



REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

PRESENTATION BY

THE HONOURABLE ERROL MC LEOD

MINISTER OF LABOUR AND SMALL AND MICRO ENTERPRISE

DEVELOPMENT

ON

**STRENGTHENING OF THE LABOUR ADMINISTRATION: MANAGEMENT AND
PLANNING MODELS**

AT

**THE FIRST MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUPS OF THE SIXTEENTH INTER-
AMERICAN CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF LABOUR**

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

Thursday July 29, 2010

3:30 p.m.

Members of the Panel,

Distinguished delegates.

It is with solidarity that I embrace this opportunity to participate in this Panel and in the First Meeting of Working Group 2 of the Sixteenth Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour. The Working Group Meetings have afforded my initiation into the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour process for which I am pleased to be a part in the capacity of First Vice-Chair.

Since assuming office as Minister of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development in Trinidad and Tobago less than two months ago, one of my priority issues has been that of strengthening the labour administration capacity of the Government. As a former President, for many years, of one of the largest and most influential trade unions in Trinidad and Tobago operating in the Energy and Petrochemical sector, I have been intimately associated with the Ministry of Labour and have always considered it to be central to good governance and economic and social development. I am even more convinced of this now.

Framework for Development

The Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development plays a critical role in the Framework for Sustainable Development as articulated by the newly elected People's Partnership Government of Trinidad and Tobago. This Framework, which seeks to place people at the centre of development and emphasizes the protection of workers, is built on seven inter-connected pillars as follows:

- Pillar 1: People-Centred Development – We need everyone and all can contribute;
- Pillar 2: Poverty Eradication and Social Justice – Preference for the poor and disadvantaged;
- Pillar 3: National and Personal Security – Human Security for Peace and Prosperity;
- Pillar 4: Information and Communication Technologies – Connecting Trinidad and Tobago and building the new economy;
- Pillar 5: A more Diversified, Knowledge-Intensive Economy – Building on the native genius of our people;
- Pillar 6: Good Governance – People participation; and
- Pillar 7: Foreign Policy – Securing our place in the world.

Labour Administration

In Trinidad and Tobago, labour is central to development, and in this regard, labour administration is effected by several agencies for instance the Industrial Court, which is a Statutory Body and Superior Court of Record has responsibility for, among other things, labour dispute resolution. Overall responsibility for labour administration however, lies with the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development. These functions can be broadly categorized into eight areas namely:

- i. **Employment relations** - managed by our Conciliation Unit and Trade Union Registrar;

- ii. **Labour Inspection** - managed by the Occupational Safety and Health Authority and Agency and the Labour Inspectorate Department;
- iii. **Employment Bureau** - managed by the National Employment Service and the Unemployment Relief Programme;
- iv. **Business Development** - Co-operatives Division and under the realm of the Enterprise Development, the National Entrepreneurship Development Company which provides training and a financial window for new and small and micro enterprises;
- v. **Labour legislation** – development of Labour Policy to enable drafting of new legislation or amendment of existing legislation;
- vi. **Research and Planning** – with responsibility for labour research and labour market information;
- vii. **Labour Education** – Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies; and
- viii. **Support functions** – such as Information Technology, Administration, Communication.

Strategic Planning Model

The above functions are guided by the Ministry's Strategic Plan 2009 to 2012 which was developed to reflect the emerging demands being placed on it arising from global, regional and national changes. The Ministry is taking a close look at its mandate and its operations in order to adapt to the rapid changes and transition taking place in both its internal and external environment.

The Strategic Planning and Management model which has been adopted by the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development is that of the Balanced Scorecard. The balanced scorecard seeks to align business activities to

the vision and strategy of the organization, improve internal and external communications and monitor organization performance against strategic goals. It also provides an effective performance measurement framework. This model is organized into the following four (4) basic perspectives which permit a balance between short and long-term objectives, between desired outcomes and the performance drivers of those outcomes:

- Financial or Resource Mobilization Perspective;
- Customer Perspective;
- Internal Business Perspective; and
- Learning and Growth Perspective.

Using this model, the Strategic Plan for the Ministry was developed through a highly participatory process which involved all the internal stakeholders, from top management to staff of the various Units and Divisions. It identifies, among other things, the Ministry's Vision, Mission, guiding values and norms, strategic goals and strategic objectives. The Vision of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development is to be "*the premier organization delivering quality service, ensuring equitable access to decent work and facilitating entrepreneurial opportunities.*" Its Mission is "*to enhance employment and entrepreneurial opportunities, income and wealth creation, in a safe, healthy and peaceful industrial environment in collaboration with our social partners and through a customer-focused, empowered and motivated staff.*"

In order to fulfill the Vision and Mission, the following five (5) strategic goals have been identified to be pursued over the period 2009-2012:

- To achieve stable full employment within the framework of decent and safe work in a non-discriminating and equitable environment;
- To create a favourable industrial relations environment, based on free collective bargaining, tripartism, appropriate legal protection, timely dispute resolution and mutual respect;
- To encourage and develop a vibrant Micro and Small Enterprise (MSE) and Co-operative Sector;
- To strengthen and restructure the processes and operations of the Ministry to provide “Superior Customer Service”; and
- To review and strengthen labour legislation.

For each of the above-mentioned goals, there are clearly identified strategic objectives, initiatives, timelines, accountable Units/Divisions and outcomes. In order to further elaborate the Strategic Plan, an Action Plan was developed for the period 2010-2011 and approved by the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago. This Action Plan feeds into the National Action Plan which will be directly linked to Budgetary Allocations for fiscal year 2010/11.

Action Plan 2010/11

The Action Plan for 2010/11 will serve as an implementation and productivity tool to the Ministry, facilitating budgeting and other resource utilization, information sharing among Units/Divisions and providing the bases for economies of scale and

enhanced productivity within the Ministry. The process for development of this Plan involves the preparation of sub-plans by each Unit/Division of the Ministry which are reviewed for consistency and congruity with the Ministry's approved Strategic Plan 2009-2012, the Ministerial Performance Management Framework and the decisions of Cabinet. For each Unit/Division, the Action Plan details the initiatives to be undertaken in the given financial year, the timeframe, outputs and key performance measurements, resource requirements including financial and human resources and responsible Officers.

Performance Management System

In order to strengthen the Ministry's management team to deliver the expected output based on the Action Plan, a performance management system developed for the wider Public Service is being used. The Ministerial Performance Management Framework (MPMF) is aimed at improving the performance and effectiveness of Ministries and Departments in the pursuit of the enhancement and delivery of quality public services as laid out in national and organisational strategic plans.

The MPMF assesses Ministerial Performance, Management Team Performance, Service to Citizens and Employee Engagement. Ministerial performance is assessed in accordance with the following criteria:

- Effectiveness;
- Efficiency;
- Relevance; and
- Financial viability

The performance of managers is assessed using a multi-rater (360 degree) assessment process and against fourteen (14) core competencies required by senior managers.

Planning Framework and Decent Work

The adoption of a comprehensive strategic planning, business planning and performance measurement system by the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development has provided a framework for the Ministry to monitor progress in achieving the overall goal of decent work for all. It is anticipated that the development of a Decent Work Policy and Programme of Action for Trinidad and Tobago, for which preparatory work has commenced by my Ministry, will consolidate the framework within which actions to address decent work deficits will be pursued.

Without pre-empting the contents of the Decent Work Policy and Programme of Action which is being developed with the involvement of the social partners, I am confident that attention will be given to the further strengthening of key arms of the labour administration system such as the labour inspection, the employment services, employment relations and legislation. It should be noted that in recent times significant attention has been placed on enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the labour administration services provided by the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development. Some of the main initiatives which have been undertaken to date in this regard include:

- Establishment of the Occupational Safety and Health Agency and Authority as part of the process of modernizing the occupational safety and health framework in Trinidad and Tobago;
- Transformation of the network of public employment services into One Stop Career Resource Centres (OSCRs) which provide a one-stop facility for the registration of job-seekers and employers, and job counseling and advisory services;
- Expansion of the Conciliation Unit through the recruitment of fourteen (14) technical officers and administrative support staff to provide better and more timely conciliatory services to employers and employees;
- Enhancement of the Labour Inspectorate through an OAS-funded project which involved an assessment of this function in Trinidad and Tobago, training of Inspectors and purchase of equipment. The Unit was also restructured and expanded.
- Establishment of an International Affairs Unit in the Ministry to manage and oversee the fulfillment of Government's regional, hemispheric and international labour commitments and obligations.

Social Dialogue

Within the previously described framework, tripartite cooperation in the work of the Ministry has a long history. The main tools for organizing tripartite cooperation are the numerous committee-type advisory boards assisting the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development. Among other things, one of the central functions of these Committees is that of advising the Minister of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development on labour matters. In some instances

these bodies are multi-partite and provide a forum for dialogue and consensus on key labour matters. Some of the Committees/Boards under the Ministry are as follows:

- ILO 144 Tripartite Committee
- Registration, Recognition and Certification Board which regulates the registration, recognition and certification of Trade Unions
- Occupational Health and Safety Authority
- Minimum Wages Board
- HIV/AIDS Advocacy and Sustainability Centre Advisory Board
- Industrial Relations Advisory Committee
- National Steering Committee Re: Conduct of a Baseline Survey of the Supply and Demand for Labour in Trinidad and Tobago
- Board of Governors of Cipriani College of Labour and Cooperative Studies
- National Productivity Council

The Ministry complements the above consultative process through inter departmental collaboration, inter agency collaboration and stake holder consultations.

Conclusion

I wish to commend the Organization of American States and in particular the Department of Social Development and Employment for promoting the Inter-American Network for Labour Administration (RIAL) as a mechanism for horizontal co-operation among Ministries of Labour of the region. Through the RIAL, my Ministry has been able to benefit from a rich exchange with other

countries in strengthening our labour administration function as well as provide assistance to other Ministries of Labour. The sharing of experiences in this way has no doubt yielded great collective benefits to our region.

There is no doubt that more work is required to ensure that our labour administration services meet the needs of our stakeholders. This is especially so in light of the critical role which Ministries of Labour are being called upon to play in the context of recovery from the global economic and financial crisis. I am very supportive of this role as there is no other Ministry which is better poised to promote the interests of the main players in our economies – workers and business.

In closing, I am pleased to state that the Ministry of Labour and Small of Micro Enterprise Development is committed to the adoption and implementation of a Planning and Management model that is flexible, results-oriented and based on social dialogue will enable us to achieve decent work for all.

I thank you.