



MEDIA RELEASE

September 3, 2018

A Time for Constructive Dialogue

Following the announcement of the Government's intention to close the refinery at Petrotrin last week and escalation of tensions between the Government and the representative workers union, the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce makes a public call to all stakeholders to adopt a level-headed approach and work collaboratively for a successful way forward.

The T&T Chamber deems the call by the President of the OWTU a retrograde step that may simply serve to undermine the economy, and ultimately harm the very persons it is intended to help. The possible fallout could very well serve to intensify already trying times for all who share the burden - including the more vulnerable among us.

At a time when our country is grappling with challenging economic conditions, such rhetoric inciting citizens to mobilise can only be described as irresponsible. It is also our understanding that such action is contrary to the Industrial Relations Act. Instead of calls for disruptive activity, the T&T Chamber is of the view that there needs to be a commitment to do whatever it takes to restore our national competitiveness and growth.

The country has been aware of the situation with Petrotrin for several years. We now stand at a crossroads where we can neither sustain the massive debt nor the ongoing losses of the refinery operations. It is a time for forward looking approaches; the world is changing and we need to place greater emphasis on where we need to be for a sustainable economy.

The T&T Chamber subscribes fully to the ideals of constructive dialogue as established through the National Tripartite Advisory Council (NTAC). Anything less, would be counter-productive to securing a better future for all of us who live and work in Trinidad and Tobago.

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