



## **Opening Remarks**

**The Honourable Randall Mitchell, M.P.  
Minister of Housing and Urban Development**

### **Formal Opening**

**Maracas, St Joseph Police Station**

**FRIDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2017**

**10.00 A.M.**

## **Salutations**

- Dr. the Honourable Keith Rowley, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
- My Cabinet Colleagues: -
  - Major General (Ret'd) the Honourable Edmund Dillon, Minister of National Security
  - Dr. the Honourable Nyan Gadsby-Dolly, Minister of Community Development, Culture and the Arts and MP for St. Ann's East
  - The Honourable Terrence Deyalsingh, Minister of Health and MP for St. Joseph
  - The Honourable Esmond Forde, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives and MP for Tunapuna
- Permanent Secretaries and Deputy Permanent Secretaries
- Mr. Stephen Williams, Ag Commissioner of Police
- Other Heads of Division of the Ministry of National Security
- Mr. Noel Garcia, Chairman, UDeCOTT and other members of the Board
- Stakeholders

- Representatives of this community
- Members of the Media
- All other Specially Invited Guests

Good morning and welcome to this morning's official opening and handover of the Maracas/St. Joseph Police Station.

As Minister of Housing and Urban Development, I am always filled with pride when we formally open a station such as this. Ladies and gentlemen, the provision of modern infrastructure, underscores this Government's commitment to offer the best that we can to our citizens, even as we are experiencing economic challenges.

This is also evidence of the fact that we place the safety and security of our citizens and our communities, at a high level of priority.

In the past year, this Government, through UDeCOTT has completed and handed over the Government Plaza, Ministry of Education tower and the Brian Lara Cricket Academy. These complexes were built to provide modern, comfortable, safe accommodation for our public officers and the public so that they can serve the needs of citizens more effectively.

The same can be said for the seventeen (17) police stations that UDeCOTT was tasked to construct in various locations throughout Trinidad and Tobago. UDeCOTT, not only had to ensure that these stations were modern with key amenities, but that these stations were functional so that they met the fundamental operational needs of a police service which serves dynamic and multifaceted communities.

We are of the opinion that these modern, state of the art facilities will certainly boost staff morale and improve effectiveness; benefitting not only the officers but those who enter these doors seeking to be protected and served. While there have been some minor variations based on the requirements of the particular area, we have tried to incorporate global best practices in the development of each police station.

This station includes a public reception space, private statement room, a fingerprinting room and feature elements that reflect an improved approach to offender management. Some of the new additions include multiple juvenile holding rooms, to ensure that young offenders are kept separate from adult offenders/suspects and cells and processing areas for offenders can be accessed via separate, secured vehicle access areas.

In-house lecture rooms, a library and gymnasium, sufficient dormitories for male and female officers, a kitchen, laundry room, prayer room and a private office for counselling, are key features of this station. These facilities will support the Police Service's efforts to ensure that its police officers are not only well trained but also physically, emotionally and mentally prepared to treat with members of the public.

It is expected that spaces such as community meeting rooms where residents can meet to voice their opinions and collectively seek service

accountability, will be well received by communities such as Maracas, St. Joseph. This station is also outfitted to adequately cater to the needs of persons with disabilities; a very important segment of our population. The needs of victims are also taken into account through the addition of secure Victim Recovery Rooms.

Since coming into office, I have had the pleasure of presiding over a number of handover ceremonies spearheaded by UDeCOTT and I continue to be amazed at the progress that we have made in just under 21 months, despite the economic challenges we face, in taking this country forward.

As I close, I wish to congratulate the Chairman of UDeCOTT; Mr. Noel Garcia, the Board and the Management team, for completing yet another major project. My commendation must also extend to the technocrats, project managers and the contractors who have all played their role in bringing this project to completion.

UDeCOTT , has once again been able to **Sign, Seal and Deliver**.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for the opportunity to welcome you this morning.