



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO



COUNTRY PROFILE

Type of Government	Republic and parliamentary democracy
President	H.E. Anthony Carmona (since March 2013)
Prime Minister	Dr. Keith Rowley (since September 2015)
Foreign Minister	Dennis Moses (since September 2015)
Capital	Port of Spain
Independence	31 st August 1962 (from the UK)
Surface area	5130 sq km
Population	1,222,363 (July 2015 est.)
Languages	English (official), Caribbean Hindustani (a dialect of Hindi)
Religions	Protestant 32.1%, Roman Catholic 21.6%, Hindu 18.2%, Muslim 5%, Jehovah's Witness 1.5%, other 8.4%, none 2.2%, unspecified 11.1% (2011 est.)
Ethnic Groups	East Indian 35.4%, African 34.2% mixed/other 15.3%, mixed African/East Indian 7.7%, other 1.3%, unspecified 6.2% (2011 est.)
Currency/Exchange rate	Trinidad and Tobago dollars (TTD) per US dollar – 6.38 (2015 est.)
Exports	Petroleum and petroleum products, liquefied natural gas, methanol, ammonia, urea, steel products, beverages, cereal and cereal products, sugar, cocoa, coffee, citrus fruit, vegetables, flowers
Main Export Partners	US 29.1%, Argentina 9.3%, Brazil 6.6%, Chile 5.9%, Peru 4.5% (2014)
Imports	Mineral fuels, lubricants, machinery, transportation equipment, manufactured goods, food, chemicals, live animals
Main Import Partners	US 34.6%, Brazil 7.7%, Gabon 6.2%, China 6.1%, Russia 5%, Canada 4.1%, (2014)
GDP per capita PPP	\$32,800 (2015 est.)
GDP Growth	1% (2015 est.)
Inflation Rate	7.5% (2015 est.)
Corruption Perception (CPI) Score:	39/100, Ranked 72 nd out of 168 Countries (Transparency International 2015)
Business Competitiveness (BCI) Score	3.9, Ranked 89 th out of 140 Countries, (World Economic Forum 2015 - 2016)
Ease of Doing Business	88/189 (doingbusiness.org 2016)

JAMAICA -TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago established Diplomatic Relations on 18th June 1963.

His Excellency David Prendergast is Jamaica's High Commissioner to Trinidad and Tobago, since January 2015.

Her Excellency the Reverend Dr. Iva Camille Gloudon demitted office on 13th October 2015 as Trinidad and Tobago's High Commissioner to Jamaica. Ms. Theresa Noel-Belasco served as Chargé d'Affaires for the period October 2015 to June 2016.

Mr. Fitzgerald McArthur Jeffrey, the new High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to Jamaica, presented his credentials to the Governor General of Jamaica on 5th July 2016.

BILATERAL RELATIONS

Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago enjoy cordial relations in spite of the various challenges which have arisen in areas such as, trade and immigration.

Over the years, several bilateral cooperation programmes have been implemented with relative success in the areas of scholarships and short term training programmes, including in diplomacy, environmental sustainability, commodity identification, and trade policy. The acquisition of Air Jamaica by Caribbean Airlines was also a process that, although now successfully resolved, presented some initial difficulties for both parties.

Trinidad and Tobago had also provided assistance for the recovery efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Dean (August 2007) at the value of TT\$20 Million (US\$3,190,684.73M) and Hurricane Gustav (September 2008) to the value of TT\$10 Million. Both contributions were grants from the Petroleum Stabilisation Fund (PSF), which was established in September 2004 for quick disbursement of grant facilities, on a non-discriminatory basis among CARICOM Member States to provide relief for poverty alleviation and implementation of disaster prevention and mitigation and disaster recovery in emergency cases.

The Foreign Ministers of both countries met in Jamaica in December 2013 for bi-national consultations on, *inter alia*, free movement in the context of the CSME, the implications of the CCJ ruling in the Shanique Myrie case, the treatment of Jamaicans by immigration officers in Trinidad and Tobago, and the conditions under which Jamaicans are accommodated when denied entry into Trinidad and Tobago.

A second round of bi-national consultations on the issue of free movement within the context of the CSME, was held in Trinidad and Tobago in June 2014. Following these discussions, a decision was made to establish a Joint Commission under the umbrella of a Framework Agreement, which would facilitate bilateral discussions and cooperation in various areas of mutual interest. The draft agreement is currently under review.

RECENT BILATERAL EXCHANGES

Since the installation of the new Administration of Prime Minister Holness, the Government has actively engaged Trinidad and Tobago in efforts to resolve the issue of mistreatment of Jamaican nationals at the Piarco International Airport in Port of Spain.

The Government of Jamaica has used every opportunity to hold discussions with high officials of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to discuss this and other issues of interest to both countries, including through meetings and written exchanges between the Foreign Ministers of both countries, including:

COTED Meeting

On 21st April 2016, the Honourable Karl Samuda, Minister of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, met with Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry of Trinidad and Tobago, in the margins of the 42nd Meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) in Georgetown, Guyana.

High-level Signing Ceremony for the Paris Climate Change Agreement

On 22nd April 2016, a bilateral meeting took place between the Foreign Ministers of both countries, in the margins of the High-level Signing Ceremony for the Paris Climate Change Agreement, in New York.

COFCOR

Within the margins of the 19th Meeting of the Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR) held in May 2016, in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Senator the Honourable Kamina Johnson Smith used the opportunity to engage the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago.

7th ACS Summit

The Most Honourable Andrew Holness, Prime Minister of Jamaica, held bilateral talks with Dr. the Honourable Keith Rowley, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago in the margins of the 7th Summit of the Association of Caribbean States, which was held on 4th June 2016, in Havana, Cuba.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S INVOLVEMENT IN REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Trinidad and Tobago is an active Member of the CARICOM, the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and the Organization of American States (OAS).

CARICOM

Trinidad and Tobago served as Chair of CARICOM from July to December 2013, during which the country hosted the Thirty Fourth Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. It also hosted the Meeting of Heads of CARICOM and the Dominican Republic with H.E. Joe Biden, Vice President of the United States, on 28th May 2013, and a Meeting between specially invited CARICOM Heads and H.E. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, on 2nd June 2013.

Trinidad and Tobago holds the portfolios of Energy and Security (Drugs and Illicit Arms) in the CARICOM Quasi-Cabinet of Heads of Government. In keeping with its purview for regional security, Trinidad and Tobago has strongly promoted the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and submitted its candidature to host the ATT Secretariat, but was unsuccessful.

Trinidad and Tobago hosts the headquarters of the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ). The country has retained the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council as its final Court of Appeal.

Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago are regarded as leaders within CARICOM.

Association of Caribbean States (ACS)

Trinidad and Tobago is host of the ACS Secretariat which is located in Port-of-Spain. Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago have been among the more active CARICOM Member States of the ACS and have played an integral role in the Ad Hoc Working Group established in 2009 to explore measures for the strengthening of the ACS and to make recommendations for increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the ACS Secretariat.

Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC)

In keeping with the resolution adopted at the First CELAC Summit formalising CARICOM as an extended Member of the CELAC Quartet, Trinidad and Tobago represented the Community on the CELAC Quartet (alongside Cuba, Chile and Costa Rica) during its CARICOM Chairmanship in 2013.

While serving in this capacity, Trinidad and Tobago engaged in discussions at the ministerial level with Third countries such as Russia, China and India, among others. These meetings discussed the possibilities of creating mechanisms in which to conduct formal discussions on matters relating to climate change, energy security, trade and investment, the global economy, security and functional cooperation.

Organization of American States (OAS)

In 1967, Trinidad and Tobago became the first Commonwealth country to join the Organization of American States (OAS).

The Fifth Summit of the Americas (VSOA) was held in Port of Spain in Trinidad and Tobago, in April 2009, under the theme "*Securing Our Citizens' Future by Promoting Human Prosperity, Energy Security and Environmental Sustainability.*"

Trinidad and Tobago most recently assumed the Chair of the Permanent Council of the hemispheric institution in April 2015.

Law of the Sea

Trinidad and Tobago national Judge Lennox Ballah played an instrumental role in the development of the international regime of the Law of the sea, which led to the establishment of the International Seabed Authority (ISA) in Jamaica. During the visit, Prime Minister Rowley is expected to deliver an address to the 22nd Session of the ISA, which is currently underway.

POLITICAL OVERVIEW AND DEVELOPMENTS

General Elections

General elections were held on 7th September 2015 and Dr. Keith Rowley, President of the People's National Movement (PNM) was elected as Prime Minister. The PNM won 23 of the 41 seats contested, defeating the coalition People's Partnership Government, led by Kamla Persad-Bissessar.

The new administration's 2015 "Let's do this together," People's National Movement (PNM) Manifesto stated as one of its mandates under the heading International Relations and Foreign Policy initiatives: to "Repair relationships in CARICOM that have been damaged over the last 5 years, such as the relationship with Jamaica."

Dr. Rowley renamed Trinidad and Tobago's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs and appointed Senator the Honourable Dennis Moses as the Minister. In January 2016, Senator Moses, who remains the Minister of Foreign Affairs, was given added administrative responsibilities within the Ministry of National Security to include the processing of work permits, handling of immigration issues and treating with foreign contacts. The Ministry of National Security therefore has two Ministers - Major General (Ret'd) Edmund Dillon and Senator the Honourable Dennis Moses.

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

The country has one of the highest growth rates and per capita incomes in Latin America and the Caribbean and it is the leading Caribbean producer of crude oil and liquid natural gas. Its economy is heavily dependent on these natural resources. Trinidad and Tobago also supplies manufactured goods, notably food products and beverages, as well as cement to the Caribbean region. Tourism is a growing sector but is not as important domestically as it is to other Caribbean islands.