



MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

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For Immediate Release

MEDIA RELEASE

2023 PREPARATION FOR RELEASE PROGRAMME LAUNCHED IN THE NATION'S PRISONS

Port of Spain: Minister of National Security, the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds M.P., on March 07, 2023, joined Vision on Mission (VOM) and the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service to launch the 2023 Preparation for Release Programme within the country's prison system.

The Preparation for Release Programme is designed to provide cognitive, behavioural, restructuring, resettlement opportunities and linkages to the necessary support services to improve offenders' transition from Prison to communities. The result of this can lead to increased public safety and the reduction of reoffending by participating inmates.

Delivering the feature address, Minister Hinds acknowledged the significance of the Preparation for Release Programme and thanked Vision on Mission for the work the organization has been doing in collaboration with the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service, through the programme and in resettling persons released from prison. The Minister reiterated his commitment to work with prison officials, inmates, youth residents, and all stakeholders to improve the prison system, placing particular emphasis on continued restorative justice practices, rehabilitation, restoration and reintegration.

Speaking directly to the inmates who successfully completed the 2022 instalment of the programme and those about to participate in 2023, the Minister urged them all to be positive role models upon their return to their respective communities. He stated, *"Make the most out of the second chance you have been given by leading productive lives as law-abiding citizens"*.

In his remarks, Commissioner of Prisons (Ag.), Mr. Deopersad Ramoutar recognized the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service's longstanding relationship with VOM to facilitate programmes aimed at reforming and rehabilitating offenders. Commissioner (Ag.) Ramoutar noted that the Prison Service Programmes Department has enhanced its rehabilitative initiatives over the years, in collaboration with several Non-Governmental Organizations, including VOM.

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Speaking at the event, Chief Executive Officer of Vision on Mission, Ms. Giselle Chance said that VOM was birthed in the prisons and remains steadfast in its mission to contribute to crime reduction and decrease the recidivism rate. She indicated that VOM intends to deepen its collaboration with the Prison Service Programmes Department to further develop the Preparation for Release Programme and to make the delivery even more effective.

Also delivering remarks were Deputy Commissioner of Prisons (Ag.), Mr. Carlos Corraspe; and Chairman of Vision on Mission Board of Directors, Mr. Fitzroy Frederick.

As part of the launch proceedings, testimonials were delivered by VOM clients who spoke on how the Preparation for Release made a positive impact on their lives after release from prison. Certificates were also presented to inmates who completed the 2022 Preparation for Release Programme.

The Launch Ceremony was held at the Maximum Security Prison in Arouca under the theme "*Preparation for Success*". Also in attendance were Minister of Social Development and Family Services, Senator the Honourable Donna Cox; Chargé d’Affaires of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Harry Putker; Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of National Security, Ms. Aarti Bedassie-Maharaj; other Members of the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service; representatives from the Ministry of Youth Development and National Services; officials from the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service; and Members of the Board of VOM.

The Preparation for Release Programme, which is aligned to the Prison Service’s Correctional Education Programme, is primarily offered and delivered to convicted inmates who have 18-24 months remaining in their sentence. In 2023, the nine (9) month programme will be offered to approximately one hundred (100) inmates and facilitated at the Carrera Convict Prison, Port of Spain Prison, Women’s Prison, Golden Grove Prison, and Maximum Security Prison.

Photos and captions



1. Minister of National Security, the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds M.P. (*centre*) presents a Certificate of Completion to a participating inmate (*second from left*) in the 2022 Vision on Mission (VOM) Preparation for Release Programme, at the Launch Ceremony for the 2023 instalment of the Programme held on March 07, 2022 at the Maximum Security Prison in Arouca. Also in the photo are Chairman of Vision on Mission Board of Directors, Mr. Fitzroy Frederick (*first from left*); Chief Executive Officer of VOM, Ms. Giselle Chance (*second from right*); and Commissioner of Prisons (Ag.), Mr. Deopersad Ramoutar (*first from right*).

3



2. Officials present to support the Launch of the Vision on Mission (VOM) 2023 Preparation of Release Programme held on March 07, 2023 at the Maximum Security Prison in Arouca. *From left to right*: Chairman of VOM Board of Directors, Mr. Fitzroy Frederick; Chief Executive Officer of VOM, Ms. Giselle

Chance; Minister of National Security, the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds M.P.; Commissioner of Prisons (Ag.), Mr. Deopersad Ramoutar; Minister of Social Development and Family Services, Senator the Honourable Donna Cox; Deputy Commissioner of Prisons (Ag.), Mr. Carlos Corraspe; Chargé d’Affaires of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Harry Putker; and Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of National Security, Ms. Aarti Bedassie-Maharaj.



3. Prison Inmates who participated in the Vision on Mission (VOM) 2022 Preparation for Release Programme. The 2023 VOM Preparation for Release Programme was launched on March 07, 2023 at the Maximum Security Prison in Arouca.

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