



# MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

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For Immediate Release

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **COUNTER TRAFFICKING UNIT PARTICIPATES IN INTERPOL'S LARGEST-EVER GLOBAL OPERATION AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SMUGGLING**

***Port-of-Spain:*** In a powerful display of international cooperation and resolve, the Ministry of National Security's Counter Trafficking Unit (CTU) joined forces with global law enforcement agencies to strike a significant blow against human trafficking and migrant smuggling, as part of Interpol's historic *Operation Liberterra II*.

Spanning 116 countries and conducted from September 29 to October 05, 2024, this unprecedented operation led to the rescue of 3,222 potential victims of trafficking (VoTs) and the identification of 17,793 irregular migrants worldwide. Trinidad and Tobago achieved Interpol's Level 1 designation, demonstrating its capability to rescue victims and successfully charge suspects involved in human trafficking activities, while also participating at Level 2, border monitoring at key entry points.

During *Operation Liberterra II*, the CTU, in collaboration with the Immigration Division, strengthened its border monitoring at the International Airport. Screening efforts covered 47 incoming flights and over 5,300 passengers, detecting human trafficking and smuggling risks, identifying fraudulent activities and focusing on the protection of unaccompanied and separated children.

The operation was bolstered by the active involvement of the following agencies:

- Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP)
- Interpol Bureau
- Immigration Division
- Special Investigations Unit (SIU), TTPS
- Guard and Emergency Branch (GEB), TTPS
- Central Division Task Force (CDTF), TTPS
- Assistant Commissioner of Police, South

- Cyber-Crime and Social Media Unit (CSMU), TTPS
- Child Protection Unit (CPU), TTPS
- Air Support Unit, TTPS
- Crime Scene Investigations Unit (CSI), TTPS
- Victim and Witness Support Unit (VWSU), TTPS
- Financial Intelligence Unit of Trinidad and Tobago (FIUTT)
- Children’s Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (CATT)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Trinidad and Tobago’s performance during the operation earned recognition twice from Interpol, positioning the nation as a leader in combating human trafficking. In total, *Operation Liberterra II* conducted nearly 8 million checks against Interpol’s databases globally, and the coordinated efforts of participating countries led to 2,517 arrests related to human trafficking and smuggling. Interpol’s Executive Director of Police Services, Stephen Kavanagh, emphasized the success of the operation, stating, *“Beyond providing a snapshot of global trafficking and migration trends, the operation served as a vital capacity building opportunity for countries, fostering relationships between specialized units, and enhancing cross-agency collaboration.”*

The Ministry of National Security, through the CTU and its partners, remains steadfast in its mission to protect VoTs and bring perpetrators to justice. This successful operation represents another step toward improving our Trafficking in Persons (TiPs) ranking in 2025, underscoring the impact of collaborative action and rigorous enforcement in the fight against human trafficking.

The Ministry thanks all partner agencies for their commitment and dedication.

**For more information or to report suspected cases of human trafficking, please contact the CTU toll-free Hotline at 800-4CTU (4288).**

**END**