tobago Virtual Library** - a comprehensive web-based database of the documents of international institutions, academia, think tanks and other institutions about many topics on Trinidad and Tobago from 1999. This will provide an invaluable source of information for research and analysis on a range of sectors in the national development matrix.

V. FACILITATING THE POLICY AGENDA

FACILITATING URBAN DEVELOPMENT

UDeCOTT

The Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago (UDeCOTT) seeks to give greater focus to the regeneration of the city of Port of Spain as a business and financial centre and to the development of other urban centres. Over the medium-term, environmentally sound and commercially viable projects are being promoted and undertaken with a view to developing and rehabilitating the physical fabric of urban and other designated areas of Trinidad and Tobago.

The Chaguaramas Development Authority

Improvement works and general upgrade of the Chaguaramas Peninsula will continue to be the focus of the Chaguaramas Development Authority. In this regard, environmental development and enhancement, forest rehabilitation, golf course improvement and expansion as well as improvements to the physical infrastructure are being actively pursued.

LAW AND JUSTICE

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago recognizes the vital role of the Rule of Law to the economic growth of the economy, international trade and foreign investment, the protection of fundamental human rights, the safety and security of all citizens, the administration of Justice, the preservation and protection of the natural environment, the effectiveness of the governance of the country, as well as, the prevention and detection of corruption and fraudulent activities and the prosecution of the offenders. Government has therefore embarked on several practical initiatives and is currently engaged in planning and devising other innovative and technologically-driven strategies and projects to modernize, strengthen and improve the various areas of Law and Justice so as to meet and satisfy the changing environment (both nationally and internationally) as well as the growing demands and concerns of our society.

Recognizing that executive action must be grounded in national policy, Government has embarked on an

aggressive coherent and systematic thrust to improve and modernize the legislative and regulatory framework governing and relating to the operations and effectiveness of both public and private sector activity so as to address the several critical issues faced by the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. Toward this end, the Ministry of the Attorney General has consulted with nineteen (19) Government Ministries with a view to guiding them in formulating their legislative policies and assessing their legislative requirements. The legislative requirements for the various Ministries have been categorized and attached varying priorities depending on the needs assessment as defined by both the Ministries as well as their various stakeholders. In addition, the Ministry of the Attorney General has begun the process of scheduling the legislative work to be carried out in accordance with the priorities of the Government's main objectives and policy areas in line with Vision 2020.

Specific consideration and attention is being given to the upgrading of existing legislation and regulations and the introduction of new legislation to detect and prevent corrupt and fraudulent activities in the quest to ensure that the highest standards of integrity are maintained and practiced by those who hold public office.

CORRUPTION AND FRAUDALENT ACTIVITIES

Government has also aggressively acted against corruption as required by the **United Nations Convention Against Corruption**. In order to ensure that the legislative agenda of the Government is successfully implemented, the Ministry of the Attorney General is in the process of preparing its Strategic Plan which would assist in determining the resources needed to strengthen the office of the **Chief Parliamentary Counsel (CPC)** in particular which is the Department with the responsibility for legislative drafting on behalf of the Government.

The creation of a specialized unit - **The Process Review Team**, now has the responsibilities of developing and managing systems to ensure that matters are handled promptly and efficiently and also, to employ intervention strategies to fast-track critical legal matters

V. FACILITATING THE POLICY AGENDA

and to devise creative tactics to unravel bottlenecks and snags in the legal system.

Government is fully aware that corruption has the potential to undermine the fabric of society, create mistrust and disharmony among the population towards the State and State officials and most importantly to deprive the poor and needy of the essentials to life and basic amenities. Keen focus will therefore continue to be placed on combating corrupt and fraudulent practices in both the public and private sectors.

Thus far, the **Anti-Corruption Investigation Bureau** has been at the forefront of conducting investigations and gathering and producing admissible evidence that has led to the arrest of several persons who are alleged to have been involved in state funded projects, which experienced significant cost overruns. Government has also, for the first time, enjoyed considerable success in tracking, investigating and co-ordinating asset recovery actions across the Globe.

ORGANIZED CRIME

As far as trans-national organized crime is concerned, Government will continue to strengthen its capacity and structures to facilitate the fulfillment of the country's obligations under the various Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties and to actively pursue extradition matters. Also, Government will seek to strengthen collaborative ties and working relationships with other countries in order to enhance the procedures which govern the sharing of relevant intelligence and information in the fight against the illegal drug trade and money laundering activities and to deal with cross-country criminal and other illegal activities that have a negative impact on our society and those of other friendly nations.

THE MAGISTRACY

In order to ensure that the Administration of Justice is improved and modernized, Government will commence construction of new Magistrates' courts. The new buildings will include computerized and state-of-the-art systems for court reporting, services delivery to clients, preparation of documents, receipt, transmission

and storage of data/information, as well as electronic surveillance and security systems and proper and humane holding facilities for prisoners awaiting for their matters to be heard. Additionally, the buildings will include accommodation for social support services, and would be so designed to facilitate effective court operations and promote a non-adversarial environment as far as possible. (Box 5.1)

Box 5.1: New Magistrates' Courts

New Magistrates Courts are to be constructed at:- Siparia; Rio Claro; Arima; Sangre Grande and Chaguanas

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

At present, the Ministry of the Attorney General is in the process of critically reviewing its own systems and procedures to enhance the effectiveness of the delivery of services of the various legal departments. As one of the main initiatives, in this regard the Ministry has proposed the introduction of an **Electronic Monitoring Service Delivery System (EMSDDS)** to track and manage legal matters for which the Ministry is responsible. This system would also enable the Process Review Team to detect weaknesses and inefficiencies in the structures and systems involved in handling the legal matters within the responsibility of the Ministry and allow for more informed and timely decision-making.

Another measure being pursued is the establishment of a Research and Statistical Sub-unit under the Project Management Unit of the Ministry of the Attorney General. This Sub-unit will be mandated to develop and maintain electronic databases on critical information and statistics and to conduct research in specific areas in order to guide the Ministry in assessing the outcomes of the matters for which it has responsibility so as to facilitate the process of enhancing overall performance.

Immediate steps have also been taken to strengthen and enhance the capability and capacity of staff of the

V. FACILITATING THE POLICY AGENDA

Ministry of the Attorney General. Some of the measures include the training of staff in relevant areas of expertise, principally in legislative drafting, principles of commercial law, negotiation, procurement/tendering and contracting, mediation and technical reporting. The engagement of highly qualified and experienced legal, professional and technical staff, on contract, to provide the necessary expertise and services will be another initiative to be actively pursued.

Government, is also pursuing the necessary arrangements for the preparation of the designs for a new South Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions as well as a suitable location in Port of Spain for the new North Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

THE CARIBBEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

In order for Trinidad and Tobago to achieve its full potential as a sovereign State, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is committed to the establishment of the Caribbean Court of Justice. The imperative for this court is highlighted by the statement made by Lord Hofman in “The State v Charles Matthews” (one’s morals should not affect one’s views of an independent nation’s constitution). In this regard, the Ministry of the Attorney General has a central role in preparing and contributing to the various areas of work pertaining to the establishment of the Caribbean Court of Justice. More specifically, the Ministry of the Attorney General in keeping with the CARICOM mandate, is actively pursuing the preparation of temporary accommodation in Port of Spain for the Caribbean Court of Justice in order to fulfill its undertaking to the Heads to provide such accommodation. The Ministry has already identified suitable sites for the permanent accommodation of the Caribbean Court of Justice and residential accommodation for the Judges who are to preside in the Caribbean Court of Justice, in collaboration and with the consent of the Chairman of the Regional Judicial and Legal Services Commission (RJLSC).

In essence, Government, through the Ministry of the Attorney General has adopted an integrative approach that is expected to transform the Law and Justice Sector

into an efficient and vibrant sector that will facilitate and promote Equity, Justice and Rectitude in the society and encourage public confidence in and adherence to the Rule of Law.

FOREIGN POLICY

Among the major policy objectives of the country’s Foreign Policy are:-

- (i) To identify and pursue strategic alliances with selected countries of North and Latin America, Europe, Africa, Asia and the Pacific and deepen and strengthen existing economic and cultural linkages particularly with the United States and Venezuela;
- (ii) To strengthen the regional integration process and bilateral relations with CARICOM Member States (Box 5.2);
- (iii) To position Trinidad and Tobago as the economic, trade and business center of the hemisphere; and
- (iv) To reduce or eliminate the potential for maritime delimitation disputes and foster closer regional cooperation.

Accordingly, Government will continue to actively pursue strategic bilateral relations and to strengthen diplomatic relations with key sovereignties. The forging or deepening of relations with like-minded States including influential, industrialized countries has proven to be successful in providing a platform for promoting Trinidad and Tobago’s interests in the international arena. Principal among the objectives of Trinidad and Tobago’s Foreign Policy in its bilateral relations is the promotion of the country as an attractive destination for trade and tourism and for investment in the energy and other sectors. Technical cooperation in areas identified as national priorities will also be aggressively sought through ongoing bilateral and multilateral diplomatic initiatives.

V. FACILITATING THE POLICY AGENDA

Box 5.2: The Main Elements of the CARICOM Agenda

- The deepening of the integration process through the establishment of the CSME ;
- Inauguration of the Caribbean Court of Justice;
- Facilitation of the free movement of university graduates, sports persons, musicians, artistes and media workers;
- External trade negotiations in the three negotiating theatres of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the EU-ACP Forum, and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA);
- Enhancement of relations with the United States;
- Strengthening of relations with Canada, Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, India, Japan, the Russian Federation and Venezuela;
- Establishment of a mechanism to deal with common resources in CARICOM (e.g. a Common Fisheries Regime and the establishment of a mechanism for developing a Regional Policy and Legal Framework for access to energy resources);
- Strengthening regional agriculture for sustainable growth and development;
- Options for Governance in the Caribbean Community; and
- Cooperation in security matters.

CARICOM POLICY

Government, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will continue to aggressively pursue efforts to ensure that Trinidad and Tobago is CSME-ready by December 2004.

In so doing, Government is convinced that this country's full participation in the single economic space will:-

- Provide increased social and economic benefits to citizens;
- Encourage joint ventures and other investment activity through support for the Region's development efforts; and
- Consolidate Trinidad and Tobago's image within CARICOM, as a principal destination of exports of goods and services.

Priority will also be placed on Trinidad and Tobago's maritime relations with neighboring countries. To this end, Government will continue to pursue speedy resolution to outstanding delimitation disputes that impact the socioeconomic well being of the country.

THE ACS AND THE FTAA

Global challenges demand the need for coordination of effort not only internationally and within CARICOM but within the wider Caribbean through the Association of Caribbean States (ACS). The work of the ACS, which focuses primarily on Trade, Transportation, Sustainable Tourism and Natural Disasters, addresses areas vital to national development. In this vein, in July 2004, Trinidad and Tobago signed the **Convention Establishing the Sustainable Tourism Zone of the Caribbean (STZC)**, the **Protocol to the Convention** and the **Multilateral Air Transport Agreement**.

The major foreign policy initiative in positioning Trinidad and Tobago as the economic, trade and business center of the hemisphere revolves around securing the headquarters of the Secretariat of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Coordinated efforts between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its overseas missions in collaboration with the Ministry of Trade and Industry, together with valuable support from CARICOM Member States in leading Ministerial Missions to selected countries in Latin America have been very encouraging.

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PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

The launch of the **Public Sector Reform Initiation Programme** in March 2004 set in motion a thirty-six (36) month long period of activities focusing largely on the reform of the Public Service. The Public Service Transformation Division of the Ministry of Public Administration and Information is responsible for directly managing the programme under the theme, **“Pathway to Service Excellence”**. The Programme developed by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago with support from the Inter-American Development Bank will concentrate on developing reform strategy, creating networks, and building capacity.

The specific objectives of the Programme are: -

- Identification of the issues for transformation of the Public Sector;
- Definition of a suitable, feasible and politically sensitive strategy for the transformation of the Public Sector;
- Facilitation of widespread agreement and support necessary to implement such a strategy; and
- Development of basic management instruments and capacity to manage Reform.

This initiative comes at a critical time in the nation’s Vision 2020 exercise, which requires an effective and efficient Public Sector. In addition, global and regional imperatives also demand a higher level of public sector service delivery. The reform Programme will be characterized by in-depth analysis of the governance systems and institutions that are the core of public management systems, engagement of a broad sweep of stakeholders in discussion on Public Sector Reform, and identification of risks to the reform, and the readying of the change agents and systems within the public service to manage and facilitate the reform.

By the end of the programme the Public Sector and the Public Service in particular will be well poised to become a client-centric, high performing organization, capable

of facilitating the goals of Vision 2020.

CAREER/SUCCESSION MANAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

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. In 2004 enhanced recruitment and selection mechanisms using assessment center processes commenced for Deputy Permanent Secretary positions, with the assistance of the Public Service Commission of Canada. In late 2004 the assessment process will be completed for the first group of candidates. Activities in 2005/2006 will include additional assessment operations, competency-based training and development programmes and structured competency-based interviewing.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND ADVANCED TRAINING

The Scholarships and Advanced Training Division (SATD) will move to improve the delivery of service to its clients as follows:-

- Computerization of scholar and scholarship records;
- Development of a website for wider public access and communications; and
- Provision of competency training to staff members 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 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
- Maximize the investment in Government Scholars.

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CREATING A KNOWLEDGE-BASED SOCIETY

The **National Information, Communication and Technology Plan**, now referred to as **fastforward**, evolved from a highly participative and collaborative approach between Government, various public and private sector stakeholders, and academia. In 2003/2004 the following eight (8) Pathfinder Projects were formulated and international calls for tenders were issued for their implementation in 2004/2005:-

- (a) **Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Governance and capability:** A Memorandum of Understanding is to be signed with the Canadian Government to assist in designing and developing Information Technology Governance capabilities.
- (b) **Community Access:** Development of 2-3 model community access centers with internet and information technology where analysis of global best-practices will inform content design and the roll-out strategy for implementation nationally.
- (c) **SchoolNet:** An interactive school network will be established in five (5) schools. Strategies for improving content and innovation in the educational system will be considered.
- (d) **Broadband Strategy:** A best-practice study will be conducted and together with an analysis of market conditions, a national strategy will be designed.
- (e) **E-Commerce/e-Business Development:** Development of a portal for business houses to encourage collaboration with each other, suppliers and access to Government services. Other networking/innovation strategies will be encouraged for Small and Medium Enterprises by 2008.
- (f) **E-Government:** A survey will be conducted on selected Government services and an e-Government portal developed.
- (g) **Legislative Review and Reform:** Gap analysis of existing legislation will be undertaken and will inform the formulation of a legislative policy

framework.

- (h) **Promotion and Awareness:** Development of a national campaign for national and niche audiences.

Government through the Ministry of Public Administration and Information, will be rolling out the second phase of *fastforward*. In this instance, the projects will include further research of best practices, feasibility studies and assessments, pilots, comprehensive design initiatives and the roll-out and extension of 2003/2004 Pathfinders.

The following projects have been identified for further development and commencement of implementation, where possible, in 2004/2005: -

- **Community Connections:** An operational project to roll-out the design developed for Community Access Centers and training of persons to man the centers.
- **Knowledge, Innovation and Development (KID):** Extension of the SchoolNet interaction to eighteen (18) other schools.
- **E-Government Portal:** Roll-out of Phase 1 of the portal with a limited collection of Government services and information.
- **LibraryNet:** Implementation of a Pilot to move to high-speed connectivity in twenty-two (22) public libraries along with continued research and development into digitization and on-line distribution of music and video articles and archives.
- **Integrated Justice Network:** An e-Justice stakeholder forum will be established and a pilot network integrating National Security, Defense and the Judiciary developed.
- **Computers for Communities:** A **National Repair and Supply Centre** will be designed together with an incentive programme for private sector donations of pre-owned computers.
- **Communications, Promotion and Awareness:** The 2003/2004 **Pathfinder National Awareness**

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Programme will be extended along with the development and production of targeted campaigns.

- **E-Commerce:** A Pilot **Student/Business Connections Programme** will be developed.
- **ICT Tax and Fiscal Incentives:** An examination of a series of tax and other fiscal incentives which could stimulate ownership of computers will be developed.
- **Legislative Review:** The formulation of a legislative policy framework will begin.
- **ICT Governance:** Extension of the Pathfinder project arrangements with adjustments identified from the 2003/2004 experience.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

With the proclamation of the Telecommunications Act in June 2004, the **Telecommunications Authority** became the regulatory agency for the telecommunications sector. Its Executive Director has been selected and has assumed duties. The Authority has since initiated a recruitment programme to build the necessary human resource capacity to effectively perform its mandate.

In further pursuit of the Authority's regulatory objectives under the Telecommunications Act 2001, a Programme entitled the **Liberalization of the Telecommunications Sector** has been developed. This programme comprises the necessary projects and initiatives required to effectively regulate the sector. The objectives of the programme are:-

- To equip the Authority with the necessary tools and skills required to maximize utilization and revenue earned in respect of the nation's telecommunications resources;
- To provide expert advice in respect of technical, economic and financial matters related to telecommunications competition to ensure that a healthy, fair and competitive environment is sustained;

- To develop the necessary frameworks, plans, programmes and projects to ensure the achievement of the social and economic objectives of telecommunications liberalization such as universal service, affordable and competitive prices and the availability of multiple service providers in the various markets;
- To develop the necessary capacity to overcome the likely challenges that will arise in a market that is about to embark on telecommunications liberalization;

To achieve these objectives, the Ministry of Public Administration and Information and the Telecommunications Authority will pursue the following development programme projects: -

- The procurement and establishment of an **Advanced Automated Spectrum Management System**;
- The establishment of an **Information Technology (IT) Intranet and Internet-based Infrastructure** for the Authority;
- The engagement of an international consulting firm to perform costing and financial analyses;
- The development of a universal service framework and implementation plan; and
- The development of a comprehensive dispute resolution framework.

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES

The Government Information Services Division will be restructured to operate more efficiently and effectively in a technologically advanced and changing communications environment. In furtherance of this, a strategic plan, geared toward transforming and improving the structure of the Division will be developed. Operationally, the re-engineered Information Division, will implement projects for the design of a standardized cataloguing system, the transfer of audio/visual information from analogue to digital format and the provision of an upgraded database on Government information.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) INFRASTRUCTURE AND SYSTEMS OF THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND INFORMATION

Government has mandated the Ministry of Public Administration to re-invent and reshape the Public Service through Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Programmes and Projects. The Ministry is therefore intensifying its efforts to strengthen its internal communications and information technology services infrastructure to enable all of its eighteen (18) divisions to improve delivery efficiency and effectiveness in providing services to the public, other Ministries and public authorities.

The Information Technology Section of the Ministry has identified four (4) projects that will have a direct and immediate positive impact on the Ministry's internal operations and will benefit other Ministries and agencies indirectly through enhanced delivery of services, information sharing, work activity collaboration and systems integration. The initiative will result in the following benefits:-

- Alignment of ICT services with current and future needs;
- Improvement of the quality of ICT services delivered; and
- Reduced costs of providing ICT services over the long-term.

JOB EVALUATION EXERCISE

The Personnel Department of the Ministry of Public Administration and Information will continue its efforts to improve the remuneration packages for 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 the Job Evaluation Exercises is just one of the means of achieving that objective.

Job evaluation exercises were completed in respect of the Police Service and the Teaching Service and their results implemented. Other exercises were begun and/or completed in respect of the Judicial and Legal Service and the Protective Services, and the Teaching Service. A pilot study in the Civil Service and Statutory Authorities was completed early in 2004 when two hundred and sixty-eight (268) Job Descriptions were developed, approved, signed off and evaluated. The core exercise is in progress and will be conducted in five (5) phases, two of which are complete. The third phase, the training of Liaison Officers began in July 2004.

DEVELOPMENT OF HR POLICIES AND SYSTEMS

In its Strategic Plan, the Personnel Department of the Ministry of Public Administration and Information committed to creating the appropriate policies for the management and maintenance of the human resources function in the Public Service and to developing systems to aid implementation of those policies. The policies, systems and strategies aim to enhance the performance of the HRM function in order to provide optimal levels of service delivery.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SECTOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES/GUIDELINES

Of significance to our country at this time, is the development of policies and programmes to ensure the maintenance of a happy, healthy, satisfied workforce. In this regard, legislation was drafted to guide the implementation of policies for Occupational Safety and Health and attention is now being paid to the treatment of workers living with HIV/AIDS.

As the Employer, the Chief Personnel Officer, has responsibility for ensuring that there is adherence to legislation governing the management of workplace events. As a consequence, sector-specific policies and/or guidelines are being developed to complement national policies on Occupational Health and Safety, including the management of life-threatening illnesses, such as HIV/AIDS.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Local Government System is a key vehicle through which Government will provide for an improved quality of life for its citizens.

For the 2005-2007 period, 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. As such, emphasis will be placed on:-

- Infrastructural Development and Community Service Delivery;
- Institutional Strengthening;
- Participatory Governance; and
- Decentralization Initiatives.

In the provision of physical and social infrastructure, **the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP), Road Improvement Fund (RIF)** and the newly created **Infrastructure Renewal Improvement and Development (IRIAD) Programme** will continue to undertake local infrastructure works such as road building and refurbishing, improvements to markets and abattoirs, drainage works, construction of bridges, development of recreation grounds, and upgrading cemeteries and cremation facilities. In addressing the visible problems affecting communities, small community contractors would be encouraged to bid for projects in their area. In addition, as far as possible, community labor will be utilized for the execution of these projects. Additionally, the **Unemployment Relief Programme**, with its new focus on construction type projects will also be part of this process and will provide a greater level of skills transfer to applicants, while also providing them with short-term unemployment relief.

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

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

Government recognizes the importance of good organizational performance as it relates to Local Government. As such, the Ministry of Local Government will undertake a programme of activities encompassing human resource development, administrative operations, staffing matters, and accommodation issues.

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

Organizational performance will also be bolstered through the filling of vacant posts as well as the creation of others that are required for efficient and effective service delivery. 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.

Technological transformation is an essential aspect of organizational performance. The objective here is to continue to develop the information technology structure of the Ministry of Local Government and the Municipal Corporations. One of the goals for the medium-term, is to implement the last phases of the programme for the establishment 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 and the Municipalities. Additionally, the implementation of systems for human resource management, financial management, electronic data communication, payroll, and the collection of rates and taxes will be continued.

With respect to administrative operations the conduct of regular audits and financial evaluations of Local Government operations would work towards ensuring

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greater accountability and transparency for all Local Government Departments to ensure compliance with regulations, procedures and specifications.

The provision of adequate accommodation for staff of local government bodies is inextricably linked to greater organizational performance, as well as, the furthering of the decentralization process and the move toward greater autonomy for local bodies. In this regard, the main focus for the medium-term is the construction of Municipal Complexes and the identification of better accommodation for the Head Office staff.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND DECENTRALISATION

Government recognizes the importance of community empowerment and will continue to encourage greater civic awareness and participation by citizens in municipal affairs, by involving communities in the planning and implementation of projects and by conducting meetings of council in strategic areas. Additionally, communities will be engaged on a wider scale through a greater level of information dissemination regarding the activities of Local Government. The establishment of a media production unit will address current capacity issues in this regard.

The role envisioned for Local Government in this medium-term is one of greater autonomy, where Municipal Corporations will be armed with a larger measure of authority through the decentralization process. The newly re-activated Decentralization Unit is charged specifically with the task of facilitating the decentralization process.

LEGISLATION

Legislative review is also on the agenda for the medium-term. This is aimed at facilitating a greater level of autonomy for Municipal Corporations. With greater autonomy the need becomes acute for greater financial self-sufficiency, thus the Ministry of Local Government will work toward establishing **Property Assessment and Collection Units** in nine (9) Regional Corporations.

The Ministry of Local Government will also continue its work with the Ministries of the Attorney General, Legal Affairs, and Finance as well as the Municipal Corporations to develop the regulations and provide the infrastructure necessary for the implementation of the provisions of the **Dangerous Dogs Act**.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

The principal objective of Government's Consumer Policy for the period 2005 to 2007 will be enforcement of consumer protection legislation and continued development of an educated and assertive consumer society while ensuring consumer supply and equity. Over the medium-term, keen focus will be placed on: -

- The education and protection of all stakeholders;
- The development of a manual outlining the laws governing various types of consumer transactions;
- Monitoring of commercial activities to collect and disseminate information with respect to broad issues and practices that relate to the way in which businesses operate in the market place. Particular emphasis will be placed on:-
 - examining unfair/adverse business practices and law enforcement regarding the motor vehicle and appliance industries;
 - determining violation of the **Adverse Trade Practices Order**;
 - **(ATPO) 2000** and the **Trade Descriptions Act**; and
 - unfair contract terms e.g. hire agreements and extended warranties.
- Collaboration between the Consumer Affairs Division (CAD), other regulatory agencies, the business community and the academic community as appropriate, to facilitate the generation of policy options and policy and programme implementation.

In order to facilitate these objectives, Government will review and amend existing legislation, including the Adverse Trade Practices Order (ATPO) 2000, which will

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be amended to include services. Decisive steps will also be taken to enforce existing legislation, with the issuance of warnings to offenders as well as the bringing of charges against violators of the ATPO 2000. Other measures will include, publication of information and advice to the consuming public and encouragement of industry self-regulation.

Plans for a **Small Claims Court** will also be pursued and Government will encourage businesses to provide effective systems for complaints resolution.

In addition, Government, through the Consumer Affairs Division (CAD) of the Ministry of Legal Affairs will develop an intensive education campaign to empower stakeholders. This education drive will focus on the development of educated, assertive, vigilant consumers fully knowledgeable of their rights and responsibilities. As a starting point, focus will be placed on youths, the business community, the differently-abled, and the elderly.

During the period, Government will also seek to establish a hotline for consumers to notify the CAD of questionable business practices as well as to access instant information related to the various databases maintained at the Division.

REGISTRATION

CIVIL REGISTRY

Implementation of the Population Registration System (PRS), entails the capturing of all members of the population and issuance of a PIN (Personal Identification Number) and a PRS Card to all members of the population. This PIN will be the principle form of identification for all citizens and residents of Trinidad and Tobago. 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 would require 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.

LAND REGISTRY

Over the medium-term, automation of the **Real Property Ordinance (RPO)** will entail the creation of a database with all existing titles; provision of a facility for maintaining and updating related transactions; and the bringing of all lands under the RPO.

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

COMPANIES REGISTRY

Government will implement a facility to allow persons to access the automated Companies Registry system from remote locations, to do searches and allow for on-line registration of documents such as articles of incorporation.

MOVEABLE PROPERTY REGISTRY

Government will establish a fully electronic registry where notices of all secured transactions on moveable property are registered. The Moveable Property Registry will register all financing agreements and provide information on same via remote registration and search facilities to all credit organizations. The Registry will support the **Credit Bureau** by providing debtor information.

VI. HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

- **EARLY CHILDHOOD AND BASIC EDUCATION**
- **TERTIARY AND TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**

EARLY CHILDHOOD AND BASIC EDUCATION

Government has demonstrated its commitment to the ongoing development of the human capital of Trinidad and Tobago through its many initiatives to provide accessible quality education to all children. These initiatives are consistent with the Government's vision of making Trinidad and Tobago a developed nation by the year 2020. Accordingly, education is seen as a "critical dimension" in positioning Trinidad and Tobago for the Global Age. Government has therefore ranked education as its top national priority. Over the period 2000 – 2004 the Government has steadily increased its budgetary allocation to the Ministry of Education from 9.5 percent in 2000 to 13.0 percent in 2004. For the fiscal year 2003/2004 the Ministry of Education received the highest overall percentage of the National Budget.

With this level of investment and support the Ministry of Education has been thrust to the forefront to lead the transformation of the society. Cognizant of the lead role it has to play, the Ministry has prioritized the development of the qualitative aspects of education, and a **Strategic Quality Plan for Education 2005 and Beyond** is soon to be finalized.

The objectives and targets under this "Quality Plan" will embrace the following areas: -

- 1) Standards for the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Sector;
- 2) Standards-based curricula at all levels;
- 3) Modernized curricula from forms one to five;
- 4) A **Curriculum Engineering System** under the aegis of the **National Curriculum Council**;

- 5) Rationalization of specialized craft courses at the secondary level and the strengthening of Technical/Vocational Education and Training (TVET) at the form four and five level as well as post secondary level, with appropriate levels of certification that is CARICOM-based;
- 6) A system of Heads of Department and Senior Teachers at the Primary and Secondary Levels;
- 7) New strategies for teacher education and continuous professional development;
- 8) A vigorous literacy drive under the aegis of the **Centre of Excellence for Teacher Training (CETT)** which seeks to build capacity within schools to make every teacher a *Reading Teacher*;
- 9) A new system of **Student Support Services (SSS)** through the newly created **SSS Division** which will provide diagnostic and testing services to schools, counseling, special education support, and the support of school social workers, psychologists and school nurses;
- 10) A system for inclusive education - closing the gap for special needs students;
- 11) Adoption of modern methods of testing and assessment and the use of international benchmarking through participation in **Progress in International Reading Literacy Studies (PIRLS)**;
- 12) A renewed system of school supervision with the introduction of an Inspectorate;
- 13) A system of indicators to measure and evaluate achievement throughout the system;
- 14) De-shifting of junior secondary schools and conversion of senior secondary schools to provide a full system of whole day schooling;
- 15) Implementation of the **School Net Programme** under the NICT Plan and continuation of full computerization of primary schools; and
- 16) Enhancement of adult education programmes through distance learning and other strategies.

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Parallel with these initiatives, the work towards restructuring and decentralization of the Ministry's operations will continue over the period of the SEPF. In addition, the **2003-2007 Schools Construction Programme** will continue with a view to ensuring that the available physical school places are quality places conducive to teaching and learning.

PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND TERTIARY (TEACHER) EDUCATION

Although the Ministry of Education has been successful in its efforts to achieve universal primary and secondary education, it is still faced with the challenge of improving the physical facilities. Approximately 50 percent of its four hundred and eighty one (481) primary schools are over fifty (50) years old and in need of rebuilding, more importantly to accommodate the delivery of the new curriculum schools.

In order to address this problem construction of new and replacement primary schools is ongoing and will continue over the period 2005-2007. For fiscal 2005 however, construction is due to be completed on sixteen (16) replacement schools.

The process of attainment of Universal Secondary Education in 2000 was facilitated through the placement of students in private secondary schools. The ultimate goal however is to accommodate all students in public schools. Towards this objective, extension works have begun on ten (10) secondary schools through the **Secondary Education Modernization Programme (SEMP)** and the **Fourth Basic Education Programme**.

Also, at the secondary level, the school construction programme seeks to incorporate the physical works to support the following: the de-shifting and conversion of Junior Secondary Schools and the conversion of Senior Secondary Schools to five and seven year schools, the reports for which is currently before Cabinet; as well as the general rehabilitation and technical upgrade of 101 Government and Government-assisted Secondary Schools. This programme will be phased over a three-

year and is expected to be completed over the medium-term.

In keeping with the goal of expanding access to tertiary education to over thirty (30) percent, a concerted effort will be made to increase sixth form access. The demand for sixth form places is being addressed through a needs assessment survey, which will inform the provision of additional sixth form places both at the academic and technical vocational level.

In addition, rationalization of the secondary level craft programme is being undertaken whereby craft students will engage in a general basic education course followed by a two-year "*sandwich programme*" which will incorporate time spent in school as well as in industry. Discussions are ongoing with the **National Training Agency** and various industries, which would partner the world of work programme.

The existing **Polytechnic Sixth Form** is to be upgraded in 2004 while a new facility is being planned for the relocation of the **Corinth Sixth Form School**.

In addition, the teachers colleges at Valsayn and Corinth will be upgraded to allow for the effective preparation of teachers for 2005 and beyond.

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION

Government views Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) as a foundational building block for a quality education system.

Accordingly, over the past two years the Ministry of Education embarked on substantial qualitative interventions aimed at reforming the ECCE sector. This initiative included the training of one hundred and eighty (180) ECCE teachers, and the provision of one hundred and twenty (120) professional development scholarships to caregivers at both Government-assisted and private schools. In addition draft National Standards and a policy document for the ECCE Sector were developed and Government is currently pursuing the implementation of the related activities in this regard.

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A needs assessment for the sector in Trinidad has been completed and preliminary indications are that approximately two hundred (200) centres may have to be built especially in rural communities in Trinidad. In respect of Tobago, a similar survey is scheduled for September 2004.

For the fiscal year 2005, forty-three (43) centres are to be built.

Another initiative is the provision of a grant of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) per centre for children at one hundred and sixty eight (168) Government-assisted ECCE Centres in both Trinidad and Tobago. These grants are to be used for the procurement of learning resources.

THE DIFFERENTLY-ABLED

Government is determined that the Education system be a fully inclusive one and that all children are provided with opportunities to realize their full potential. Accordingly, initiatives are underway to address the needs of the differently-abled in the school system.

Plans have been finalized for the rebuilding of twelve (12) special schools and construction works are due to start in 2005.

Government will also pursue the development of alternative education programmes for children with special needs in secondary schools.

THE TOTAL QUALITY SYSTEM MODEL

Adoption of the total quality system model will seek to implement corrective action in all areas of weaknesses in the present system including the incidence of:-

- Functional illiteracy in the school system;
- Students graduating from secondary school without a full certificate; and
- Too few students qualifying for entry to tertiary education.

In an effort to effectively address this situation, Government has created a Quality Assurance Unit

within the Ministry of Education. This Unit has been mandated to set institutional standards for all the sectors that impact the classroom, and ensure maintenance of these standards through continuous monitoring and evaluation.

Other initiatives to achieve and sustain quality include the establishment of a **Teacher Professional Development Unit**, which was operationalized in April 2004. During the coming year, this Unit will review the recruitment, orientation and training structures for teachers. Other focal points will be:-

- Professional training for all teachers;
- Continuous on-the-job training;
- Higher admission standards to the profession; and
- Subject-specific teacher training through the **Division of Curriculum Development**.

Additionally, the new performance management and assessment system for members of the Teaching Service is being finalized for implementation by the end of 2004.

The implementation of school-based management is targeted for September 2004. Under this new system, school leaders will be expected to manage and make decisions concerning expenditure and curricula. The process of preparation and training began in 2003 and continued in 2004. Further training will continue in 2005. Accordingly, twenty-five (25) local school boards are to be inaugurated by the end of 2004 to assist principals in the management of schools and to ensure community participation in schooling. In addition, new boards will be inaugurated in 2006.

The Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Ministry of Health is finalizing plans for the implementation of the **School Health Plan**. In this regard, audio and visual testing of pupils at the infant level is expected to start in September 2004.

CURRICULUM MODERNIZATION

Modernization of the curriculum to address the changing economic and social needs of the country is another key item on Government's Education Agenda.

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In August 2004, the **National Curriculum Council** was inaugurated. This Council comprises all the major stakeholders and vested interest groups and has responsibility for facilitating, supporting and advancing curriculum development and curriculum related matters.

To support curriculum implementation and student learning, the Government will provide increased multi-media resources and updated collections of basic reference books and journals to forty (40) secondary schools on a phased basis. This process will commence in December 2004 and will continue into 2005.

In an effort to ensure valid and reliable systems of assessment, the piloting of the **National Certificate of Secondary Education Level one (1)** is ongoing at the form three level. Level two (2) is due to be selectively introduced in 2005 for students at the form five level.

To support curriculum development, Government will install multi-media facilities at forty (40) secondary schools by December 2004 and will continue its installation of technology labs at these schools into 2005.

Other initiatives include:-

- The establishment of a **Textbook Development Committee** of experts and a Sub-sector Research Committee to improve the availability of resources to support curriculum development;
- Expansion of the **Textbook Rental Loan Programme**; and
- Provision of book grants to secondary school students.

SCHOOL VIOLENCE AND INDISCIPLINE

Over the medium-term, Government will strengthen the **Schools Intervention Strategies Unit** to develop and coordinate projects to address the issue of violence and indiscipline in our nation's schools. A number of projects have already been implemented and others are scheduled for implementation over the 2005 –2007 period.

The development of a **Joint Action Plan for School Discipline** by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of National Security, is currently impacting the problem of indiscipline among students in seventeen (17) selected schools. Other achievements include:-

- The development of a draft policy on drug addiction; and
- Participation of students in fifteen (15) of the seventeen (17) selected schools in mentoring programmes.

OTHER STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAMMES

At present there are fifty (50) guidance officers working in about fifteen (15) primary schools. With the expansion of the programme, one hundred and twenty six (126) new positions have been created and candidates selected for the posts.

It is anticipated that for the fiscal year 2004-2005, eighty (80) guidance officers will be assigned to eighty (80) secondary schools while forty (40) guidance officers will be assigned to one hundred (100) primary schools.

In order to support student access to education and to facilitate student learning, Government will continue its provision of support programmes to students. These programmes consist of the following:-

- School Nutrition services which include the provision of breakfast and lunch to students at Early Childhood Centres, primary and secondary schools. The Breakfast Programme will be expanded from 25,000 to 30,000 meals per day, and the Lunch Programme from 90,000 to 92,000 meals per day;
- The School Transport Programme which facilitates the provision of maxi taxi and bus transportation to students and which will be expanding to cater for special needs children;
- The School Textbook Rental Programme through which essential textbooks are provided on loan to students of primary and secondary schools, and

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resource materials to Early Childhood Care and Education Centres and Students of Special Schools; and

- The Book Grant Programme through which students of public and private schools are provided with funding to purchase essential textbooks.

DEVELOPMENT OF READING SKILLS

The establishment of a **Centre of Excellence for Teacher Training (CETT)**. The goal of the CETT is to provide teacher training in reading instruction and improve the reading skills of students in primary schools.

A total of twenty seven (27) schools will be selected in Phase I of a programme aimed at addressing the low reading level of reading skills among children at the primary level.

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

In an effort to align the strategic direction of the education system with the objectives set for national development, Government will seek to decentralize and restructure the Ministry of Education. The main objective is to achieve better organizational performance, better management of schools and a higher level of effectiveness throughout the system.

Major activities over the past year included the development and dissemination of a detailed project plan to guide the implementation process. Other initiatives include:-

- The development and implementation of a communication agenda which included a series of seminars and outreach programmes in various modes for stakeholders and interest groups for the purpose of information sharing and 'buy in';
- Initiation of the process for institutionalizing school-based management through the conduct of seminars and workshops on the draft policy and procedures manual for school-based management, development of a framework for school development planning, and preparation of requests

for proposals to procure software solutions to support school-based management;

- Facilitation of the continued establishment of local school boards in Government schools;
- Initiation of the process for the establishment of upgraded decentralized education districts, including identification of services and functions to be conducted by schools, districts and central administration, the conduct of a migration needs analysis, and development of the draft organizational structure for the district offices among others; and
- Joint hosting of coordination meetings with the human resource management and the organizational development consultants hired to assist in the restructuring and reorganization process.

Major projections for fiscal 2005 include:-

- Establishment of the full service education districts commencing with St. Patrick and Victoria;
- Continuation of the roll out of local school boards in Government schools;
- Alignment of decentralization efforts of the Ministry of Education with the Local Government objectives and with that of Tobago;
- Development and implementation of a comprehensive training plan to support restructuring and decentralization;
- Development of the Legislative framework to support restructuring and decentralization;
- Development and implementation of a change management plan, a physical resource plan, a financial plan and a system for outsourcing of services;
- Coordination of the procurement of school-based management software, with the Information Technology Unit;
- Institutionalization of the system of school-based management; and

- Continuous monitoring of the project implementation.

Government envisages that with the successful continuation and implementation of the many strategies and programmes identified, the goal of contributing towards the development of the country's human resources would be realized.

TERTIARY, TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

TERTIARY EDUCATION

The target of developed country status for Trinidad and Tobago is a dynamic one that requires significant changes in all sectors of the society and rapid and radical change in some specific areas.

Science, Technology and Tertiary Education are significant pillars of the foundation for achieving the target of developed country status by 2020. The realization of Vision 2020 however requires the following:-

Holistic development of the society in terms of: -

- The development of skills and capabilities that are necessary to function in a knowledge-based economy;
- The nurturing of the creative, innovative and entrepreneurial potential of the people;
- The inculcation of a culture of critical thinking and lifelong learning;
- The fostering of change management and leadership skills; and
- The instilling of core attitudes and values.

Development, implementation and evaluation of policy framework for Tertiary Education and Science and Technology, which includes:-

- The alignment of skills and competences to the requirements of the labour market;
- The development of a tertiary education sector and system will have greater synergies, raised standards

and shared information; and

- The use of information and communication technology as a major component of the tertiary education sector.

Building and strengthening of the institutional capacity and human resource capabilities to drive and sustain the sectors.

Improvement of the quality of life.

The transformation of the society by the creation of a national environment supportive of Science Technology and Innovation (STI) and characterized by the following elements:-

- The increased number of skilled and qualified staff in STI;
- High quality products and services using steadily improving processes and technologies;
- The generation, modification and absorption of new technologies and techniques;
- A private sector that values and performs research;
- Increased international competitiveness of many of our indigenous business, products and services; and
- A functional and functioning **National Innovation System**.

In forging ahead to developed country status by 2020 the aim of Government is to have a Tertiary Education System that is responsive and dynamic to the socio-economic needs of the country and leads to the creation of a civilized, creative, innovative, intelligent citizenry with the ability and desire to participate actively and rationally in a democratic society based on equality, liberalism and acceptance of diversity.

Government will also seek to promote the optimal advancement and application of **Science Technology and Innovation (STI)** towards satisfying the basic needs of the people of the country for food, shelter, clothing, health and education as well as being the

primary vehicles for rapid business and industrial growth and competitiveness.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

The report of the **Cabinet-appointed Steering Committee on Tertiary Education** would inform a revised policy document and also map out a strategic outline of the strategies to be implemented.

The Steering Committee will review draft policies on tertiary education, training and distance and lifelong learning and ensure coherence in the tertiary education sector including the appropriate backward linkages with the primary and secondary education sectors.

The Committee is currently finalizing the **National Policy on the Development of Tertiary Education and Training**. This Policy is designed along five broad policy goals, namely:-

- The structure of the system;
- The beneficiaries of the system;
- Curricular relevance of the system;
- Financing of the system; and
- The management of the system.

The Committee has been mandated by Government to produce a report by early September 2004.

ACCREDITATION

The **Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago**, once it becomes fully operational in January 2005 will make provisions for registration, quality assurance, accreditation and recognition of tertiary level programmes and institutions. The Accreditation Council will promote and encourage the adoption of international quality standards for tertiary education and training in Trinidad and Tobago. (Box 6.1)

Existing tertiary institutions would be granted provisional registration status for a period of two years after which they will be required to seek registration by

Box 6.1: Functions of the ACTT

The key functions of ACTT are:-

- Accreditation and re-accreditation of institutions and programmes;
- Recognition of foreign qualifications; and
- Promotion of quality enhancement and quality assurance in tertiary education.

The ACTT will also serve to facilitate the establishment of a qualifications framework that provides the basis for the creation of a seamless education and training system.

the Ministry in order to continue to operate in Trinidad and Tobago. New institutions are required to register before they offer tertiary level programmes as registration will confer authority on institutions to award tertiary level qualifications.

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES (UWI)

The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine for the past three (3) years has surpassed its target of a 5.8 percent increase in undergraduate registration as set out in its strategic plan for the five-year period, 2002-2007. The growth rate has now been set at 16.8 percent per annum. For the period 2003/2004 the enrolment at the St. Augustine Campus was 10,693. The targeted postgraduate enrollment was also exceeded and the enrolment in the Summer School Programme was approximately 20 percent higher than previous years.

Further, for the 2003-2004 period students from Tobago were able to study on the island for Level I of the **B.Ed in Educational Administration**. Enrolment in Masters Programmes increased by approximately 12 percent and enrolment in **UWIDEC Distance Learning Programmes** increased by 31 percent. Added to this, eighty (82) courses have now been made available to students online and an Evening University will begin in the 2004-2005 academic year. The University has also enhanced its counseling services and expanded its Shuttle Bus Service. It is also continuing to enhance the teaching and learning environment.

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The University of the West Indies in its six-year strategic plan for the period, 2002-2007 has been working toward operationalising its key strategic priorities. These are:-

- Student Centeredness;
- Quality;
- IT Platform;
- Expansion of Access;
- Financial Optimization;
- Institutional Strengthening; and
- Alumni and Stakeholders' Relations.

In addition UWI has projected significant increases in its enrolment. For the period 2005-2007 the projections are: 13,489; 16,994 and 20,865. Consequently, there are plans to expand postgraduate programmes, the taught Masters Programme, on-line courses and the summer programme. In order to facilitate greater mobility throughout the tertiary education system, the University will continue assessing various programme offerings of tertiary level institutions for articulation with UWI.

The University will also forge ahead with plans for the construction of a lecture theater and classroom building, an extension of the Milner Hall of residence and a teaching and learning complex to address the problems of overcrowding of classrooms, shortage of residential accommodation and to strengthen the teaching and learning environment.

THE COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND APPLIED ARTS OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO (COSTAATT)

The College of Science Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago (COSTAATT) in fulfilling its mandate to be a single multi-campus college and to increase access to tertiary education has embarked on the following initiatives:-

- Improvement to facilities;
- Establishment of a Wide Area Network;
- Training and development activities; and

- Expanding access, the main thrust of which will be the development of the **Financial Aid Programme** for commencement in September 2004. (Box 6.2)

Box: 6.2: The Financial Aid Programme

This Programme includes:-

- A Community Education Programme;
- A book loan and grants facility;
- Peer tutoring scholarships; and
- Work-study scholarships.

In addition, COSTAATT has a mandate to:-

- Increase enrollment in tertiary education;
- Broaden access for previously underserved groups of students; and
- Improve the quality and relevance of programmes and services in order to meet the needs of business, industry, state agencies, students, parents, and the faculty and staff of the constituent campuses.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO (UTT)

The Government has established the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) as a model institution of higher education, focusing on programmes in engineering and technology, research, innovation, entrepreneurship and humanities. UTT will be established in conjunction with the **Wallerfield Science and Technology Park**, designed to commercialize research and development and spawn enterprises for wealth and sustainable job creation. The University of Trinidad and Tobago will be established as a charitable trust under the Trustee Act, 1981.

The UTT has as its mandate a commitment to develop ethical and educated industry-ready graduates, promote innovation and facilitate enterprise for wealth generation

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and sustainable job creation, towards the equitable enhancement of the quality of life for all.

The UTT, in the first instance would comprise an **Institute of Science, Engineering and Technology**, comprising a School of Engineering and Technology, a School of Earth Science, Centres of Research, Development and Services including a Centre for Energy Studies, a Centre for Information, Communications and Technology, and a Manufacturing and Innovation Centre. Plans are also in train for the establishment of a :-

- A Student Services Unit;
- A Continuing Education and Community Outreach Unit;
- An Institute of Applied Arts and Humanities comprising:
- A College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago;
- An Academy of Arts, Letters and Public Affairs;
- A Vocational Teacher Training Unit;
- A School of Languages; and
- A School of Journalism and Media Affairs.

The following existing institutions are to be integrated into UTT:-

- The Trinidad and Tobago Institute of Technology;
- The Engineering, Tool and Die functions of Metal Industries Company Limited (MIC);
- The Caribbean Industrial Research Unit (CARIRI);
- The Institute of Marine Affairs; and
- COSTAATT, on a phased basis, with the John S. Donaldson Technical Institute, the San Fernando Technical Institute and the Point Fortin Vocational Centre in Phase I.

The UTT will be established as a multi-campus organization operating in northern, central, and southern Trinidad as well as in Tobago. It will initially

commence its operations in a re-structured **Trinidad and Tobago Institute of Technology** campus in September 2004.

For the academic year 2004/ 2005, commencing in September 2004, the following programmes would be introduced:-

- An M. Sc. in Exploration and Production;
- A Bachelor of Technology in electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, process and utility engineering, petroleum and engineering and information system; and
- A Diploma in Technology in the petroleum engineering, chemical engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, telecommunication engineering, industrial instrumentation, computer technology and computer engineering.

As at July 2004, fourteen hundred (1,400) prospective students have applied to the UTT.

Over the medium-term, the UTT will expand its course offerings to include graduate programmes in the field of Offshore Technologies, including Refining, Gas Processing and Marketing, Petroleum Management, Natural Gas Technology and Electrical Management. Degree programmes will be extended to manufacturing engineering, computer technology, earth sciences and maritime technologies.

In addition, alliances between the UTT and the following institutions would be formalized:-

- El Instituto Superior De La Energia of Madrid, Spain;
- The Southampton Institute of the United Kingdom;
- The Faculty of Engineering, University of the West Indies (UWI); and
- The Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, Canada.

Box: 6.3: The Key Objectives of GATE

These are:-

- To make tertiary education affordable to all so that no citizen of Trinidad and Tobago will be denied tertiary education because of their inability to pay;
- To build and strengthen the national tertiary education sector in both public and private institutions; and
- To widen and deepen access to tertiary education that will support economic development and promote social equality

Government will also introduce a **Transitional Studies Programme** under the direction of UTT. This Programme will seek to prepare CXC graduates and persons wishing to re-enter the education system for entry into the University's programmes. The programme is to be conducted at four (4) locations in Trinidad and one (1) in Tobago. The Transitional Studies Programme is to be reviewed in two year's time in order to ascertain whether it has met its objectives.

GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE FOR TUITION EXPENSES (GATE)

The GATE Programme replaces the Dollar for Dollar Education Plan and is to commence in September 2004.

In terms of access to GATE, students at the public tertiary level institutions would be eligible to access grants to cover a minimum of 50 percent of their tuition fees. Students at private tertiary level institutions would be eligible to receive grants of 50 percent of their tuition fees up to a maximum of \$5,000.00 per year. Students who are unable to pay the remaining 50 percent of their tuition fees would be able to access the additional funding on the basis of a means test. (Box 6.3)

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

The **National Training Agency (NTA)** is the Government body responsible for the rationalization,

regulation and co-ordination of the Country's Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

A major achievement in this regard is the establishment of the **National Apprenticeship Programme (NAP)**. The NAP is a structured skills training programme that involves employers and apprentices/trainees/ graduates in a dual training system that combines on-the-job training and formal instruction into recognized sets of skills training, assessment and certification. It involves:-

- The assessment and verification of employers' capability to access the **Apprenticeship Tax Allowance**, under which employers are eligible for a 200 percent tax deduction; and
- The approval and registration of employers/training providers and the development of an employer database .

Over the medium-term, the NTA will initiate several new strategies including:-

- *Managing NAP*

The long-term vision of the NAP will be to ensure that every registered apprenticeship programme would as far as possible be offered the TTNVQ as its ultimate qualification.

- *Promote the use of National Occupational Standards (NOS)*

The NOS is an integral element of the TTNVQ and is the national occupational standards of competence. These standards are developed through the formation of Industry Training Organizations which is an industry led sectoral body which will serve as the focal point for human resource development in an alliance among employers, trainers, labour organizations, professional bodies and employee associations.

- *Facilitate the development of the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ)*

This involves collaboration with the NTAs of the region to work out the logistics of the development and implementation of the CVQ.

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- *Implement a Quality Assurance System for TVET*

A quality assurance system will be developed for TVET, in collaboration with the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago.

- *Provision of facilities to cater for the diverse activities in which the NTA will be involved with particular reference to the administration of the new TTNVQ qualification*

Integrated Complex for Tertiary Education

A conceptual plan for the development of an integrated Complex for Tertiary Education for the Ministry of STTE on Government Farm Lands at Curepe is being proposed. The proposed facility will include :-

- Headquarters for the National Training Agency (NTA);
- Headquarters for the Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme Limited (YTEPP);
- Accommodation for the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT);
- Accommodation for the **Distance Learning Secretariat**;
- A Campus for the **College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago (COSTAATT)**;
- A proposed **National Science Centre (NSC)** for the **National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST)**;
- A conference centre for the Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education;
- Special units and Head Office of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education; and
- A conceptual plan for the proposed relocation of the **John S. Donaldson Technical Institute**, which will be integrated in Phase I of the establishment of the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT).

Multi-Sector Skills Training (MuST)

The Multi-Sector Skills Training (MuST) is a specialized craft training programme that seeks to develop a cadre of competent workers within priority areas of the national economy. The Programme is work-based and will provide life skills training and enhanced employability to nationals between the ages of 18-50 inclusive of the following categories:-

- The unemployed;
- The economically disadvantaged;
- Displaced workers; and
- Re-entrants into productive society.

The goal of the MuST Programme is to train five thousand (5000) nationals in each of two (2) annual cycles.

It is anticipated that the Programme will be expanded to train ten thousand (10,000) persons over the 2005-2007 period. However, while the first phase of the Programme focused on the Construction Sector, the additional phases to be implemented over the medium-term, will be expanded to include Tourism and Hospitality and Agriculture.

On-the Job-Training (OJT)

OJT is a pre-employment training programme, which aims to offer trainees an introduction into the world of work. The goal is to conduct two cycles annually with five thousand (5,000) trainees per cycle. For the period October to July, 2004 a total of 5,234 trainees benefited from the Programme. Over the medium-term, additional measures will be put in place to ensure the placement of ten thousand (10,000) apprentices annually. In addition, a tracer study will be conducted, with a view to assessing the impact of the Programme and to follow up on OJT graduates in terms of full-time employment.

YTEPP

The construction of the YTEPP training centre at Valencia commenced in August 2004 and is due to be

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completed in 2005. In addition, construction of the YTEPP Headquarters will commence under the Integrated Complex for Tertiary Education Project.

YTEPP will also undertake a tracer study in 2005 to access the impact of the programme. Plans are also in train to increase the number of persons obtaining NEC certification from 55 percent to 75 percent over the period as well as to expand the **Cambridge Certified Computer Training**.

Metal Industries Company (MIC)

In order to rationalize skills training, the **Helping You Prepare for Employment (HYPE) Programme** will be merged with the **National Skills Development Programme (NSDP) Programme** under MIC. The merger of these two programmes will achieve consistent standards and operating efficiencies, as well as maximize the benefits to be gained from the two training activities. The consolidation will also allow for internal articulation and facilitate upward movement from basic craft training to full professional certification.

FUNDING MECHANISMS

In 2005, a detailed plan would be formulated for the merger of the **Students' Revolving Loan Fund** and the **University Students Guarantee Loan Fund into Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP)**. The **Funding and Grants Administration Unit**, staffed in 2004, would also be responsible for managing funds donated by companies. Targets for 2005-2006 include:-

- The preparation of a feasibility report and documentation on an Education Savings Plan;
- The consideration of tax incentives to companies which contribute to HELP; and
- The development of a framework for the administration of GATE and HELP with inputs from private financial institutions.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Government's aim is to promote the optimal advancement and application of Science, Technology and

Innovation, with a view towards satisfying the basic needs of the people for food, shelter, clothing, health and education as well as being the primary vehicles for rapid business and industrial growth and competitiveness.

Towards this end, Government will facilitate several initiatives:-

- The establishment of Science, Technology and Innovation Policy;
- Implement Foresighting and Innovation Mapping Strategy; and
- Development of programmes specifically geared to promoting innovation:-
 - Sci-TechKnoFest;
 - Prime Minister's Awards for Innovation and
 - Invention; and
 - Excellence Awards.

In achieving this goal, Government will establish a **Council for Science Technology and Innovation (STI)**. This Council will be responsible for the development of a STI policy framework for Trinidad and Tobago.

Foresighting and Innovation Mapping

STI is vital to the achievement of sustainable social progress and economic development consistent with developed country status. To move forward, a research agenda will be established, one that will be relevant to the needs of present and future industries.

This agenda will include a portfolio of Research and Development (R&D) projects with grades ranging from

Box 6.4: Definition of Foresighting

Foresighting is an advanced tool used in the planning and development of R&D programmes that carry long-term benefits. It is based on scenario planning of long-term opportunities and threats including the impact of technological changes.

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horizon zero to age three. The strategic starting point for developing such a portfolio mix is to engage in a technological foresighting exercise.

NIHERST will spearhead this technological foresighting project, with the assistance of consultants. The foresighting project will identify priority areas for Research & Development and Innovation for present and future industries. It will involve in-depth micro level studies of firms and a macro analysis of national, regional and global developments. Simultaneously, an assessment of the sectors to ascertain gaps will also be done.

This exercise would achieve the following results: -

- An overall view of the sector as it relates to the economy in the future;
- An outline of the guideposts and support required to drive the particular sectors in the new direction; and
- A list of the skills and capabilities required to support the research and innovation activities.

For Trinidad, the sectors that are targeted for foresighting are: -

- Manufacturing;
- Agriculture and Agro-processing Marine Resources, Food processing and Forestry;
- Petroleum, Natural Gas, Asphalt and Energy;
- Materials and Construction;
- Pharmaceuticals;
- Tourism;
- Information Technology and Telecommunications;
- Medicine and dental supplies; and
- Arts, Culture and Our National Heritage.

For Tobago, the areas targeted are: -

- Environmental and natural resources-marine research;
- Communication and IT sector; and

- Agriculture and Food Security.

Sci-TechKnoFest

The theme for the 2006 festival will be one based on the environment and the icon exhibition will be entitled “Fury”. It will comprise both locally and foreign made exhibits on natural disasters and forces such as, hurricanes, tornadoes and earthquakes. An interactive exhibition on the Natural Wonders of the Caribbean will also be displayed.

The exhibition will aim to educate the public on the environment with a view to promoting sustainable use of natural resources as well as curbing pollution and promoting environmental science as a viable career choice.

The Prime Minister’s Awards for Innovation and Invention

Within the last four years, this initiative has evolved into an integrated programme of activities for developing a national culture of innovation and invention. Over the medium-term a website will be upgraded and financial support will be given to winners for the protection of their ideas and inventions.

NIHERST has the mandate to extend the reach of the creativity workshops through the auspices of the community science weeks. This would incorporate the addition of:-

- Creativity Programmes in three communities: Blanchisseuse, Moruga and Cedros;
- Two Easter Camps in Diego Martin and Marabella;
- Two (2) summer camps; and
- Three (3) post-SEA workshops.

Another initiative, Young “Technopreneurs” will be launched for business, science and technology students. Its aim is to develop young entrepreneurs who are inclined to inventing and commercializing new ideas. An eight-part television series “Ideas at Work” will be produced to support this whole programme of innovation and invention. The series will highlight creative ideas

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that have launched profitable business and sustainable livelihoods for communities.

Awards for Excellence in STI

A new scheme to reward and recognize excellence in science teaching, research and development in areas of medicine, life sciences, physical science, engineering and technology, as well as, math and science teaching at any level in the educational system will be launched. The objective is to encourage excellence in these areas and to inspire students to pursue careers in Science and Technology and promote public recognition of outstanding nationals.

VII. HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- **GENERAL HEALTH CARE**
- **HIV/AIDS**
- **MANAGEMENT OF CHRONIC DISEASES**

GENERAL HEALTH CARE

Government remains committed to the achievement of the objectives of the Health Sector Reform Programme, which are in keeping with the Vision 2020 Macro Development Policy. Having been granted approval for an extension for a further three years, the Ministry of Health is currently working towards the completion of the Health Sector Reform Programme by 2006. To achieve this goal, as indicated in the Vision 2020 document, a number of critical and strategic initiatives are being undertaken that are intended to ensure the success of the Programme.

Infrastructure projects targeted for delivery are to be completed within the next two years. Projects earmarked for completion in 2005 include the commissioning of a new wing at the San Fernando General Hospital, the Scarborough Regional Hospital, the National Oncology Center District Health Facilities, and enhancement of Health Centers at Mayaro, Roxborough, Siparia, St. James, Chaguanas, St. Joseph and Oxford Street. Projected targets for delivery in 2006 include health centers and outreach health centers, upgrade works at the Sangre Grande District Hospital and construction of an enhanced health center in Sangre Grande. In addition, construction of a new forty-six (46) bed hospital for Point Fortin, which was approved by Cabinet in April 2004, is currently in the design phase. The Ministry also plans to begin a programme to renovate and refurbish all the ambulance bases of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and to upgrade the EMS communication network.

To strengthen the health delivery process, a number of technical assistance projects are being implemented to support the operationalisation of effective service delivery systems at the newly constructed health

facilities. The most significant are the technical assistance consultancies for the operationalisation of the new Scarborough Hospital and for the new wing of the San Fernando General Hospital, which will include an ICU, a Burns Unit and a Day Surgery.

Additionally, keen focus will be placed on implementation of the **Primary Health Care Systems Development, Training and Health Promotion Project**, which is critical for the successful completion of the Health Sector Reform Programme objective of rationalization of health services by strengthening primary care services. This will result in a reorientation of human resources towards current health needs, with an emphasis on disease prevention and health promotion.

In keeping with the objectives of the Reform Programme, new policies, standards and management information systems will be introduced. A Committee has also been established to draft a **Public Health Policy** with the assistance of PAHO, as a step towards drafting new legislation to replace the outdated Public Health Ordinance Ch. 12 No. 4, to reflect modern environmental health needs. Further, a number of protocols are being developed as part of the management of chronic diseases and cervical cancer screening. The Ministry of Health has formally issued a mammography protocol and mammography screening is currently being offered at public facilities at no cost to high-risk patients.

A new **Waiting List Management System** is to be piloted in the Regional Health Authorities (RHAs) based on a review and action plan approved by the Quality Council. Priority will also be given to development of additional management information systems, especially IS/IT Systems Development that are needed to integrate information related to health services, operations, financing, human resources and medical records. To this end, recruitment of a Director to provide leadership for the IS/IT Project Unit is actively being pursued.

The Ministry of Health will continue its programme of human resources development to ensure the provision of adequate numbers of trained personnel at public health facilities with the objective of improving health

VII. HEALTH AND WELLNESS

service delivery. Under the **National Oncology Programme**, the Ministry has begun the process to provide training for oncologists, pathologists, physicians, radiation therapists and oncology nurses as well as technical support staff. As part of this process, in 2005 the Ministry will begin offering scholarships to train radiation oncologists and pathologists.

The Ministry will also continue its efforts to address the shortage of nursing personnel at public health facilities through recruitment and ongoing training. To this end, the strategies will continue to focus in the medium-term on ensuring a continuous supply of registered nurses and registered mental nurses by training approximately three hundred (300) basic nursing students annually and the provision of post basic nursing education for Registered general/mental nurses. The establishment of a **Bachelor of Science Nursing Programme** for nurses at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine is also being pursued.

In addition, the Ministry of Health recently established a Memorandum of Understanding with the Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, Canada to provide a framework for collaboration in the field of mental health to enhance mental health services in Trinidad and Tobago, as envisioned in the **Mental Health Plan**. Areas of collaboration will include, inter alia: the assessment and management of psychiatric emergencies; training of general practitioners in psychiatry; clinical refresher programmers; consultative services regarding service delivery mechanisms; development and implementation of a special treatment facility at the Port of Spain General Hospital; and studies to identify structural problems and deficiencies in the system of mental health care provided by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

HIV/AIDS

During the period 2005 – 2007 Government will continue the activities necessary for the implementation of the **National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS**. Toward this end, the Ministry of Health will continue to play a lead role in controlling the spread of the disease. Specific emphasis will be placed on programmes for the

prevention of mother to child transmission; voluntary testing and counseling; and treatment of people living with HIV/AIDS including provision of anti-retroviral drugs in the public sector. Emphasis will also be placed on the training of health care professionals to administer treatment and provide the necessary laboratory investigations to support rational and safe utilization of anti-retroviral drugs within the context of a national system for the clinical management and treatment of HIV/AIDS.

MANAGEMENT OF CHRONIC DISEASES

Along with ongoing implementation of the **Chronic Disease Assistance Programme** to provide easy access to drugs for the treatment of selected chronic diseases, the Government will continue to provide subsidized cardiac surgery at the Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex (EWMSC) to patients in need who are unable to afford the full cost of their treatment. The **Charitable Cataract Surgery Programme** in collaboration with the Ophthalmologic Society of Trinidad and Tobago, will continue to provide surgery for patients on waiting lists at San Fernando and Port of Spain General Hospitals.

A special programme for Renal Dialysis has been introduced to increase the accessibility to renal dialysis services by the general population. This will be facilitated by the construction of **Renal Dialysis Treatment Centers** throughout the country. In conjunction with this, a **Renal Transplant Surgery Programme** which is under development will facilitate the provision of renal transplant surgeries by 2005. This programme will be governed by the terms outlined in the **Tissue Transplant Act of 2000**.

VIII. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- **SOCIAL SECTOR POLICY**
- **SOCIAL SERVICES DELIVERY**
- **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**
- **SPORT**
- **YOUTH**

SOCIAL SECTOR POLICY

The overarching objective of Social Sector Policy Development is the promotion of social progress by fostering human and social environments conducive to continuous improvement in the well being of the population. In this regard, special emphasis will be placed on: -

- Reducing poverty and inequities in opportunities;
- Investments in human and social capital;
- Promoting social inclusion, cohesion, a peaceful environment, positive values, attitudes and behaviours; and
- Overcoming social ills to strengthen the social fabric required for social development.

The guiding principles adopted in pursuit of the above-stated policy objectives are participation, collaboration and partnership. In particular, Government will seek to partner with civil society organizations to develop the sector and to provide decentralised services to various target groups. Keen attention will also be placed on ensuring value for money in Government investments in the sector and on improving programmes targeting the vulnerable groups. In this regard, improvements in social infrastructure and institutional structures to enhance service delivery are important areas of focus.

Social Development Policy and the associated programmes and projects in Trinidad and Tobago are informed by national and international policy objectives, inclusive of the thrust towards Vision 2020, in addition to the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)** and

targeted improvements in the country's ratings in the **Human Development Index (HDI)**.

Vision 2020 asserts that as a nation, Trinidad and Tobago should be developed economically, politically and socially. It therefore advocates improvements in: financial and commercial activities; human development; social and institutional structures; the quality of governance; and the effective targeting of the needs of citizens.

Box 8.1: The Millennium Development Goals

The MDGs comprise eight (8) goals, namely: eradication of extreme poverty and hunger; achievement of universal primary education; promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women; reduction of child mortality; improvement of maternal health; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and development of global partnerships for development.

The aim of social sector policy therefore is to provide the framework for achieving Government's social development objectives and primarily, to ensure that an enabling environment is created for all citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, irrespective of race, creed, age, religion or gender, to access opportunities to attain an acceptable quality of life.

The initiatives undertaken 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. Consequently, sustainable human development with a focus on people-centred 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 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.

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The major issues to be addressed in the social sector include: -

- 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;
- Social integration of vulnerable and at-risk groups including persons with disabilities, older persons, socially displaced persons, at-risk children, ex-prisoners and deported persons;
- Improving the delivery of social services to communities;
- Improvements in the targeting of social programmes and services;
- Improvements in the system for monitoring and evaluating social sector programmes;
- Establishment of a structured approach to the provision of social services by civil society organizations such as Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) and Community-based Organizations (CBOs); and
- 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.

SOCIAL SERVICES DELIVERY

The current focus on **Integrated Service Delivery** is the lens through which Government will seek to provide comprehensive, participatory and well targeted interventions which are designed on the basis of empirical data on the needs and characteristics of the less fortunate in the society. Government recognizes further that the goal of comprehensive social service delivery transcends the boundary of initiatives under the purview of the Office of the Prime Minister, Social Services Delivery. The needs of citizens encompass health and nutrition issues, literacy, education and

training issues, employment and income generation and housing and infrastructural issues. In this regard, Government will pursue integrated assessment of needs and programme planning among relevant Ministries in collaboration with civil society through the establishment of **Regional Social and Human Development Councils** in each municipal region of Trinidad and Tobago and the maintenance of the **Couva Social Services Centre**. The objectives relevant to these approaches are: -

- To enhance the delivery of poverty reduction initiatives in the region through integrated needs assessment and collaboration planning and implementation of interventions;
- To create a network for interaction among public sector and NGO providers of social services to the poorest segments of the population, beginning at the regional level;
- To improve the quality of anti-poverty intervention within the region by facilitating access to poverty information and social services among stakeholders;
- To enable the implementation of anti-poverty micro projects that target the needs of the lowest segments of the population in the region; and
- To ensure that all services are available to citizens even to the remotest areas of the country.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION OF THE LESS FORTUNATE

A major policy objective is the socio-economic transformation of less fortunate citizens of the nation. While recognising the fact that some citizens will be in perpetual need of assistance, Government is committed to identifying those who could be rehabilitated and to ensuring that a comprehensive mechanism is in place to pursue the socio-economic transformation of such citizens. This is seen as critical in the context of the link between the spate of violent crime, youth involvement in criminal activities and economically depressed communities and underscores the need to rescue such communities in sustainable ways.

VIII. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The mechanism for social transformation would therefore include psycho-social and life skills development, literacy, training and skills upgrade and access to credit and other opportunities for the generation of sustainable incomes. It will be spearheaded through integrated service delivery between and among key Divisions of the Social Services Delivery Unit of the Office of the Prime Minister including the National Family Services and Social Welfare Divisions, the SHARE Secretariat and the newly appointed Development Support Unit as well as through specific linkages with other development Ministries and agencies including the Ministries of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs, Sport and Youth Affairs, and Public Utilities and the Environment as well as the National Training Agency

Government will also continue to strengthen and expand existing empowerment initiatives including the SHARE Secretariat's Programme of development implemented through NGOs participating in the Hamper Programme, the Micro-Enterprise and Training and Development Grant Programme, the Micro-enterprise Loan Facility and the Multi-Purpose Community Based Tele-centre Project. Additionally, the Regional Councils on Social and Human Development will implement a Micro Projects Grant Programme through which support will be provided to civil society organisations to undertake development initiatives within municipal regions.

PROTECTION OF THE VULNERABLE AND DISADVANTAGED

Children

Government will continue to place considerable emphasis on the protection and mainstreaming of vulnerable groups in the society. Having regard to the fact that children are the future of the nation and that reaching a child would protect an entire life from being unproductive and dysfunctional, children will continue to receive special focus in the immediate medium-term period.

In this regard, Government will pursue the objective of providing a regulatory mechanism for the care and

protection of children including those at children's homes and other institutions through the establishment of the Children's Authority. Government will also continue to engage a number of preparatory activities in advance of the establishment of the Authority. Such activities will include the finalization of the Survey of the Needs of Children's Homes, and a comprehensive assessment of all children at the major homes, with a view to developing a care plan for each of them, that would seek to prepare each child for exiting the respective institutions. The objective here is to protect these children from a dysfunctional and unproductive future.

A programme of sensitisation targeted to the public at large, will ensure that the role and function of this body in the care and the protection of children is well understood and supported.

It is to be noted that these activities will take place in collaboration with the Ministry of Health's Continuum of Care Exercise, which seeks to ensure that children who are not in need of medical services can be exited from hospitals and adequately provided for in as close to a home environment as possible within the community.

Government will also continue to support the work of NGOs and Faith Based Organisations (FBOs), which provide services to and care centres for children, with a view to ensuring that adequate support is available throughout the Nation.

The Disabled

Continuing special attention will be paid to the needs of persons with disabilities. To this end, Government will pursue a policy of coordination and promotion of the issues relevant to the rights and mainstreaming of persons with disabilities in order to ensure that the needs of this group are addressed in a comprehensive manner. In 2005, Government will finalise the Policy on Persons with Disabilities as the major platform for the development of this sector. Through the Disability Affairs Unit, the Government will aggressively pursue implementation of key areas of the policy as it relates to

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access to education and training, transformation, public awareness and financial support.

In the areas of education and training, Government will continue to enable the participation of persons with disabilities in tertiary education through the provision of scholarships.

In addition, the Office of the Prime Minister, Social Services Delivery, will train persons to function as personal assistants to citizens with disabilities who seek to participate in training or employment.

Government will continue to pursue its close relationship with the NGO Sector in a more structured manner. More particularly, Government will engage a consultancy support for those NGOs that provide training for persons with disabilities, with a view to improving the overall effectiveness and impact of the operations and services of these institutions.

The Socially Displaced

The re-integration of socially displaced persons is also high on Government's agenda. Services to this group of citizens will be expanded through the establishment of assessment centres in other areas of Trinidad, alongside efforts to improve the quality of care available at existing centres by establishing adequate standards of care for such facilities. Government will also continue to pursue holistic support to socially displaced persons through coordinating efforts across Ministries and Department, to ensure that an appropriate continuum of care and rehabilitative services is accessible.

PREVENTATIVE INITIATIVES

A considerable aspect of the focus on Government will be the implementation of preventative strategies, which would involve public education and sensitisation programmes. Issues, which will be the target of preventive strategies, will include substance abuse reduction, improper parenting practices and family dysfunction, inadequate early childhood care and attention and the neglect and marginalisation of persons with disabilities.

Support to the Healthy Functioning of the Family

Government notes with concern the range of ills plaguing the society, too many of which lead to a condemning evaluation of the functioning of families in Trinidad and Tobago. It is obvious that the challenge of modern living has eroded the ability of too many families to provide an adequate environment for the development of their members. The cost of truncated education, incarceration, and reduced earning capacity has impacted negatively on the quality of family life.

Initiatives to promote healthy family functioning will continue to be a major platform for the services delivered by the Government. Moreover, the National Family Services Division of the Ministry of Social Services Delivery will lead a coordinated assault against family dysfunctions. The strategy will capitalise on the role of the media in information dissemination. It will also involve coordinated approaches through NGOs, communities, the education system, religious bodies and other relevant stakeholders.

Major Issues Impacting the Sector

Government will take definitive steps over the medium-term to improve the quality and timeliness of official data on poverty and social conditions in Trinidad and Tobago. It is anticipated that this objective will largely be realised through the intervention of the European Union-sponsored **Poverty Reduction Programme** which has been mandated not only to conduct a **Living Standard Measurement Survey** in Trinidad and Tobago but also to undertake regional poverty profiles which should facilitate more localised poverty data and qualitative assessments.

Government will pursue a policy of data driven delivery with a view to improving the quality and impact of its services. Accordingly, Government will seek to strengthen the collection of data on all of its clients to an enhanced system for the collection, storage and analysis of data. In addition, Government will seek to address the dearth of current information on poverty through the conduct of a **National Living Standards**

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Measurement Survey in 2005, as well as regional Qualitative Poverty Assessments. The latter will be designated to provide critical information and poverty assessments to support and sharpen the work of the **Regional Councils on Social and Human Development**.

It is anticipated that these initiatives will significantly impact the coordination and effectiveness of service delivery to the disadvantaged and socially dispossessed.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In an effort to empower all citizens, Government will partner with communities to identify and satisfy their needs through the provision of gender sensitive quality programmes and services, thereby achieving improvement in their standard of living.

In this regard, over the 2005 – 2007 period, Government will be guided by its vision of “Playing a leading role in the empowering of communities and the enrichment of their lives”. Focus will include: -

- **Resource mobilization and utilization** – the building of improved and sustained positive communications and interaction with stakeholders, including regional and international agencies;
- **Customer service** – promoting, establishing and developing improved relationships between Government as a provider of services and individuals, groups and agencies as users of these services;
- **Internal business processes** – the development of its knowledge systems, integration of its information systems, improvement of its facilities by the upgrade/expansion of its physical accommodation; and
- **Learning and growth** – developing leadership and a culture change within the Ministry, increasing effectiveness and satisfaction of human resource and organizational restructuring.

The underlying principles of this policy position will be quality service, integrity in all affairs, equitable treatment, empowerment, respect for all and high productivity.

The main aspects of the Policy Framework will be implemented by means of programmes and projects, which will focus on: -

- Expansion of the society’s knowledge and skills base through the facilitation of employable and artistic skills training and community sensitization, awareness and education classes, heritage tours and the **Prime Minister’s Best Village Competition**;
- Improvement of public services quality and delivery through the increase in construction/reconstruction/refurbishment/upgrade of public community centers and complexes, and public and private cultural, religious, educational and recreational facilities;
- Strengthening and expansion of the physical infrastructure base in low income and depressed communities with inadequate and/or non-functional physical facilities by way of the **Community Enhancement and Rehabilitation Programme (CERP)**, **Self-Help and the National Social Improvement Programme (NSIP)**;
- Improved housing through the **Minor Repair/ Reconstruction Grant (MRRG)**, which gives assistance to needy persons such as the physically disabled, the elderly and fire victims whose homes may have been unsafe, inadequate or gutted by fire;
- Modernization of laws to engender equity and justice on gender issues with the ongoing review of current legislation in compliance with the **Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**;
- Social cohesiveness and a strong sense of nationalism through programmes such as the **Prime Minister’s Best Village Competition and Cultural (Community Concerts) Programme**;

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- Safer neighborhoods and communities through the training and structures (e.g. Community Desks/Community Officers) set up with the assistance of the **Community Safety and Enhancement Programme**;
- Care and support for the elderly and the needy through the **Geriatric Adolescent Partnership Programme (GAPP)** and the refurbishment and increase in the number of **Transformation Development Centers (TDCs)**. Graduates of GAPP will provide home care and companionship for deserving elderly persons within the community while the TDCs will provide a nutritious meal, counseling, assessment and employable skills training for the needy;
- Institutional strengthening within the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs and within the NGOs and CBOs, which partner with the Ministry in delivering services to the communities. This will be achieved mainly through the provision of staff training and technical and financial support;
- Employment facilitation through the establishment of Community Information, Documentation and Management Centres in all Administrative Districts, which will establish and maintain databases on the skills available within the communities as well as the availability of persons including the unemployed;
- Income generation through grants to CBOs under the **Community Assistance for Revival and Empowerment (CARE) Programme**. These grants are to facilitate the development and promotion of micro-enterprise business initiatives; and
- Increase in cultural awareness and participation and preservation of our peoples' cultural heritage through the restoration/refurbishment/preservation of sites such as the **Little Carib Theatre**, the **National Museum**, the **San Fernando Museum**, **Nelson Island Heritage**, **Naipaul House** and the **Queen's Hall**.

SPORT

In the area of sport, Government will continue its focus on crime prevention strategies through the delivery of programmes for mass participation, hosting of celebratory events such as **The National Youth/Sport Festival** as well as maintenance of its extensive sport and youth infrastructure with funding from the **Public Sector Investment Programme**.

The revised **National Sport Policy (2002)** points to a structure for the holistic development of sport in Trinidad and Tobago through the establishment of an autonomous body to generally manage the operations and maintain the sport plant. The Ministry is currently reviewing the administrative structure outlined in the National Sport Policy for the management of sport. Having observed international working models of sporting commissions in Cuba and Australia, the work of the Project Execution Unit continued with the preliminary drafting of documents for the management and business operations of the Sport Commission of Trinidad and Tobago.

Government, having become signatory to the **Copenhagen Declaration on Anti-Doping in Sport** in March 2004, will establish a local **Anti-Doping Commission** to administer and enforce the anti-doping rules as set out in the **World Anti-Doping Code**.

The Ministry's programme for sport development will provide quality sporting infrastructure for leisure and competition - refurbishment/upgrading works to sport infrastructure; an increase in the quantity of sport infrastructure - construction of the **Brian Lara Multi-Purpose Caribbean Sporting Academy and Sport/Youth Multi-Purpose Facility**; and promotion and implementation of the revised National Sport Policy - preparations for an administrative structure to manage Sport.

Approximately 45,364 persons benefit annually from mass participation programmes in sport. As part of the strategies to improve the knowledge, practice and benefits of sport, the delivery arm of the Ministry of

Sport and Youth Affairs will expand its services to encourage mass participation in physical education, leisure sport and high performance sport to a wider geographic base.

YOUTH

Youth development activities centered on the finalization of the **Draft Youth Policy** which received Cabinet's approval in April 2004. The Policy document outlines the framework within which Government's Youth Development initiatives will be executed while the plan charts the course through which the goals, objectives and strategies of the Policy will be realized.

In furtherance of this policy implementation, the Ministry will 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 Marginalized Communities**", and at the national level, through the formation of a **National Youth Council** which will provide a forum for the advocacy of sustainable youth development

through youth participation in governance and decision-making.

One of the strategies outlined by Government to facilitate the implementation of the National Youth Policy is the establishment of a Project Implementation Unit. This Unit will be responsible for managing the implementation of the fifteen (15) courses of action outlined in the National Youth Policy. The Ministry will continue to focus on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of youth development programmes and facilities through the refurbishment and upgrade of youth training centers to facilitate the introduction of a modern-day curriculum and provide an extended programme of empowerment opportunities for young people.

Policy initiatives will be geared towards adopting a partnership approach with key stakeholders in the implementation of the National Youth Policy. The Ministry will adopt a holistic approach to youth development by responding to the issues of continued prevalence of HIV/AIDS, hopelessness and alienation, access to **INFORMATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY (imaT)**, providing vocational and social life skills and empowering youth-led and youth-serving organizations.

IX. LIVING CONDITIONS

- HOUSING
- PUBLIC UTILITIES
- INFRASTRUCTURE
- PUBLIC BUILDINGS
- TRANSPORTATION
- THE ENVIRONMENT

HOUSING

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. In this regard, Government is keenly aware of the fact that there are persons in need of financial assistance to enable them to make basic improvements to their homes. The **Home Improvement Grant Programme** was designed to provide assistance/grants to such persons. 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
- To promote the maintenance of the housing stock nationally and address the current state of dilapidation in some houses.

Urban Redevelopment

This Programme addresses redevelopment problems of urban centers with improved services and infrastructure inclusive of commercial redevelopment of targeted areas and provision of much needed social and recreational facilities designed to improve the quality of life in low and middle-income residential areas in older neighborhoods/communities. In addition, the programme will create new housing solutions to meet the increasing demand for housing in urban areas.

SQUATTER REGULARIZATION AND CONTAINMENT

Government, in recognition of the social and economic challenges associated with squatter regularization, will continue its **Squatter Regularization Programme** in designated areas, while simultaneously containing the expansion of squatting. This programme will be undertaken by the **Land Settlement Agency (LSA)** whose mandate is the regularization of squatters. The programme involves physical upgrades, security of tenure, and squatter containment.

The LSA will utilize financial resources of the Inter American Development National Settlement Programme - Second Stage Loan. This loan caters for the upgrade of 5,400 lots over a period of three years, in squatter settlements covered under the State Land (Regularization of Tenure) Act No. 25 of 1998. Government, through the LSA, will regularize the physical infrastructure of 2,150 in 2004-2005, and a further 2,400 lots over the period 2005-2006.

The Squatter Regularization Programme will also include the distribution of 1,200 Certificates of Comfort for the issuance of Statutory Leases in 2005-2006 and a further 1,500 over the 2006-2007 period.

To further enhance its efforts in the creation of sustainable communities in 2005-2007, Government will also continue to encourage community participation in the development of social and economic infrastructure. This will be accomplished through the formation of co-operatives and community groups to initiate self-help and self-reliance activities to assist in the incremental development of these settlements.

CREATION OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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 the necessary steps to ensure that ten (10) percent of all contracts awarded for housing construction are given to small contractors.

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

PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE AND ADEQUATE 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 and the Joint Venture Programme with the aim of providing an average of 6,000 housing units per year for the next ten years. While the end of 2005 will complete the Infill Lots Programme, the executing agency, the National Housing Authority (NHA) has identified lands to sustain the **Joint Venture Programme** to the end of 2007.

Box 9.1: The Rent-to-Own Programme

Under this Programme, the beneficiary is allowed to occupy a mortgage unit under a License Agreement for a period of five (5) years, with the option to purchase. At the end of the five 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 offset maintenance expenditure. All other charges relevant to the property will be borne by the beneficiary.

Rent-to-own

The current Housing Policy focuses on widening the range of alternatives for housing available to the poor

marginalized and disadvantaged groups in society. The **Rent-to-Own Programme** has been developed as one initiative to accomplish this. 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.

Sites and Services

In its continued efforts to make housing available to low and middle-income groups, Government, through its agency, the **Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Committee, (SILWC)** will continue to provide serviced lots for its targeted clientele. For the period 2005 -2007, it is anticipated that approximately 400 such lots will be provided.

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 intensified. This will be achieved via an increase in joint venture contracts and continued implementation of financial initiatives aimed at increasing housing finance to low and middle-income groups. As such, steps will be taken to increase the number of financial institutions participating in the **Approved Mortgage Companies (AMC) Programme**.

Government will also resume negotiations with a consortium of banks to secure additional funding to support the **Government's Housing Programme** in the areas of:-

- Construction funding for contractors under the Joint Venture Programme;

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- Mortgage financing for purchasers of the housing stock produced under the Joint Venture Programme; and
- The provision of mortgages for houses in the \$TT150,000 range and below under the IDB subsidized loan programme.

SECTOR AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

During the period 2005-2007, Government will undertake institutional strengthening activities, sector development studies and initiatives aimed at modernizing the Ministry and addressing strategic bottlenecks.

Institutional strengthening activities will include the restructuring of the Ministry and its executing agencies. With respect to the restructuring of the National Housing Authority (NHA), Cabinet has approved the establishment of the **Housing Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago (HDC)** by an Act of Parliament. Under the Act, the HDC would be empowered to: -

- Do all things necessary and convenient for or in connection with providing affordable shelter and associated community facilities for low and middle-income citizens; and
- Implement the broad policy of the Government in relation to housing.

The transformation of the **Land Settlement Agency** will also be completed to enable/intensify its focus on regularization and squatter containment. Within the Ministry of Housing, organizational changes will continue. These include, the creation of the **Housing Policy Facilitation and Implementation Unit** and the strengthening of the skills base of core units.

Sector development studies will include: -

- A redefinition of urban housing and subdivision standards and regulations;
- The conversion of public rental housing into owner

occupied units;

- Increasing access of lower income groups to home financing;
- Conduct of a **Housing Demand Study**; and
- Streamlining of Local Government processes for development approval and urban environmental service delivery.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

The main focus in achieving the Vision 2020 goal of developed nation status, is improving the standard of living of all citizens in Trinidad and Tobago. Critical to this is the provision of adequate, reliable and affordable utility services. The policy thrust therefore would continue to be that all utilities perform at their optimal levels providing quality services to its customers at affordable rates.

In this context, **Quality of Service Standards** has been implemented in respect of electricity transmission and distribution to consumers. Improved quality of service is anticipated under the overall standards. **Draft Quality Standards** have been developed for the Water and Waste Water and public consultations on these are ongoing. Further, a Social Action Plan which addresses the specific concerns of the vulnerable groups in the society with respect to the utilities has been developed. This document is currently in circulation for public consultation. Specific measures include: provision of priority services for vulnerable groups; procedures for dealing with customers in default; debt recovery and disconnection procedures and policies; retroactive billing policies; expanding the range and accessibility of payment methods; handling of complaints; and continuous consumer education.

INFRASTRUCTURE

HIGHWAYS

Over the medium-term, Government will give high priority to the further development of the national road

network in Trinidad and Tobago, in keeping with Government's vision to achieve developed country status by 2020.

The **National Highways Programme (NHP)**, which is ongoing, comprises the following elements:-

- Roads and Bridges Rehabilitation;
- Trunk Roads Expansion;
- Institutional Strengthening of the Highways Division; and
- Reinstatement and Stabilization of Failed Slopes.

Five (5) contract packages have been awarded for the rehabilitation of 75 Km of roads (Year II) in Trinidad with a completion date of February 2005.

Additionally, four (4) contract packages for Trinidad and one (1) contract package for Tobago for the rehabilitation of roads and bridges (Phase I, Year III) have been awarded and works have commenced, the expected completion date is October 2005.

Contract packages for rehabilitation of nine (9) segments of roads in Trinidad and four (4) segments of roads in Tobago (Phase II, Year III) will be awarded in fiscal 2004/2005. Also, in fiscal 2004/2005, eighteen (18) bridges in Trinidad and one (1) bridge in Tobago will be rehabilitated.

Under the Trunk Roads Expansion element of the NHP, a contract was awarded at the beginning of August 2004 and construction works have commenced on the extension of the Diego Martin Highway from Sierra Leone to Wendy Fitzwilliam Boulevard. Completion is scheduled for August 2005.

Regarding dualling of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway from O' Meara Road to Antigua Road; reconstruction of the Santa Rosa Bridge is completed. Award of the construction contract will be made in December 2004 with construction scheduled for a duration of twelve (12) months.

Currently, negotiations are ongoing for the award of four (4) contracts to Consultants to undertake feasibility studies and prepare designs for the following highways:-

- San Fernando to Point Fortin;
- San Fernando to Princes Town;
- Princes Town to Mayaro; and
- Extension of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway to Sangre Grande.

These consultancies will commence in December 2004 and completion is expected in December 2005, after which construction works will commence.

Institutional Strengthening of the Highways Division

Institutional Strengthening and reorganization of the Highways Division is being pursued via Project Management and Technical consultancies. It is intended to improve the efficiency in which routine and periodic maintenance are carried out both in the Highways Division of the Ministry of Works and Transport and the Division of Infrastructure and Public Utilities in Tobago.

The Project Management consultancy is substantially completed. However, the Tobago aspect of the Technical Consultancy is ongoing. Portable weight scales have been received and are ready for operations. Infrastructure for the permanent weight stations will be constructed in fiscal 2004/2005. The transition of the Highways Division into a Roads Authority will commence apace in the new financial year.

Reinstatement and Stabilization of Failed Slopes

Designs for twenty-six (26) failed slopes are completed. Three (3) contract packages have been awarded. Construction commenced early in 2004 and completion is expected by mid 2005.

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Apart from the NHP other strategies to be implemented are:-

- Dualing of the Diego Martin Highways from Victoria Gardens to Acton Court in an effort to alleviate traffic congestion in the area;
- Improvement to Maraval Access along Saddle Road from Rapsey Street to Valetton Avenue as a measure to alleviate traffic along the Maraval Road;
- East-West Corridor Expansion and Improvement Works – construction of an interchange at the intersection of the Churchill Roosevelt and Uriah Butler Highways and ancillary works before and after the intersection;
- Development of alternative vehicular access Routes Linking Key Population Centres – upgrade of existing roads throughout the country to alleviate traffic congestion in the various town centers;
- Programme for upgrading road efficiency;
- Wrightson Road Improvements;
- Widening of the Churchill Roosevelt Highway between Aranguez and El Socorro;
- Construction of a vehicular and pedestrian bridge and related works associated with the construction of the North Western Boys' and North Western Girls' Secondary Schools;
- Uriah Butler Highway – Construction of additional lane from the Churchill Roosevelt Highway to Changuanas;
- Improvements to Beetham Highway – from Barataria Interchange to Market Interchange; and
- Street lighting along the Priority Bus Route.

Benefits to be derived from works to be undertaken on the road network include:-

- Opportunity for job creation in this sector;
- Facilitation of an easy flow of people, goods and services;
- Decrease in travel time on the roads;

- Reduction in vehicle operating costs; and
- Regulation of axle-loads on the roadways.

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, a **Comprehensive Drainage and Flood Control Programme** will be implemented. During the period 2002-2004, the major projects undertaken under this programme focused on improvement and flood mitigation measures to key rivers in the respective regions, such as Marabella, North Oropouche and Vistabella Rivers in the South; Richplain Ravine and watercourses in the Maraval/Diego Martin Areas in the North; Caroni River in Central and the replacement of irrigation water pumps at Valsayn, Aranguez and El Socorro Agriculture Area. It is to be noted that of these projects, the Marabella River, Richplain Ravine, watercourses in the Maraval and Diego Martin areas and the replacement of the irrigation water pumps are expected to be completed by the end of fiscal 2004. Work will continue apace on the other projects during fiscal 2005-2007.

Another key project, which will be implemented during the period of 2005-2007, is the construction of the Mamoral Dam and Reservoir. This project is a main component of the **Caparo River Basin Flood Mitigation and Water Resources Development Project** and is expected to complement the benefits achieved from the other two components already completed, namely:-

- Caparo River Improvement Works West of Brasso/ Caparo Valley Road Bridge; and
- Caparo/Honda Diversions Structures.

Once completed, the programme works will significantly improve the country's drainage infrastructure thus impacting positively on the well being of the citizenry.

Coastal Protection

In addition to the ongoing projects, coastal protection works will be undertaken at Mosquito Creek where a revetment wall will be constructed at the Cremation Site. This measure will halt the severe erosion occurring at the base of the cliff, which poses a threat to both the site and the car park facilities and, if left unattended, would eventually destroy the roadway. A revetment wall will also be constructed behind the existing sea wall as a splash prevention measure, thus reducing incidences of flooding of the roadway, which is a vital link for commuters between San Fernando and Point Fortin.

Coastal protection work is also earmarked for the eastern coastline of Trinidad between Manzanilla Point in the North and Point Radix in the South, an area that has been subjected to severe erosion and flooding over the years.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Government, in its pursuit of developed nation status, will continue its programme of restoration and refurbishment to its cadre of public buildings. Focus will therefore be placed on the restoration of buildings to ensure the re-adaptive and economic re-use of these buildings, and, where applicable, to preserve the historical integrity of the buildings.

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

- **President's Residence and Office** - Restoration/conservation works to the main building of the house to ensure structural safety, and refurbishment of existing office;
- **Queen's Royal College** - Restoration to main building, procurement of administration supplies and project management;
- **Stollmeyer's Castle** - Restoration/conservation

works to the main building; and

- **Mille Fleur Building** - Restoration and re-adaptive re-use works.

TRANSPORTATION

A fully functional, modern, national transportation system is key to the economic and social well being of any country. For more than thirty (30) years, improvements in the national transportation system of Trinidad and Tobago have been driven by the outdated 1967 National Transportation Plan. Accordingly, Government will undertake preparation of a **Comprehensive National Transportation Study (CNTS)** for Trinidad and Tobago. The Study will seek to develop:-

- A national transportation sectoral policy which is consistent with other public policies of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, the recommendations of the policy will take into account all modes of transport, including existing modes and possible future modes;
- Co-ordinated national transportation plans in the land, sea and air sectors that provide the Government with a rational, systematic, decision making tool for investment in transportation infrastructure over the next 20 years; and
- A plan for the training of counterpart personnel to continue the development and updating of the transportation sectoral policy, once the consultant's services have been completed.

The benefits to be derived from the CNTS include:-

- The identification of future transport needs and demands for Trinidad and Tobago;
- Guidelines, policies and strategies for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of a transportation system; and
- A plan for a well-balanced, comprehensive and integrated transportation system which will support commerce, manufacturing, tourism and recreational activities.

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AIR TRANSPORT

With respect to the country's air transportation infrastructure, three (3) air transport projects, aimed at upgrading our nation's airport facilities have progressed considerably. The rehabilitation of the Piarco Runway is almost complete and, despite the temporary suspension of works during the airport's peak periods over the last fiscal year. Completion is targeted for the end of September 2004. The construction of the new fire station at the Piarco Airport is expected to be completed by the end of July 2004. Additionally, the lead architects on the upgrade of the Crown Point terminal building have finalized schematic designs for the project and these have been submitted for approval. Completion is targeted for 2005. The **Tobago House of Assembly (THA)** has also acquired the site needed for the location of the non-directional beacons for the Crown Point Terminal.

These improvements in the physical aspects of aviation infrastructure have also been completed by the approval of aviation security regulations by the Chief Parliamentary Counsel, an important achievement for the regulatory infrastructure of air transport.

However, it must be noted that while these projects have facilitated the policy agenda to an extent, higher levels of economic growth in line with the overall vision of developed country status by the year 2020 would be achieved by the integration of other projects such as the completion of taxiway repairs and the rehabilitation of drainage infrastructure at the Piarco Airport.

SEA TRANSPORT

Maritime and Fisheries

Government is committed to the provision of certified training and skills development for local and regional seafarers in the maritime and fisheries sector through the **Caribbean Fisheries Training and Development Institute (CFTDI)**. Some of the projects, which have been identified to date to assist in the further development of this tertiary institute, include, the renovation of the stores facility, the

construction of a gear repair facility, and the rehabilitation of the jetty located at the Institute's sea front premises. In terms of the former project, renovation works was undertaken to the storeroom in fiscal year 2004. The construction of a gear repair facility and the rehabilitation of the jetty projects are planned for the 2005-2007 period. The CFTDI jetty is in a critical state of deterioration and rehabilitation works are urgently required to be undertaken. Refurbishment of the jetty will allow for better mooring of the Institute's vessels as well as provide a safe training area for staff and students. The repair facility project is necessary to meet Government's obligation to the **Regional Fisheries Training Programme (RFTP)**, a joint technical co-operation project between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of Japan. This facility will improve the operations of the RFTP and, by extension the fishing community during training periods.

Government has recognized the need for an effective and efficiently functioning navigational aids system to facilitate the safe navigation of ships within the waters of Trinidad and Tobago and as such has embarked on further upgrading of navigational aids structures throughout the country. In the last quarter of fiscal year 2004 major renovation works commenced on three (3) lighthouses at Galera Point – Toco, Brigand Hill – Manzanilla and Chacachacare – Chaguaramas. Repair works are also planned for six (6) major beacons located at Galeota Point, La Lune Point – Moruga, Taparo Point – Erin, Point Baliene – Gasper Grande (West Point), Chapara Point – Las Cuevas, and Crown Point – Tobago in fiscal year 2005.

Inter-island Service

Government is committed to the provision of an efficient and effective sea transport system between Trinidad and Tobago. Toward this end, Government has recently agreed to the acquisition of two (2) conventional passenger cargo roll-on-roll-off ferries and a cargo vessel for use on the inter-island service between Port of Spain and Scarborough. These acquisitions are intended to improve the transportation links between Trinidad and

IX. LIVING CONDITIONS

Tobago and are scheduled to commence during fiscal year 2005.

Government Shipping Service (GSS) Facilities

In June 2004, Government agreed that the Government Shipping Service (GSS) facilities at the Ports of Port of Spain and Scarborough be upgraded. The main elements of the upgrade include:-

- The construction of a new terminal building at Port of Spain;
- Construction of berthing facilities to enable the safe berthing of the two (2) existing conventional ferries and the new fast ferry at Port of Spain and Scarborough; and
- Improvements to the terminal building at Scarborough.

A consulting team comprising architectural, civil engineering, mechanical and electrical expertise will be engaged and mandated to determine the extent of the work required. The duration of the project is estimated at eighteen (18) months commencing January 2005. The construction of a new terminal building in Port of Spain and the construction of new berths for the fast ferry are proposed to be undertaken in fiscal year 2005.

Restructuring of the Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago

The restructuring of the Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (PATT) into several strategic business units will continue over the 2005-2007 period. The new business units will undertake the operations of the Port relating to regulatory, infrastructure development, real estate management, cargo handling, cruise shipping, the inter-island ferry service, towage operations and the CARICOM Wharves.

Government is at the stage of identifying a preferred investor for the Port of Port of Spain (PPOS) – the business unit that would be responsible for the cargo handling operations. With respect to the establishment of the **Port of Spain Infrastructure Company**

Limited (POSICO) – the business unit with responsibility for real estate management, the Vesting Bill has been prepared and submitted for vetting by the Chief Parliamentary Counsel (CPC).

Additionally, legislation required for the establishment of a **National Ports Council (NPC)**, with responsibility for economic, developmental, regulatory and environmental issues concerning port activities in the country, is currently being drafted.

LAND TRANSPORTATION

The Public Transport Service Corporation

The Public Transport Service Corporation will continue to improve the delivery of public transport service to the population through improvement in its operational efficiency. Fleet replenishment and enhancement will continue to play a major role in conjunction with a legal institutional and financial restructuring exercise.

With respect to fleet replenishment, Cabinet has approved the acquisition of twelve (12) articulated buses to be utilized along the East/West and North/South corridors of Trinidad. In addition, the Corporation is in the process of acquiring five (5) purpose-built buses for transportation of differently-abled persons.

Permit and Vehicle Registration Information System

Government, through the Transport Division of the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure, will seek to improve its regulatory framework by modernizing its operations through the implementation of a new **Permit and Vehicle Registration Information System** during the period 2005-2007.

Toward this end, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has accepted the offer of technical support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the procurement of the new system. Preparatory works are being undertaken and the Request for Proposal would be advertised in the first quarter of fiscal year 2004/2005.

Road Safety

During the first half of 2004, in excess of fifty (50) new zebra crossings were installed at critical locations around the nation. In the area of road safety, the Ministry of Works and Transport through the Traffic Management Branch (TMB) would continue its **Road Markings and Sign Replacement Programme** on major highways and roads in Trinidad. In addition, New Jersey Safety Barriers will be installed on medians of major highways throughout the country.

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 and the water we drink to recreation. Sustainable development encompassing the protection and conservation of the environment continues to be a major plank of Government's long-term strategic plan. Towards this end, Government 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 Environment Management Act which established the Environment 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 enactments 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 EMA is in the process of finalizing the **Draft Water Pollution Rules** and the **Water Pollution (Fees) Regulations** with a view to having these in a state of readiness to be laid in Parliament. These Rules will establish a regime, which will seek to regulate and reduce the introduction of water pollutants into the natural environment. The ultimate objective of these pieces of legislation is to protect the integrity of the country's supply of drinking water and other water resources.

Investigations will also be conducted into the various land-based sources of pollutants of the Caroni River Basin.

Air and Noise Pollution

Air and noise pollution occurs 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 impact 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.

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The problem of air pollution will be 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 draft **Air Pollution Rules**, which will contribute significantly to the reduction of emission of pollutants into the atmosphere.

The phase-out of lead in gasoline in April 2004 in effect eliminated a major source of air pollution that has serious health implications considering that exposure to lead has serious health risks to humans ranging from neuro-developmental problems in children to cardiovascular problems in adults.

The principle 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.

Solid Waste

Trinidad and Tobago has experienced significant growth in solid waste generation over the last two decades as a result of the increase in population, industrial expansion, urbanization and changing lifestyles. Deficiencies in institutional development, enforcement capabilities and infrastructural facilities coupled with a lack of environmentally responsible behavior among large

segments of the population has resulted in significant quantities of solid waste generated not being disposed of in an environmentally sound manner.

In an attempt to address the deficiencies in solid waste management, Government is currently taking steps to put in place a **National Solid Waste Management System** with the following objectives: -

- The conservation of energy and natural resources;
- The reduction in waste generated ;
- An environmentally sound treatment of municipal, commercial, industrial, agricultural and medical wastes, using the best available technology;
- The development of the most cost-effective systems for disposal of solid waste; and
- The protection of human health and the environment from the potential hazards of waste disposal.

A **Draft Beverage Containers Bill** is also in the process of being finalized with a view to having it laid in Parliament as soon as possible. The Bill is intended to promote the use of voluntary schemes for the collection, reuse and recycling of beverage containers while providing for the regulation by the EMA of the distribution of beverages in containers by bottlers. The Bill will in effect reduce the improper disposal of beverage containers which impact negatively both on the economy and the environment. This is especially the case with plastic containers, as, given their non-bio-degradable nature, such impact is lasting. In Trinidad and Tobago, one obvious example of the negative impact of irresponsible beverage container disposal is flooding, resulting from the clogging of waterways by container waste.

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ESTABLISHMENT OF SYSTEMS AND PROGRAMMES FOR PROTECTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Trinidad and Tobago has a rich biodiversity with numerous species of flowering plants, mammals, amphibians, insects and fish. There is need to continue the preservation and conservation of the natural resources as they serve as a resource base for many of our social and economic activities. Within the medium-term, a systematic programme for the management of parks and wildlife will be introduced in keeping with the provisions of both the Environmental Management Act and the National Environmental Policy. This programme will entail the establishment of a National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Authority and three model National Parks at Maracas and Matura in Trinidad and Main Ridge, in Tobago.

The Environmentally Sensitive Areas Rules, Environmentally Sensitive Species Rules, and the Certificate of Environmental Clearance Rules greatly enhanced the legislative framework for conservation and protection of the country's biodiversity. Within the coming medium-term, there will be continued implementation of these rules. In addition, it is expected that four (4) Environmentally Sensitive Areas and three (3) Environmentally Sensitive Species will be designated over the medium-term.

One of the major threats to this country's biodiversity is deforestation, which results from poor agricultural practices, illegal logging, quarrying, and forest fires. This denudation has contributed to land erosion, watershed degradation, significant reduction in the wildlife population and overall degradation of the forest ecosystem. In order to address these issues, the Ministry of Public Utilities and the Environment has initiated a National Reforestation Programme in strategic areas of the country. The areas chosen for reforestation are based on the following criteria:-

- Environmental sensitivity;
- Impact on forest fires; and
- Land capability classification.

Apart from reforestation, the programme will also generate the following benefits:-

- Employment generation for some 2,700 persons annually;
- Improved and protected watersheds;
- Reduction in flooding;
- Increased carbon sequestration;
- Improved recreational facilities;
- Revenue generation;
- Generation of foreign exchange through the export of forest and eco-tourism products;
- Employment generation and poverty alleviation;
- Entrepreneurial development; and
- Enhanced food security.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A critical factor in the attainment of Government's strategic vision of environmental protection and enhancement is the involvement of the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago in the process. Towards this end the Divisions/Agencies of the Ministry of Public Utilities and the Environment, have been involved in a number of education programmes to build greater environmental awareness among the citizenry of the country. It is hoped that a greater environmental awareness among the citizenry would encourage community involvement in improving the environment. Education channels included television, radio and print ads, and training workshops and seminars on forest fires, flooding solid waste, noise, sensitive areas and species and biosafety. These education programmes of the Ministry will continue to be implemented and further strengthened over the medium term.

Community Based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme (CEPEP)

The main programmes for encouraging greater involvement of communities in improving local conditions continues to be the **Community-based**

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Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme (CEPEP) and the Community Environment Improvement Initiative (CEII).

The CEPEP is managed by the Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL) and involves community-based contractors implementing environmental improvement projects.

The Programme includes the following activities: -

- Collect, sort and remove garbage from public roadways which are inaccessible to other waste-handling systems;
- Conduct ongoing clean-up of coastal areas by collecting, sorting and removing shoreline garbage;
- Beautification of existing dump spots;

- Develop a yard waste composting facility (the output of this facility can be sold to farmers and home-owners for agricultural support usages);
- Develop recycling centers for the deposition of recyclable material;
- Restoration and maintenance of open spaces;
- Collect, sort and remove solid waste from water courses (including rivers, ravines, drains and canals); and
- Perform environmental action based on feedback and findings from the Community Environmental Improvement Officers.

This Programme is a major employment generator and since its launch there has been a continuous increase in the number of communities throughout Trinidad and Tobago requesting inclusion under CEPEP.

- **LABOUR MARKET CONDITIONS**
- **POVERTY REDUCTION AND EMPLOYMENT & WEALTH CREATION**
- **DECENT WORK IN THE WORKPLACE**

LABOUR MARKET CONDITIONS

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago recognizes that employment is central to economic growth and prosperity. Through sustainable, productive, competitive and decent employment, a country can realize the necessary growth for development, whilst for the individual it can facilitate the achievement of social and economic well-being.

The advent of the Free Trade Area of The Americas (FTAA) and the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) has made enterprise development in Trinidad and Tobago particularly challenging. To perform effectively in the globalized environment it is important that Trinidad and Tobago and countries of the region and hemisphere take the high road to globalization. This is a development path that promotes the creation of a well-trained and flexible workforce that is highly competitive, innovative and productive, that uses technology as a key productive factor and applies good labour and employment practices.

Within this context, active labour market policy on human resource development that matches the needs of the constantly changing labour market is an essential element in expanding opportunities for employment. It is essential to achieve economic and social inclusion of all workers particularly the vulnerable, such as, women, minorities, the disabled, the informal economy, and persons living with HIV/AIDS. Active labour market policy is also a major tool in the fight against poverty. Most importantly, however, it is the basis of any country's strategy to avoid global exclusion.

The development, promotion and coordination of macro economic policies designed to ensure that the quality of employment guarantees human dignity and decent work are therefore central to the achievement of developed country status by 2020.

The six (6) medium-term objectives and key strategies for the achievement of sustainable productive and decent employment are as follows:-

1. *To facilitate labour market equilibrium by:-*

- Development of a comprehensive employment policy;
- Provision of timely labour market information and analyses to guide policy and programme interventions in particular growth sectors; and
- Sourcing of employment opportunities through the **One Stop Career Resource Centres (OSCRC)**.

2. *To promote 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 youth and persons in the Informal Economy;
- Building of an entrepreneurial spirit;
- Ongoing institutional strengthening of the Friendly Societies Movement; and
- Development of a policy environment to inform on the potential for small and micro enterprises (SMEs) development by sector.

3. *To promote 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

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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 in particular the inspection units such as Labour Inspectorate and the Factory Inspectorate, to 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
 - The conduct of a survey to ascertain the extent of observance of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.
4. *To promote industrial peace in the national economy through:-*
- The enhancement of the social dialogue machinery as a development tool;
 - The enactment of a comprehensive menu of legislation; and
 - The enhancement of tertiary training through labour market signaling.
5. *To enhance the capacity of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development to undertake an expanded role in formulating and implementing national development goals through:-*
- The ongoing modernization of the structure and functions of the Ministry;
 - The 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 Cooperative Studies as the primary provider for training in labour relations, cooperative development, enterprise development, etc.

6. *To manage Government's regional and international commitments and responsibilities with respect to the Labour Market Agenda, in particular, 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;
- Timely submission of reports;
- Effective and articulate participation of Government's representatives in labour and employment sessions at the regional, hemispheric and international fora and their follow up activities; and
- Publication of bi-annual labour market bulletins and regular research papers on labour market issues.

FACILITATION OF LABOUR MARKET EQUILIBRIUM

In addition, Government, through the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development, will continue to effectively coordinate national human resource planning with a view to ensuring a level of manpower preparation to adequately meet the demand for and supply of labour over the period 2005 to 2007.

THE NATIONAL HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (NHRMIS)

The provision of timely and relevant labour market information, via the NHRMIS, is critical, especially as it relates to developing active labour market policies to meet the needs of the constantly changing labour market. An essential element of this process involves expanding opportunities for employment and achieving economic and social inclusion of all workers, including the vulnerable groups.

Also critical is the issue of standardization of labour market data throughout the region. Such standardization would greatly facilitate comparative

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analysis. The NHRMIS will provide the avenue through which national standardization can be achieved, which could then be fed into a **CARICOM Labour Market Information System (CLMIS)**.

The NHRMIS is also critical to ensuring that the labour market needs of the various sectors are met. Increasingly important in this globalized environment is the need for countries to have an adequate number of workers with the skills necessary to compete in the global economy, thus ensuring sustainable economic development. The labour market signals are crucial to the development of appropriate training programmes to ensure that there is sufficient trained manpower to meet the current and future demands of the employers.

This information will continue to serve to inform the Government's human resource development strategies. It will also be used for the development of targeted programmes and projects that maximize employment growth and the promotion of labour market equilibrium.

The **Labour Market Council**, a tripartite committee that has been charged with the responsibility for overseeing improvements in labour market information and the operation of the labour exchanges in Trinidad and Tobago, has, since its inception in May 2003, continued to operate to rationalize the activities of the key stakeholders in the labour market to:-

- Encourage the use and development of NHRMIS; and
- Eliminate duplication of effort.

THE NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE (NES)

The re-engineered NES, through the establishment of **One Stop Career Resource Centres (OSCRC)**, operates as a modernized public employment service. A major marketing drive is currently being undertaken to improve the NES delivery to jobseekers and employers.

The NES through the automated data bank continues to offer jobseekers an opportunity to place their job applications in the public domain so as to afford them

an equal chance for selection from a pool of similarly qualified candidates. It also offers to employers a database of potential qualified employees from which they can match skills available with the current and emerging needs of the organization. Currently there are six (6) OSCRCs located throughout the country in Port-of-Spain, San Fernando, Chaguanas, Sangre Grande, Tobago and Point Fortin.

Government views the NES as a potential centralized data source for both supply of and demand for labour. As a public employment agency, it can meet the demands of fulfilling employment needs in an equitable and transparent manner.

POVERTY REDUCTION AND EMPLOYMENT AND WEALTH CREATION

The promotion of employment opportunities in the Non-oil Sector is a key strategy in the generation of wealth and prosperity in the wider society. In this regard, Government will continue development of small and micro enterprises, the entrepreneurial spirit, cooperatives, regulation of the informal economy and friendly societies are seen as important to the achievement of wealth creation and poverty reduction.

THE COOPERATIVE SECTOR

Government is currently reviewing draft legislation aimed at regularizing the cooperative sector. Toward this end, the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development is in the process of revisiting the policy towards cooperative development, prior to the development of an action plan.

BUILDING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

In Trinidad and Tobago, it is estimated that there are between twenty thousand (20,000) and thirty thousand (30,000) incorporated and unincorporated small businesses, which provides employment to approximately fifty five thousand (55,000) to sixty five thousand (65,000) individuals and contribute between

5 percent to 10 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). These estimates represent an underestimation since they do not include establishments found in the informal economy. Women in particular, are engaged in several of these informal activities such as food preparation and preservation and street and market vending.

Small and micro enterprises by nature are generally operational at the micro level of the economy, such as the community, the location of these enterprises at the community level facilitate employment and the creation of services thereby providing viability and cohesiveness of communities. Small and micro enterprises with proper support could also become competitive in the domestic and international market place.

Government established an **Enterprise Development Division (EDD)**, a policy unit to examine and give guidance on the potential for entrepreneurial development. Since its inception the EDD has drafted a **Fair Share Policy (FSP)**, which proposes an allocation by law of a designated share of all Government purchasing and capital spending to qualified small and micro enterprises. It seeks to encourage large private contractors to subcontract to small business.

In keeping with the observance of the **International Year of Micro Credit (2005)**, the EDD, in collaboration with NEDCO will host a symposium in fiscal 2004/2005, for the harmonization of institutional support for small and micro enterprises and also to raise awareness of the importance of micro credit and micro finance in the eradication of poverty.

The **National Entrepreneurship Development Company (NEDCO)** since its inception in July 2002, has interviewed over eighteen thousand (18,000) persons and financed the establishment of three thousand, three hundred (3,300) new businesses. To date, seventeen hundred (1,700) persons received training in various aspects of small business management.

Government through the EDD will continue to 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.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES

Government is committed to creating a well-developed and modern financial system with a variety of financial institutions and instruments available to mobilize savings. The Friendly Societies Movement is a community-based initiative that can assist in empowering individuals and communities. The financial services that are available in the form of grants and soft loans can assist in reducing poverty and helping individuals in times of distress.

Government will continue to seek to increase the membership of these Societies through its current marketing campaigns and through training for the management teams of the Societies.

DECENT WORK IN THE WORKPLACE

STANDARD SETTING

The development agenda for Trinidad and Tobago must be placed within the context of the regional and international environment and its various commitments and obligations.

Recognizing the impacts of the globalization process on labour, the ILO in 1998, through its Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, outlined to Member States the importance of creating a basic floor of conditions. These international labour standards are viewed as the basic standards and an important step to achieving decent work.

To this end, Trinidad and Tobago has completed ratification of seven (7) of the eight (8) ILO core Conventions and reports regularly on their implementation of these Conventions. ILO's core Conventions are as follows:-

- No. 87 - Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, 1948;

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- 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 most recent of Trinidad and Tobago's ratifications was that of Convention No. 182, on the *Worst Forms of Child Labour*, which was ratified on April 23, 2003.

This country had previously attempted ratification of Convention No. 138, but the ILO did not register this ratification, due to the fact that the requirement of the declaration of a minimum age was not fulfilled. In May 2004, the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development sought and obtained the approval of Cabinet for the declaration by Trinidad and Tobago of a minimum age for admission to employment of sixteen (16) years. This declaration would allow Trinidad and Tobago to complete the ratification process.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

One of the challenges posed by globalization is the need for countries to become competitive. In many instances, this has resulted in rapid industrialization where the emphasis is on production. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago is committed to the promotion of decent work in the workplace. Central to decent work is ensuring a safe and healthy working environment free from accidents, injuries and exposure to hazardous equipment and chemicals.

Government has undertaken to provide an appropriate Occupational Safety and Health legislative framework. The Occupational Safety and Health Act No 1. of 2004

provides for the revision and extension of the present law regarding the safety, health and welfare of persons at work in order to keep pace with the country's rapid industrialization. It covers most workers with the exception of those in private homes (domestic workers) and all aspects of work undertaken in an industrial establishment (defined as a factory, shop, office, place of work or other premises excluding residential premises) that may have significant impact on the health and safety of employees. However, although the Government has a key role in the prevention of accidents and disease in the workplace, the process is really managed at the enterprise level.

NATIONAL WORKPLACE POLICY ON HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS has been recognized as an important workplace issue due to the impact on the most productive sector of the labour force, namely persons in the age cohort, 15-30. The MLSMED, along with its tripartite partners, in collaboration with the **National Aids Coordinating Committee (NACC)** is working on the development of **National Workplace Policy on HIV/AIDS**.

MINIMUM WAGES

Since the increase in the national minimum wage to \$8.00 per hour in January 2003, Government has been reviewing the impact of this wage and the possibility of increasing it in response to inflation as a strategy to reduce the incidence of poverty. A mechanism to monitor the ongoing impact of the national minimum wage on the economy will soon be put in place.

ELIMINATION OF CHILD LABOUR

Research conducted by the International Labour Organization, (ILO) in 2002, revealed the incidence of the worst forms of child labour in two land fill sites in Trinidad. As a result of these findings, the ILO has planned an intervention for the rehabilitation of some of the children involved in this activity.

The proposed action programme will seek to rehabilitate child laborers currently engaged in activities at the two sites namely, the Beetham Estate Landfill and Forres

Park Landfill. The goal of the Programme is to withdraw and prevent children from working in these landfills. The **Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)** was been selected as the implementing agency for the project and the Office of the Prime Minister, Social Services Delivery has committed US\$ 19,047.00 to the project for the purpose of conducting a baseline survey.

In addition, Cabinet has appointed a **National Steering Committee on the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour in Trinidad and Tobago**, with the broad responsibility for addressing child labour. In addition to assisting with the above two projects, the Committee is required to develop a policy and action plan to address the issue of child labour in Trinidad and Tobago.

INDUSTRIAL PEACE

Government has recognized the importance of the social dialogue machinery as an important tool in the development agenda and is committed to strengthening the existing institutions as well as promoting the use of the social dialogue machinery for all national, social and economic decisions.

In this regard, construction work on the expansion of the Cipriani Labour College has commenced and is expected to be completed by 2006. Through the physical

upgrade, the College will increase its intake capacity, as well as, develop its potential to be the primary agency to address labour education in Trinidad and Tobago.

The Ministry and Small and Micro Enterprise Development is also actively pursuing the modernization of its functions, systems and processes to enhance its capacity to undertake an expanded role in formulating and implementing national development goals.

The rationale for the modernization exercise is rooted in the view that economic, social and political transformations are taking place and therefore labour would inevitably be affected. These transformations would result in the strengthening of some existing labour administration practices, and the removal of others, but more importantly, the taking on of additional activities.

The strategies that will be developed to satisfy the regional and hemispheric views on creating a modernized Labour Ministry are:-

- Institutional redesign;
- Social dialogue;
- Legislative reform; and
- Capacity building.

XI. PERSONAL SAFETY AND SECURITY

- **CRIME PREVENTION**
- **THE PROTECTIVE SERVICES**
- **THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

CRIME PREVENTION

Crime prevention and control continues to be among the key issues engaging the attention of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. Accordingly, Government, via the Ministry of National Security will maintain its primary role in establishing and maintaining systems and strategies to effectively reduce crime and the fear of crime. The Protective Services, in particular, have been strengthened, trained, modernized and re-equipped to operate at optimal levels of professionalism and effectiveness.

During the 2005-2007 period, Government will continue to work assiduously at improving the capabilities of the various Divisions of the Ministry of National Security, so as to enable them to deliver the required quality service to enhance this country's national security and public safety status. Emphasis will therefore be placed on initiating or advancing projects and programmes aimed at recruitment, training, retraining and development of staff, upgrading of physical accommodation and acquisition of the necessary vehicles and equipment that will ensure that the organization remains abreast of technological advancements. In keeping with this approach, Government will pursue the completion of its **Passport Automation Project**, which will ensure that the travel documents of citizens of Trinidad and Tobago are consistent with international standards and thereby, positively impact security at all national ports of entry.

Crime detection will be further enhanced with the commencement of DNA testing at the Forensic Science Center. To this end, the Ministry of National Security is at present working in collaboration with the Ministry of the Attorney General to formalize the necessary regulations for operationalizing the provisions of the

DNA Act 2000. Government will also ensure the provision of appropriate specialized training and equipment for staff at the Center. With its most recent acquisition, the **Integrated Ballistics Identification System (IBIS)**, the Forensic Science Center's capacity for forensic analysis of firearm and ammunition has been significantly enhanced. This piece of equipment allows unprecedented ability to search and identify, matches among previously entered pieces of evidence and to link evidence arising from different incidents.

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 of National Security continues 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 of the Ministry, which is currently ongoing. Additionally, the Ministry of National Security will continue to partner 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, safe, secure and productive environments for teaching and learning.

Another major area of focus over the medium-term, is 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 scheduled for implementation during the three-year period.

THE PROTECTIVE SERVICES

THE POLICE SERVICE

The **Trinidad and Tobago Police Service Data Communication Network** infrastructure is now firmly

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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, expansions of the **Automated Fingerprinting Identification System (AFIS)** and the **Mugshot System**, the introduction of a system to allow for data transmission between the Licensing Division 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 of the Ministry of National Security and other relevant agencies and a timelier processing of matters.

In improving the capabilities of the Police Service, attention will also be placed on ensuring that Stations are adequately and appropriately staffed and that officers are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to deal with the current crime situation. Specialized training will therefore be provided in areas such as Fraud Investigation, Crime Scene Technology, Strategic Intelligence Analysis, Major Crime Investigation Techniques, Forensic Art Techniques and Bloodstain Evidence.

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 construction of police facilities throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

THE DEFENCE FORCE

The Defence Force has become an integral part of the Government's crime eradication staff, 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. Therefore, in addition to upgrading the **Global Maritime Distress and Safety System**, to enhance

the search, rescue and surveillance capability of the Coast Guard, steps are currently in train for the acquisition of two (2) offshore patrol vehicles, one (1) fast patrol boat and four (4) 20-metre launches.

In keeping with the need to comply with the **International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS)** and the **International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code**, Government has also established the **Maritime Ship Safety and Port Facility Security Unit** of the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard, to act as a Mission Control Liaison Center and has increased the manpower of the Coast Guard by eight (8) officers and ninety (90) ratings to facilitate operationalization of the Unit. This intake is separate from the ongoing phased increase in the strength of the Defence Force, which began in 1999 and will continue into 2006 and 2007.

The Defence Force will advance its computerization thrust with the purchase of additional computers and network equipment and provision of the requisite training opportunities to officers.

Further, Government will continue its community-focused approach as a fundamental component of the 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 lend assistance to the national community in certain projects.

The Regiment's contribution to youth development will be expanded with the implementation of three programmes – **MILAT**, **MYPART** and **NYS** – 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.

THE PRISON SERVICE

The transformation of the Prison Service from the current retributive mode to a rehabilitative mode will

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continue with the establishment of a **Transformation Unit** to manage the transition. The staffing and commencement of operations of this Unit are priority items that will continue into Fiscal 2005, together with the introduction of a **Parole System**, which is another component of the transformation process. Cabinet has approved the membership of the **Parole Introduction Committee** and the Ministry of National Security is in the process of convening that Committee's inaugural meeting.

Concurrently, work on the **Maximum Security Prison** will continue 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 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, over the medium-term, will seek to recruit additional staff so as to ensure that the Prison is adequately manned.

Over the period, improvement and reconstruction works will also be undertaken 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 Center.

The Fire Service

The Ministry of National Security, having been charged with the responsibility to ensure fire protection and suppression and other emergency services, will continue its programme of construction and refurbishment of fire stations across the country including the acquisition of vehicles and equipment necessary to achieve that objective.

Among the areas earmarked for construction of new fire stations are San Fernando, Sangre Grande, Couva, Black Rock/Plymouth and Mayaro, while those scheduled for refurbishment include stations at 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.

Upgrading of the Salt Water System is also scheduled to begin with the engagement of a consultancy service to evaluate the existing system and make appropriate recommendations for the required upgrade.

The capabilities of the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service will be further strengthened by the ongoing computerization project.

NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (NEMA)

The National Emergency Management Agency is committed to initiating and supporting activities related to disaster management in Trinidad and Tobago. Over the last year, the Agency 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.

In fiscal 2005 and beyond, NEMA 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. The Agency will further strengthen its capacity by conducting training programmes for persons attached to emergency service providers and first responders.

At the same time, NEMA will pursue the development and implementation of a **National Building Code** and **Disaster Management Policy** with a view to promoting disaster prevention and preparedness.

The Agency, which was recently relocated, will also continue working toward the completion of fully functional facilities, both in Trinidad and in Tobago.

XII. KEY ECONOMIC SECTORS

- **ENERGY AND ENERGY INDUSTRIES**
- **AGRICULTURE**
- **TOURISM**

ENERGY AND ENERGY INDUSTRIES

The Energy Sector will continue to play a pivotal role in the growth and development of the economy. To this end, various projects and activities are being planned or are at various stages of development with the aim of optimizing returns from the country's petroleum resources, promoting national economic sustainability and increasing the country's competitive edge, globally.

It is recognized that the administrative machinery of the Energy Sector must be in step with planned developments. Accordingly, Government will actively pursue initiatives to strengthen the administrative arm of the sector. Toward this end, a major area of focus will be the restructuring of the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries to create a more asset-based, stakeholder- focused and performance-driven organization.

Over the medium-term, the principal thrust of Government policy in the upstream sub-sector, will continue to be the attraction of foreign investment to explore and increase hydrocarbon reserves. In this regard, the **Competitive Bid Round 2003** involving ten (10) offshore acreage blocks was closed earlier this year. To date, negotiations have been successfully concluded and signing is imminent in respect of four (4) of the ten (10) blocks that were offered.

The Memorandum of Understanding between Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela with respect to the implementation of a **Cross Border Field Development Plan** is a significant first step to the cross border development of gas. Agreement on the production of these reserves will enhance the security of the country's gas supply, and could result in

opportunities for the processing of Venezuelan gas at the Atlantic LNG Plant. Moreover, the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries will continue to conduct annual audits of natural gas reserves, to be used as a planning tool in the Natural Gas Sub-sector.

In addition, Government's commitment to the development of local content and local participation in the Energy Sector has been borne out in the recent establishment of a permanent committee appointed by Cabinet to formulate a policy document and devise strategies to increase local content in all energy sector projects; not only at the low end, which now obtains, but also in respect of local leadership, management, control and ownership. To date the Committee has prepared a policy statement and a work programme, which is to be submitted, to Cabinet for approval. It is anticipated that the Committee will be the driving force for the development and monitoring of local content in the Energy Sector.

In the downstream sub-sector the focus of Government policy will continue to be diversification and maximization of the multiplier effects and value added through creation of linkages between the Energy Sector and the rest of the economy. In this regard, Government is engaged in ongoing discussions with interested parties for the development of additional ammonia and methanol plants, a gas-to-liquids project and a gas refinery aimed at optimizing the production of downstream petrochemicals based on syngases viz. carbon monoxide, hydrogen and nitrogen. Over the medium-term too, there will also be a considerable deepening of the natural gas production process through the coming to fruition of plans to advance from first stage petrochemicals production to further downstream derivatives such as melamine, ammonia-urea, nitrate and acetic acid.

Atlantic LNG (ALNG) Train IV will boost ethane production to adequate levels for the construction of an ethylene/polyethylene chemicals complex. This will create opportunities for employment and provide spin-off benefits to foster further economic growth and development.

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AGRICULTURE

The **Union Estate at La Brea** currently under development, will facilitate the planned industrial expansion. Among other things, this site will accommodate an aluminum smelter, which is the subject of a memorandum of understanding between the Government, a major international company and a power generation plant. The natural gas pipeline transmission network will also be expanded through the construction of a 36-inch offshore pipeline and a 56-inch cross island natural gas pipeline, which will transport natural gas to ALNG's Train IV plant in the South West Peninsula. The 56" pipeline will have the capacity for the transportation of additional gas to possible further LNG Trains as well as downstream plants in the proposed Union Estate Development.

Other performance indicators include the advanced drafting of regulations for the quarry sub-sector and the pursuit of increased efficiency in the retail marketing sector through the rationalization of gas station sites, the regularization of marketing licenses, the remediation of underground storage tanks and a policy proposal by a Ministerial Committee for the improvement of CNG service stations through improved quick fill technology and additional stations.

In recognition that crude oil and natural gas are wasting assets, consideration is being given to the development of renewable forms of energy such as solar and wind energy. A demonstration solar water-heating project is currently being developed for the Tobago Bed and Breakfast Association and will be followed up with a counterpart project in Trinidad.

Towards Caribbean energy integration, a feasibility study is being undertaken for the construction of a **Caribbean Gas Pipeline**.

Government, through the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries is currently undertaking a review of the **Energy Policy Green Paper**. Upon completion, it is envisaged that this exercise would facilitate the development of a framework by which the Energy Sector would meet its obligations within the context of Vision 2020.

Government considers the development of the Agriculture Sector to be critical to the overall sustainable socioeconomic development of Trinidad and Tobago. The Sector is extremely important in terms of national food security, employment generation, the diversification of the economy and overall economic growth. Government's goal in Agriculture over the medium-term therefore, is to revitalize the Sector, provide an adequate level of national food security and food sovereignty, and enhance the Sector's role in social and economic development.

Government's Agriculture Policy is also geared towards securing Trinidad and Tobago against the global food shortage that is expected to impact by the year 2007. Due to increased acts of global terrorism and with the vulnerabilities of Trinidad and Tobago as a small island developing state; Government will place special emphasis on enhancing national food security. Government will also ensure that a significant proportion, of our national food requirements is produced locally through the sustainable utilization our renewable natural resources.

Government is also cognizant of the recent destruction caused by hurricane, to the agriculture infrastructure in key Caribbean States, and the impact of this damage on our national food security. To cushion the expected deficit in food supplies from these Caribbean States, Government will implement during fiscal 2005, special programmes in food crop and field crop production to ensure adequate supplies of these commodities to the national community.

The Primary Objectives of Government's Agriculture Policy are to: -

- Improve the Nation's food security and food sovereignty;
- Improve agriculture production and productivity while sustaining our renewable natural resources and ecosystems;
- Increase the contribution of the Agriculture Sector to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP);

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- 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;
- 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.

In order to achieve its policy objectives in agriculture; Government will place emphasis during the medium term period (2005-2007), on the following programmes: -

- 1) Development, repair and maintenance of agricultural access roads;
- 2) Implementation of adequate and appropriate water management programmes including irrigation and drainage initiatives;
- 3) Implementation of programmes to bring additional agricultural lands into active agricultural production;
- 4) Intensification and expansion of agriculture education and training programmes;
- 5) Development of the Fisheries Sub-Sector;
- 6) Improvement of the collection, analysis, storage and retrieval of agricultural data;
- 7) Revitalization of targeted regions and strategic sub-sectors in agriculture: cocoa, small ruminants, rice, apiculture and poultry; and
- 8) Improvement of the competitiveness of locally produced agricultural commodities in the domestic and export markets.

Government's Medium-Term Agriculture Development Programmes (2005-2007) comprises the following:-

1) Development, Repair and Maintenance of agricultural access roads.

Government will expand its programmes to maintain and repair existing agricultural access roads, as well as, intensify its efforts to develop new agricultural access roads. This programme will facilitate easy transport of supplies to, and produce from agricultural establishments and bring additional agricultural lands into production.

Government recognizes that inadequate access roads have been significant constraints to increased agricultural production and productivity.

This has also been a key factor for idle Agricultural holdings. Government will involve the local communities in the construction, repair and maintenance of agricultural access roads.

2) Implementation of appropriate Water Management Programmes in Agriculture.

Government recognizes that poor water management presents severe limitations to agricultural production and productivity. During the wet season there is an abundance of water, which often results in severe flood damage to Agriculture. Agriculture production is however, severely limited during the dry season due to inadequate water supply and as a result, agricultural resources are generally idle during that period.

To address these limitations, Government will introduce adequate water management practices during fiscal 2005, to ensure sustained agriculture production and productivity. Government will implement a programme to establish agricultural ponds and dams that could store excess runoff during the wet season, for use during the dry season. The programme will reduce the incidents of flooding and increase the area of agricultural land under artificial irrigation.

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Increasing the Acreage of Agricultural Lands Under Cultivation.

In an effort to increase agricultural production, Government proposes to bring new agricultural land into active agricultural production. In implementing this programme, Government will intensify its land distribution programmes, including the accelerated **Land Distribution Programme**, where 30-year agricultural leases are awarded to qualified farmers. Government will also continue the renewal of agriculture leases that have expired. A monitoring system will be implemented to ensure that the terms and conditions of agricultural leases are strictly adhered to.

Additionally, Government will continue its programme of agricultural land reclamation by which lands are developed for use in agriculture production through drainage and leaching procedures.

Intensification and Expansion of Agricultural Education and Training programmes.

Government acknowledged that in order to increase agricultural production and productivity, agricultural operators must have the capacity and the appropriate agricultural technologies. Government will therefore, expand and intensify its agricultural education and training programmes.

Government will also continue to promote the teaching of the science and practice of agriculture in primary and secondary schools. Renewed focus will also be given to technical and tertiary level education and training in agriculture.

Government will intensify and expand the **Youth Apprenticeship Programme in Agriculture (YAPA)**. This programme will increase the involvement of youth (age 17 to 25 years) in Agriculture. Due to the high average age of the farming population, Government introduced the YAPA programme, as a means of introducing a rational system of succession planning that will promote sustainable development in the Agriculture Sector. The programme is designed to encourage the youth to develop practical skills in areas such as farm

management, production, marketing, post harvest management and food processing.

The YAPA Programme will comprise three (3) phases:-

- Orientation or Awareness Phase-Trainees are exposed to various aspects of agriculture for a period of eight weeks;
- Intensive Training Phase- Successful graduates of Phase One are exposed to agricultural production and farm management practices for a period of nine (9) months; and
- Settlement and Entrepreneurship Phase- Successful graduates from phase two are awarded agricultural lands under Standard Agricultural Leases so that they could establish their own farms and engage in commercial agriculture.

Development of the Fisheries Sub-Sector.

Government is committed to the sustainable management and utilization of the fishery and other renewable marine resources of the country. Priority will be given over the medium-term to the establishment of HACCP compliant Fishing Centres at selected locations within the country. Existing centers will be repaired and upgraded to HACCP compliance. A comprehensive assessment of the country's fish stock will be conducted. Government will also focus on continuing appropriate fishery research and development programmes, and on implementing an ecosystem approach to the management of our marine resources.

Improve the Collection, Analysis, Storage and Retrieval of Agricultural Data.

The Agricultural Census 2004 will form the basis for the establishment of an adequate and reliable Agricultural Information System. Government acknowledged the inadequacy and unreliability of the current agricultural database. Information is inadequate and unreliable for decision-making and policy formulation in agriculture. During the medium term Government will continue to develop all aspects of its agricultural statistical programme, with the aimed of establishing an adequate and reliable agricultural Information System.

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Development of Strategic Agriculture Sub-Sectors

Government's focus during this period will be on the development of these strategic sub-sectors, which could impact significantly on national food security and food sovereignty, employment generation and export earnings. Government has mandated the Cocoa and Coffee Industry Board (CCIB) to take the lead role in the revitalization of the cocoa sub-sector. To encourage development in this Sub-Sector, Government awarded increased prices to cocoa producers, and additional incentive programmes will be offered through the CCIB.

Rice is a staple commodity and therefore critical to the food security and sovereignty of Trinidad and Tobago. Government will continue to encourage increased local production of rice, by making suitable lands available to rice producers, and encourage the introduction of improved technology in rice production.

Improved Competitiveness of Agriculture in the Local and Export Markets.

During the period 2005 to 2007, Government will focus on improving the competitiveness of the Domestic Agriculture Sector by:-

- Encouraging the strengthening of NAMDEVCO as a marketing institution;
- Continuing the development of local and export agriculture markets;
- Promote and facilitate the development of a viable agro-processing industry;
- Pursuing an aggressive agriculture research and development agenda; and
- Promote the introduction of improved technology within the Agriculture Sector;

Government will encourage the participation of the private sector in the implementation of this development agenda for agriculture. Institutional strengthening of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources will be vigorously pursued to improve its capacity to adequately facilitate the development agenda.

TOURISM

Government will continue to take steps to transform our tourism industry into a major source of employment and a far larger contributor to Trinidad and Tobago's Gross Domestic Product. Integral to this process would be the strengthening of partnerships between private and public sector stakeholders with responsibility for the development, marketing and management of the tourism industry. Over the medium-term, Government will focus on the development of the country's unique dual tourism product with Trinidad targeting the "business and conference center market", and Tobago the "leisure market". In this regard, a uniquely differentiated internationally competitive product complemented by an appropriate institutional framework and adequate physical infrastructure would drive the tourism thrust.

Major Tourism initiatives over the medium-term period include: -

- Increased collaboration among industry players;
- Review of the institutional framework for Tourism Marketing and Development in Trinidad and Tobago;
- Establishment of a dynamic marketing and promotion programme;
- Increased airlift capacity from international destinations and between Trinidad and Tobago;
- Review of the legislative framework governing the industry;
- Generation of new investment in the industry;
- Establishment of an effective management system for sites and attractions;
- Generation of a higher level of tourism awareness among the local population; and
- Strengthening of the research capability.

Government recognizes that the Tourism Sector has tremendous potential for creating linkages with many other sectors of the economy. With a view to capturing the true contribution of the sector and facilitating its sustained development, efforts will continue towards implementation of the **Tourism Satellite System of Accounting**.