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### **CHAMBER LEADS TRADE MISSION TO EUROPE 2012**

The 2008 signing of the CARIFORUM – European Union Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) was the start of CARIFORUM's transition from a preferential agreement to a reciprocal trading agreement with the European Union (EU) - one of the largest trading blocs in the world and Trinidad and Tobago's third largest market (after the USA and CARICOM).

A 13-member trade mission delegation, organised by the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce is currently participating in business meetings in Germany (Hamburg and Munich), the Netherlands (Rotterdam) and the United Kingdom (Birmingham and Manchester) from 26 February to 7 March 2012.

The Chamber-led trade mission, "**Trinidad and Tobago in Europe 2012**", made possible by Trade.Com Facility in Brussels, facilitated 30 targeted business to business meetings including a visit to the University Medical Centre (Hamburg), the Bavarian Information and Communication Technology Cluster, and the Carbon Trading Stock Exchange, in Hamburg and Munich on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2012.

The companies on the mission include ANSA McAl, Angostura, Electrical Industries Limited, Trinidad Cement Limited, Infotech Caribbean, Trinidad Systems Limited, Neal and Massy ITC Group, Intelligent Business Advantage and PC Consultants. Notwithstanding the economic turbulence being experienced by members within the EU, several firms on both sides have already identified potential strategic partnerships which the Chamber will continue to monitor upon the return to Trinidad and Tobago.

His Excellency Mr. Garvin Nicholas, Ambassador of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the Federal Republic of Germany; Mr. Howard Kroch, the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in Hamburg; and Mr. Ingo Meyr, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in Munich have supported the mission and have attended the business programmes.

Ms. Catherine Kumar, CEO of the Chamber has had productive meetings with both German Chambers where we have held business events. As we seek to develop valuable ties with these Chambers and share in their learning experiences, we see potential for long-standing relationships to be built.

The Chamber will host a brief press conference upon return to T&T, to give a better perspective on the outcomes, gains made and next steps following this trade mission.

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