



Ministry of Labour

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Industrial Relations Advisory Committee (IRAC) Appointed by the Hon.
Stephen Mc Clashie, Minister of Labour**

The Honourable Stephen Mc Clashie M.P., Minister of Labour, presented Instruments of Appointment to eleven (11) Members of the newly installed Industrial Relations Advisory Committee (IRAC) at a Ceremony held at the Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies, on Monday 01 November, 2021.

This is the Committee's fifth (5th) term having been officially established in February 2012 with many of its members from the last term returning, including the Committee's Chairman Dr. Hyacinth Guy.

The Industrial Relations Advisory Committee will serve for a period of two years and is tasked with the following responsibility which is outlined in **Section 80** of the Industrial Relations Act, Chapter 88:01. The Industrial Relations Act states:

"It shall be the duty of the Advisory Committee to keep this Act under review with a view to ensuring its development and reform, including in particular the modification of any of the provisions thereof and the elimination of anomalies, and for that purpose to prepare and submit to the Minister, from time to time, specific proposals for changes therein."

At the ceremony, the Hon. Stephen Mc Clashie, congratulated the Committee for its sterling contributions thus far indicating that "The labour legislative framework of Trinidad and Tobago is the cornerstone of an effective industrial relations system and key to our sustainable economic development, keeping the balance that is desired in the various sectors. The IRAC therefore plays an extremely vital role in ensuring that the necessary advancements are made.

Over the period **July 25, 2019 to July 24, 2021** the Committee would have set a solid foundation which included:

- (i) **Employment Standards Policy Prescriptions** – In December 2019, three (3) months into its tenure, the IRAC produced a Paper on Employment Standards in Trinidad and Tobago. This Paper was submitted in January 2020 and it aimed at consolidating worker/

employee and employer rights and obligations in the employment relationship. This Paper also outlined a basic floor of rights for workers in accordance with international standards and employment relations best practices.

- (ii) **Guidelines on Remote Working in Trinidad and Tobago** - The IRAC responded to concerns raised and requests made by stakeholders on the intricacies of remote working which was at our doorsteps amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee embarked on research and developed guidelines in 2020 based on the findings of the said research.

The guidelines explored current labour legislation such as the Occupational Safety and Health Act, Workmen's Compensation Act, Maternity Protection Act and any gaps in these pieces of legislation which did not deal with the issue of remote working. The Committee also commented on the ongoing role of trade unions, the responsibilities of employees and employers as well as the benefits to be obtained for both parties and proffered other technical information on remote work in Trinidad and Tobago.

- (i) **Industrial Relations Toolkit for Managing in a Crisis in Trinidad and Tobago** - These guidelines were submitted in December 2020 and were issued as a result of the paucity of literature relating to crisis management from an industrial relations perspective in Trinidad and Tobago, which was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Paper aimed at assisting stakeholders by providing practical guidance for implementing different Industrial Relations strategies/options during crisis situations. It explored a wide array of industrial relations options in the context of existing labour statutes and industrial relations jurisprudence, industry practice and the Committee's recommendations. Most importantly, the toolkit emphasized the need for consultations and/or negotiations, cooperation, flexibility and reasonableness of parties during times of crisis.

- (ii) **Paper on COVID-19 Vaccination in Workplaces of Trinidad and Tobago** - This much anticipated Paper was submitted on July 19, 2021. Following the submission of this Paper, the recommendations of the Committee contained in said Paper were collated into the *Industrial Relations Guidelines for COVID-19 Vaccination in Workplaces in Trinidad and Tobago*. Both documents were subsequently forwarded to the Cabinet for its consideration.

In closing, the Minister thanked the new and returning members of the IRAC and articulated that he is looking forward to fresh perspectives as the Ministry of Labour and the committee work together in promoting decent work for all.

The Industrial Relations Advisory Committee comprises thirteen (13) members as follows:

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Dr. Hyacinth Guy <i>Chairman</i>	Principal Director Hyacinth Guy Human Resource Company
Mr. Mario Als	Acting President Banking, Insurance and General Workers Union (BIGWU) (Representative of the Joint Trade Union Movement (JTUM))
Mr. Clyde Elder	Secretary General Communications Workers' Union (CWU) (Representative of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions and NGOs (FITUN))
Mr. Keston Nancoo	Chairman, Board of Directors Employer Consultative Association of Trinidad and Tobago (ECA) Consultant – Senior Advisor Office of Group CEO Guardian Holding Limited (Representative of (ECA))
Mr. Behzad Hassanali	Sector Human Resource Manager (Beverage Sector) Carib Brewery Limited (Representative of the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce)

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Ms. Sabina Gomez	Chief Labour Relations Officer Ministry of Labour (Representative of the Ministry of Labour)
Ms. Sangeeta Boondoo	Senior Legal Officer Ministry of Labour (Representative of the Ministry of Labour)
Mr. Elon Mayo	Manpower and Labour Relations Director Division of Community Development, Enterprise Development and Labour (Representative of the Tobago House of Assembly)
Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine	Dean, Faculty of Law University of the West Indies (UWI) (Representative of Academia)
Mr. Dave Sahadeo	Assistant Registrar-Industrial Relations The University of the West Indies (Representative of Academia)
Mr. Emerson Martin	Examiner II Registration Recognition and Certification Board (Representative of the Industrial Relations/ Human Resources Professionals)
Ms. Carol David Kendell	Lead Consultant, Consultancy Business (Representative of the Industrial Relations/ Human Resources Professionals)

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Dr. Paul Balwant	Lecturer Organizational Behaviour and Human Resource Management UWI. (Representative of the Industrial Relations/ Human Resources Professionals)

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