



## **Ministry of National Security**

Government of the republic of Trinidad and Tobago

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For Immediate Release

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

#### **TWENTY-FIVE GRADUATED OFFICERS TAKE UP DUTIES AT THE IMMIGRATION DETENTION CENTRE**

**Port of Spain:** Minister of National Security, the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds MP; was on hand to congratulate twenty-five (25) newly graduated Immigration Detention Centre Officers, at an official ceremony held on Wednesday October 04, 2023, at the Office of Law Enforcement Policy (OLEP), Ministry of National Security, London Street, Port of Spain.

In 2009, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago through the Immigration Division of the Ministry of National Security, took the bold step to strengthen the nation's capacity to detain illegal immigrants and other aliens subjected to deportation, by establishing an Immigration Detention Centre (IDC) located in Aripo, Trinidad and Tobago. The creation of the IDC was a key component of a more comprehensive strategy to deter illegal immigration into this country.

The OLEP administers and facilitates the training process for Immigration Detention Officers. The process of training for these twenty-five (25) graduates included background investigations, Voice Stress Analysis (VSA), medical evaluation and a ten week non-residential Level I Law Enforcement Training programme conducted by the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS) Training Academy.

In his official address to the graduates, Minister Hinds took the opportunity to thank the new officers on behalf of the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, and the Ministry of National Security for taking up the call to duty, as this country continues to contend with and manage the challenging crime situation and the influx of illegal migrants.

Describing Immigration Officers as the gatekeepers and custodians, Minister Hinds stated that, *"Immigration Officers are the first and last persons that the traveller meets on entering and leaving Trinidad and Tobago. Through your actions, and in particular, how you carry out your job functions, will paint a picture in the mind of that traveller for a very long time. You create the first and sometimes the last impression visitors have of our country, so I urge you to ensure that that impression is a positive one!"*

Minister Hinds continued by saying, *"Increasing the manpower complement of the IDC, as we do today, would ensure that the Centre continues to be sufficiently manned with well-trained and professionally staffed personnel, who can assist the already-serving Detention Officers. These officers work tirelessly to address all challenges that arise in the fulfilment of their duties. We are doing the same with the TTPS, as we ramp up the recruitment arrangements to increase our numbers by 1000 in 2024!"*

The Minister ended by publically thanking the Office of Law Enforcement Policy for the drafting of the Border Security Policy for Trinidad and Tobago; and also a comprehensive review of the Firearm Licence Regime in Trinidad and Tobago.

He stated that, *"there were strong recommendations included in the Border Security Policy, which should help us strengthen our border management capacities; our international airports, to detect and intercept drugs, other illicit goods and high-risk passengers, including foreign terrorist fighters, in origin, transit and destination countries, with the overall objective of disrupting criminal networks"*

The ceremony was attended by Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of National Security, Ms. Aarti Bedassie-Maharaj; Chief Immigration Officer, Trinidad and Tobago Immigration Division, Mrs. Vera Persad; Director, Office of Law Enforcement Policy, Ministry of National Security, Ms. Gale Charles; Deputy Director, Office of Law Enforcement Policy, Ministry of National Security, Mr. Allan Meiguel; Manager, Immigration Detention Centre, Ministry of National Security, Mr. Bhojnarine Kandhai; Manager, Human Resource Department, Immigration Division, Ministry of National Security, Ms. Nirmala Ramlogan.

**PHOTOS AND CAPTIONS:**



**(Seated From Left to Right):** Manager, Immigration Detention Centre, Ministry of National Security, Mr. Bhojnarine Kandhai; Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of National Security, Ms. Aarti Bedassie-Maharaj; Director, Office of Law Enforcement Policy, Ministry of National Security, Ms. Gale Charles; Minister of National Security, the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds MP; Deputy Director, Office of Law Enforcement Policy, Mr. Allan Meiguel and Chief Immigration Officer, Trinidad and Tobago Immigration Division, Mrs. Vera Persad, flanked by trainers, instructors and newly graduated Immigration Detention Officers.

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