



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago  
Ministry of Homeland Security

July 31, 2025

For Immediate Release

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **“TRAFFIC IN THE CAPITAL” HIGHLIGHTS HUMAN TRAFFICKING AS ORGANIZED CRIME AT NATIONAL WDATIPS 2025 OBSERVANCE**

**Port-of-Spain:** On Wednesday 30 July, 2025, the Counter Trafficking Unit (CTU) of the Ministry of Homeland Security transformed the Queen’s Hall stage into a platform for national consciousness and collective resistance, hosting “*Traffic in the Capital*,” a live theatrical production in observance of World Day Against Trafficking in Persons (WDATiPs) 2025.

Presented under the global theme “Human Trafficking is Organized Crime – End the Exploitation,” the performance drew from real case files to expose how organized criminal networks operate in Trinidad and Tobago. The audience was taken through scenes of sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, recruitment, transport, harbouring, and manipulation, reminding all present that human trafficking is neither distant nor abstract, it is happening here.

The event welcomed approximately 200 guests, including senior Government officials, diplomatic representatives, international and regional organizations, law enforcement, civil society, and students.

Delivering the Feature Address, Minister of Homeland Security, the Honourable Roger Alexander, M.P., reaffirmed the Government’s commitment to aggressive anti-human trafficking enforcement and multi-agency action.

*“Human trafficking is not petty crime. It is enterprise. It is organized, structured, and profit-driven, and we must be just as organized, structured, and relentless in our response,”* the Minister stated.

The Minister also drew a poignant connection to African Emancipation Day, observed annually on August 1st:

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*"In marking African Emancipation Day in Trinidad and Tobago, we are reminded that the fight for freedom is not over. Human trafficking continues to violate the rights and dignity of countless individuals across the globe. As a Government, we remain steadfast in our duty to identify, rescue, and protect those trapped in modern systems of exploitation."*

So far in 2025, the CTU has received over 20 reports, conducted 2 major operations, and initiated 22 investigations. Three people have been charged with serious offences ranging from receiving and harbouring for the purpose of exploiting a person's prostitution unlawfully, to knowingly confiscating identification documents for the purpose of trafficking, and cruelty to children.

The theatre production was developed and staged by award-winning creative, Derron Sandy. The cast, composed of some of Trinidad and Tobago's most promising young actors, carried the audience through the painful realities of trafficking, from the grooming of children to the complicity of legal systems, and the resilience of victims.

In her opening remarks, Deputy Director of the CTU, Ms. Dane-Marie Marshall, spoke to the decision to use the arts as a tool for national engagement:

*"We, at the Counter Trafficking Unit, have always turned to the arts, not as a luxury, but as a necessity. In a world oversaturated with data, reports and policy briefs, theatre does something exceptional: it pierces through desensitization. It moves the heart before it convinces the mind. In a society as culturally rich as ours, the arts speak a language that every Trinbagonian understands, whether through rhythm, storytelling or silence."*

This performance marks a deliberate evolution in the CTU's public awareness strategy over the last year, one that embraces creative mediums to better engage communities, disrupt assumptions and target hard-to-reach audiences.

Guests at Wednesday's event were invited to wear Blue, the colour for human trafficking awareness and were also given Blue Heart Pins, provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), a symbol of solidarity with trafficking victims worldwide. The event was further supported by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Nestlé Caribbean.

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This observance was not merely a performance, it was a national statement. It affirmed that Trinidad and Tobago will not turn a blind eye to exploitation, and that public awareness is just as vital as prosecution in the fight against trafficking in persons.

The Counter Trafficking Unit remains committed to combining bold enforcement with bold storytelling, because changing hearts is often the first step to changing systems.

Members of the public are urged to learn the signs, speak up, and report any suspicious activity. Human trafficking hides in plain sight, and every citizen has a role to play.

To report suspected trafficking in persons, contact the CTU's toll-free Hotline: **800-4CTU (4288)**.

**END**

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**Photos and captions:**



**Photo 1:** Minister of Homeland Security, the Honourable Roger Alexander M.P., delivers the Feature Address at *"Traffic in the Capital"*, at Queen's Hall, on Wednesday 30 July, 2025.



**Photo 2:** Deputy Director of the Counter Trafficking Unit, Ms. Dane-Marie Marshall delivers Opening Remarks at *"Traffic in the Capital"*, at Queen's Hall, on Wednesday 30 July, 2025.

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**Photo 3:** Members of the “*Traffic in the Capital*” cast — Cheyenne Calliste, David Dennis, Destiny John, Joel Millington, Tya Jané Ramey, and Terriq Betaudier, perform a scene depicting the recruitment and grooming of vulnerable individuals for sexual exploitation.

In a unique interactive segment, Director Derron Sandy invited audience members to step on stage and identify the red flags in the unfolding scenario.

**Pictured here:** *First Vice President of the Inter-Religious Organization of Trinidad and Tobago, Pandit Lloyd Mukram Sirjoo, highlighting key indicators of human trafficking.*

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**Photo 4:** The cast of *Traffic in the Capital* delivers a powerful final scene in the form of a fluid sculpture, a choreographed visual metaphor reflecting a nation beginning to take the fight against trafficking personally.

The performance paid tribute to the resilience of victims and emphasized the role of law enforcement and the wider public in dismantling organized trafficking networks.

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