

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES FOR PERIOD AUGUST 2015 – AUGUST 2016

(Prepared for the 17th AGM to be held on the 15th September, 2016)

1. Introduction

This report outlines the activities of Trinidad and Tobago Transparency Institute (Transparency), the national chapter of Transparency International (TI), between its Sixteenth and Seventeenth Annual General Meetings, carried out for the most part following strategic decisions set in the Strategic Framework 2012-2015 and TI's Strategy 2020 - Together Against Corruption in fulfillment of Transparency's Vision of *A world in which government, politics, business, civil society and the daily lives of people are free of corruption* and revised Mission *To stop corruption and promote transparency, accountability and integrity at all levels and across all sectors of our society.*

During the period under review, the Board of Directors held two Strategic Planning sessions:

at the first on 8 August, 2015, facilitated by Vice Chair Dion Abdool, TI's draft Strategy to 2020 was considered and it was agreed to align our strategic activities with the three pillars of TI's strategic plan: People and Partners, Enforcement and Justice, Strong Movement;

at the second on 16 April, 2016, facilitated by Douglas Camacho, our Mission and Vision were reviewed. It was decided that our Mission should be aligned with the new TI Mission to be *To stop corruption and promote transparency, accountability and integrity at all levels and across all sectors of our society.*

Our 2016 to 2020 Strategic Plan is to be finalized by the end of this year.

2. Promoting Public Sector Integrity

Transparency continues to partner with government, business and civil society in promoting public sector integrity. We remain committed to strengthening the operations of the Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC), launched three years ago.

Through the medium of the Public Sector and Civil Society Group (PSCSG), of which Transparency is a founding and active member, we continue to strive to ensure integrity in the process of public procurement by working to advance progress in completing the modalities for implementation of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act.

We have advocated for legislative reform in the area of political party and campaign funding and submitted comments on the Whistleblower Protection Bill. The Bill was laid in the House of Representatives on 13 November 2015 and referred to a Joint Select Committee of Parliament whose final report is to be submitted by 9 September 2016.

As a member of the TTEITI Steering Committee, TTTI continues to lobby for transparency and accountability in the collection of revenues derived from the energy sector.

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2.1 Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC)

The Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC) provides an avenue for victims and witnesses of corruption (“clients”) to obtain redress by providing free legal advice and assistance. This is accomplished through partnerships with the Hugh Wooding Law School (HWLS) and various anti-corruption agencies and institutions. Through its partnership with HWLS, Transparency has established a specialist legal aid clinic whereby legal interns can gain experience in identifying issues, solutions and legal weaknesses related to corruption. ALAC gathers analytical data on corruption which will assist in future legal reform.

Since the milestone achievement of launching the ALAC in December 2013, Transparency has continued to fortify the operations of this institution. For example, through the British High Commission grant which ended in March 2016, Transparency was able to scale up the activities of ALAC. Thus, Transparency increased support to victims and witnesses of corruption by providing free legal advice and assistance. Awareness of corruption issues was promoted by development of an ALAC website and creation of an online data base which allows for citizen complaints to be easily categorised and managed and for statistical analysis of corruption trends and case management. Also under this grant, six legal interns were trained in identifying legal issues and solutions relating to corruption. Fifty seven client files were reviewed and updated, while five new matters were initiated. To date we have had a total of 70 cases.

Every semester Transparency continues to welcome new ALAC Interns from the Hugh Wooding Law School. The interns for the period under review - Amrita Sankar, Taryn Ragoonanan, and Amanda Wall, Stefano Bostic, Chenelle Moe, Janine Samlal were all diligent and worked assiduously on several files. Transparency is committed to improving the ALAC. It is an excellent tool for victims of corruption and serves to provide data for future legal reform.

2.2 Reform of Public Procurement Legislation

The Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Bill received Presidential assent on 14 January 2015 and from that time the Public Sector/Civil Society Group (PSCSG), of which Transparency is a founding and active member, worked closely with the Ministry of Finance and the UNDP (which had provided a consultant to develop framework documents for a Procurement Handbook and Regulations) to advance progress in completing the modalities for implementation of the Act before the General Elections. This was not achieved.

Following the September 2015 General Elections the new government introduced a Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property (Amendment) Bill, 2015 to address a few areas which it had raised in Parliament while in Opposition and considered had not been adequately addressed. The Bill provided for:

- the disposal of State land and real property to be subject to regulations made by the Minister of Finance under section 63 of the Act;
- it to be an offence for the Regulator to trade with the Government without the prior approval, by resolution, of each House of Parliament;

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- modalities for investigating the removal of the Regulator, via resolution of both Houses and appointment by the President of a Tribunal consisting of a chairman and at least two current or former Judges of the Supreme Court or the Court of Appeal. The Tribunal would have the power of a Commission of Enquiry under the COE Act;
- the establishment of a Review Board appointed by the President and comprising a Chairman (a retired Judge) and two members (a registered engineer and a chartered accountant or quantity surveyor) to deal with challenge proceedings i.e. to review decisions made by the Office of the Regulator at the request of an eligible procuring entity or individual.

The PSCSG made a submission on certain provisions of the Bill and a 12 February 2016 meeting with the Joint Select Committee to which the Bill had been referred resulted in agreement as follows:

- the provisions of the 2015 Act were sufficient to address the process for the removal of the Procurement Regulator, thus there was no need for a Tribunal.
- the legislation would be amended to restrict Members of the Board from trading with the Government (including becoming party to any contract with the Government) without prior approval of the Minister.
- the Bill would be amended to subject Regulations made by the Minister with respect to the staffing, remuneration, funding and other operational matters of the Review Board to the negative resolution of Parliament.
- it was noted that the 2015 Act did not address the disposal of State Lands and real property owned by the Government and that provisions of the amending Bill might affect the disposal of State Lands under the Minerals Act and Petroleum Act, therefore the new Procurement Regulations should be made subject to these Acts. It was also agreed that Regulations in respect of the disposal of State Lands should be subject to the negative resolution of Parliament.

Act No.5 of 2016 an act to amend the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act, 2015 was assented to on 17 June 2016.

By letter dated 3 August 2016 the PSCSG submitted concrete recommendations to the Minister of Finance on modalities for moving the process forward in a transparent manner, particularly in respect of the preparation of the necessary Regulations and establishment of new procurement responsibilities, Civil Society involvement and appointment of the Regulator and Deputy Regulator.

A budget for the Office of the Procurement Regulator (OPR) is required and the PSCSG is developing a six month action timetable.

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In his Address to the Nation on 11 September 2016 the Honourable Prime Minister indicated that he had given instructions for the immediate operationalisation of procurement legislation.

The PSCSG is giving consideration to issuing a Press Release on the way forward.

Transparency will continue to work within the PSCSG to ensure effective implementation of the Act.

2.3 Trinidad and Tobago Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (TTEITI)

Trinidad and Tobago joined the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) in March 2011 and gained Compliant Country status, the highest level of membership, on 23 January 2015. Our country thus became one of 31 of the 51 natural resource rich EITI member-countries to have achieved Compliant Country status.

Over the past year in review Transparency continued its effective support of the Trinidad and Tobago Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (TTEITI) and its membership of its Steering Committee, which oversees EITI national implementation. We are one of six civil society organisations on the Steering Committee and are represented by our Chair Deryck Murray with Dr. Debbie Mohammed, as alternate.

TTEITI has made some significant achievements since our Sixteenth AGM:

- in February 2016 a TTEITI delegation participated in the Seventh EITI Global Conference in Lima, Peru
- on 23 February 2016, Victor Hart, Chair of the Steering Committee and former Transparency Chair, was elected to the EITI International Board based in Oslo, Norway. He will represent the eleven EITI implementing countries of Europe and the Americas (Norway, Albania, UK and Germany; USA, Peru, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, the Dominican Republic and Trinidad and Tobago).
- on 30 September 2016 Trinidad and Tobago's fourth EITI Report covering the fiscal years 2014 and 2015 will be published
- Trinidad and Tobago has continued to be the Caribbean's EITI Champion. It has consistently encouraged the resource-rich CARICOM member states of Guyana, Jamaica and Suriname to join EITI. Suriname will present its application for EITI membership to the 25 October 2016 meeting of the EITI Board and Guyana is expected to follow suit in the near future.

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2.4 Code of Ethical Political Conduct and Council for Responsible Political Behaviour

On the initiative of Archbishop Joseph Harris representative religious, civil society, private sector organisations and a trade union representative came together and agreed on the establishment and provisions of the Code of Ethical Political Conduct, which came into being in July 2014. The Council for Responsible Political Behaviour was officially launched on 25 March 2015 and comprised eleven members, including one representative of each of the five signing political parties, and six representatives of the other founding signatories of the Code.

The Council monitored the 7 September 2015 General Elections and reported regularly to the founding members of the Code. It is generally agreed that the Code and Council had a positive effect on the election campaign and will be similarly beneficial for the Local Government Elections expected later this year and for the Tobago House of Assembly (THA) elections scheduled for 2017. There is still a need to determine whether the Council has continuing functions and how the Code and the Council can influence reforms in political party and election campaign financing in the near future.

Transparency was a significant contributor to the Code and continues to participate in the work of the Council.

2.6 Transparency Youth

Transparency Youth was established to facilitate the development of an ethical society in Trinidad and Tobago where youths (15-35) become the catalyst for change. The group has continued to host monthly meetings focused on developing project proposals as well as general Transparency youth business. Recognising outreach as an important element in developing a corruption free society for the nation's youth, the group focused on the following:

Youth Integrity Workshops

Transparency Youth partnered with the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development in September 2015 to host a series of Youth Integrity Workshops in southern Trinidad. These workshops were held in San Fernando, Princes Town, Los Bajos, Fyzabad, Rio Claro and Point Fortin. At these fora, the importance of integrity, morals, ethics and transparency were addressed in an interactive manner.

A total of some two hundred (200) participants between the ages of nine to twenty-five years benefitted from the sessions. Transparency Youth continues to be in contact with the participants to encourage them to uphold and spread the significance of integrity and transparency.

UWI Students Visit

On Monday 26 October, fifty (50) students from the UWI St. Augustine campus, Social Policy Development class, together with their lecturer Dr Innette Cambridge, visited Transparency. Chair Deryck Murray presented on Transparency's mandate and projects, while Transparency Youth Chair Kernika Charles presented on the work of the group. At the session several students spoke out on corruption related issues and signed up to become volunteers of Transparency Youth.

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3. Civil Society Strengthening

Transparency continued to utilise the CSO Accountability Toolkit to train CSOs in best practices re internal accountability, systems processes and procedures. A follow up workshop was held on 10 December, 2015 for CSOs who needed assistance in financial management, human resource management and board governance based on the CSO Toolkit. Sixty participants from 45 organisations attended this workshop entitled *Building Capacity among Civil Society Organisations*. The sessions were facilitated by CSO Veni Apwann.

Since its launch four years ago, over 100 civil society organisations have benefitted from the CSO Toolkit, which was developed in collaboration with the Commonwealth Foundation. The CSO Accountability Toolkit consists of 17 tools geared towards assisting organisations in conducting their operations with transparency, thereby improving accountability standards.

4. Anti-Corruption Outreach

4.1 Anti-Corruption Conference 2016

Participants at our annual ACC held on 8 March 2016 were privileged to enjoy a rich and varied programme highlighted by addresses from both PM Dr Keith Rowley and TI Chair Jose Carlos Ugaz. The theme of this year's conference was **Unmask the Corrupt: Governance, Integrity, People**. Other distinguished local, regional and international presenters included: Anthony Harbinson, immediate Past President of ACCA; Dr Darren Hayes, Assistant Professor, Pace University and Roderick Maccauley, UK Ministry of Justice. They were thoughtful, pointed and candid in their presentations and provided clear recommendations on dealing with various corruption issues, such as money laundering, cybercrime and bribery.

The Conference began with a powerful spoken word rendition by Transparency Youth Derron Sandy. The couch discussion was moderated by Reginald Armour SC and diverse perspectives on corruption were provided by panelists Michael Harris, Afra Raymond and Mark Regis. The youth debate saw an exciting exchange between Transparency Youth members Shyanne Telfer and Rondelle Keller and COSTATT's Shiv Sawh and Megan Gomez.

This year's conference was possible through the kind donations of the following sponsors: ACCA, Canadian High Commission, British Council, Raymond & Pierre Ltd, NH International (Caribbean) Ltd, Rostant DDB, Visual Art and First Citizens.

4.2 UN Anti-Corruption Day, 9 December, 2015

Transparency commemorated Anti-Corruption Day 2015 with *An Evening of Performances*. The production was organised by Transparency Youth - a very special thank you is due to our Ms Kernika Charles - and held at the Learning Resource Centre (LRC), UWI.

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Mr. Afra Raymond delivered the keynote address entitled: *The Importance of Youth Integrity and Whistle-blower Legislation*. There were performances by Cecilia Salazar in the role of Gene Miles, the whistle-blower who denounced the gas station racket in the 1960s, the Freetown Collective, Drama Making A Difference Company (DMAD Company), the Two Cents Movement and the highpoint of the evening was a performance of *Let There Be Transparency*, composed by Transparency's former Chair Frank Clarke and sung by Lord Relator. The performances spoke to issues of corruption and the importance of integrity.

It was an enlightening and enjoyable evening! Over two hundred and fifty (250) persons attended, including corporate representatives, diplomats, academia, media personalities and students. Attendees all pledged to promote transparency and anti-corruption in their daily activities following what they deemed to be an inspiring event.

4.3 Release of 2015 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)

The 2015 CPI was different for two reasons. Firstly, it was launched on 27 January 2016 rather than in December as in previous years. Secondly, for the first time, TTTI launched the CPI at a breakfast meeting in collaboration with the Chamber of Industry and Commerce.

One hundred and sixty eight countries/territories were ranked in the 2015 Index. Trinidad and Tobago's score improved by one point, to 39. Jamaica, which had moved from below Trinidad and Tobago to the same score for the past two years, improved to a score of 41- two points ahead of us. There were no available scores for several Caribbean countries this year, an indication that the required minimum of three research sources was not available.

	2015	2014
Barbados	N/A	74
Bahamas	N/A	71
St. Lucia	N/A	71
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	N/A	67
Dominica	N/A	58
Jamaica	41	38
Trinidad and Tobago	39	38
Guyana	29	30

The Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) was first released by Transparency International (TI) in 1995. It is a composite index - a survey compiled out of a number of reputable surveys undertaken by international institutions in which countries are numerically ranked based on perceptions of public sector corruption. Each country/territory has an assigned score indicating the perceived level of public sector corruption on a scale of 0 to 100, with 0 being the most corrupt and 100 the cleanest.

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5. International and Regional Meetings

5.1 Annual Membership Meeting

TI's Annual Meeting of Members (AMM) was held in Malaysia from August 31 to September 04 2015. However, Transparency was unable to participate and Trevor Munroe (Head of the Jamaica Chapter) was our proxy. We shall, however, be represented at this year's meeting which is to be held from 28 November to 1 December in Panama.

5.2 Caribbean Outreach

Transparency continues to support TI's thrust to encourage other groups in the Caribbean to take up the anti-corruption mantle. We continued to liaise with Jamaica, Guyana and others. Jamaica now has full chapter status, while Guyana has continued its activities and hopes to make significant progress under the new government. We also continue to build contacts in Barbados, St. Kitts, Grenada and other Eastern Caribbean States.

5.3 Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting

Transparency Chair Deryck Murray represented TI at a Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting in Rio de Janeiro on 4 September, 2016 and delivered a presentation entitled *It's Time to Act*. The meeting was aimed at advancing consensus and cooperation on key integrity issues in the area of sport. His presentation emphasized that all stakeholders should demand that sports organisations establish a culture of transparency by providing information on finances, pay scales and expenditure.

5.4 ICA of the Eastern Caribbean

The Institute of Chartered Accountants (ICA) of the Eastern Caribbean held a Conference in Grenada from 1 to 4 June, 2016. Vice Chair Dion Abdool facilitated a corporate governance and transparency workshop, while Chair Deryck Murray delivered the feature address on governance and integrity.

5.5 TI Regional Meeting

Dion Abdool represented Transparency at a TI Regional meeting on 27 and 28 May 2016 in Miami. Jamaica, Cayman Islands, Bahamas, Guyana, St Kitts, Canada and USA were also represented. Intense and informative sessions were facilitated by TI Directors Alejandro Salas and Luciana Torchiario.

Discussions centred around the following areas:

Corruption issues and anti-corruption trends

Legal framework for integrity (campaign financing, Freedom of Information Act, procurement)

Global corruption barometer (a survey expected to give more reliable information on corruption levels which should commence in Trinidad and Jamaica soon).

Restructuring of TI and impact on the Caribbean region

TI's acceptance of the Bahamas for commencement of the chapter process

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5.5 Project Management Institute International Conference

The Project Management Institute held its eighth bi-annual international conference on 23 September at the Centre of Excellence. Vice Chair Dion Abdool delivered a presentation entitled: *Project Management Success and Sustainability – The Integrity Factor*. He also participated in an executive panel discussion.

6. Collaboration with Government Agencies and CSOs

6.1 National Open Government

Mr John Gillette of the Ministry of Public Administration, made a presentation to Transparency Board on the Open Government National Action Plan which runs from September 2014 to June 2016 and must be signed off by civil society. He noted the significant potential role for Transparency: (i) ensuring that information is available to civil society, (ii) supporting and facilitating a process to ensure dialogue.

6.2 Meeting with PM Rowley

In February 2016 the executive directors of Transparency met with Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley to discuss the status of procurement legislation, whistle blower legislation and political campaign financing. PM Rowley indicated that continuing dialogue with Transparency will be beneficial to improving accountability and transparency in the country.

6.3 Courtesy Calls

During the visit of TI's Chairman, Jose Carlos Ugaz in March, Transparency paid several courtesy calls on various public officials, including the Attorney-General and Minister of Legal Affairs and the Chief Justice. Discussions centred around lack of resources for the judiciary and DPP's Office, backlog of pending prosecutions, strengthening legislation for the administration of justice and improving the prison system.. Courtesy calls were also paid on the Director of the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) and the Director of the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU).

6.4 CSO Meetings

Transparency participated in the European Union's (EU) Grant Funding Workshop last December together with several other CSOs. Transparency also facilitated a brainstorming session at its offices where CSOs explored various project proposals.

7. Outreach Activities

7.1 Town Hall Meetings -- Plenty Pepper

Transparency continued with its popular series of Town Hall Meetings: *Plenty Pepper* in an effort to engage the residents of selected communities in discussion on various current corruption-related issues. Despite funding issues, one Town Hall Meeting was held – in Sangre Grande on September 29.

Mr Afra Raymond, past president of the Joint Consultative Council and noted anti-corruption advocate, delivered the feature address entitled: *Facing the Facts*. He

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called for the government to publicise all financial records relating to the CL Financial bailout. The Transparency Youth speaker Derron Sandy presented a spoken word piece: *You see Right through Me*, where he explained that corruption occurs not only in business or government, but starts in the home.

7.2 Media Releases/Publicity

During the period under review, Transparency continued to engage the public by treating with issues relating to corruption, transparency, ethics and integrity in the local media.

The following are some of the press releases circulated:

2 September 2015 - **TRANSPARENCY ADVOCATE VICTOR HART AWARDED HUMMINGBIRD MEDAL**

23 October 2015 - **Award of Contracts to be Free of Corruption**

22 January 2016 - **TRANSPARENCY REITERATES CALL FOR RELEASE OF CL FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

16 February 2016 - **PM Rowley to Address Anti-Corruption Conference**

5 April 2016 · **Transparency International calls for immediate action by world leaders to stop secret companies.**

*29 January 2016 - **Transparency International calls on people everywhere to speak out against Corruption**

Various Transparency events/activities generated the following publicity:

Trinidad and Tobago Express

“Browne: Heritage and Stabilisation Fund and following best practices” August 3 2016

Joel Jullien *“Citizens should register their foreign based companies in Trinidad and Tobago”* April 5 2016

“Lobbyists want details on parliamentarians expenses” March 25 2016

Keith Subero *“What will they say”* March, 6 2016

Joel Jullien *“No good example for young people”* March 6 2016

Asha Javeed *“Transparency head raises Camille, Marlene Issues*”* March 8 2016

Asha Javeed *“Transparency chairman urges probe on ministries”* March 8 2016

Anna Ramdass *“Keep politics out of justice system”* March 2 2016

“Calls for Imbert to disclose info on CL financial bailout January” 22 2016

“The corruption of undue influence” December 15 2015

Kim Boodram *“Transparency welcomes Hart’s award”* September 2

“TTTT: Move quickly on procurement laws” October 23 2015

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Trinidad and Tobago Guardian Newspaper

Yvonne Baboolal “*PM: No confidence in Integrity Commission*” Wednesday, March 9, 2016

Shaliza Hassanali “*Gordon hits PM on IC statement*” Thursday, March 10, 2016

Geisha Kowlessar “*Transparency chair: Civil society must step up to police those in authority*” Thursday, March 3, 2016

“*The corruption of undue influence**” Published on Dec 15, 2015,

“*Transparency International sounds alarm on bribes*” August 22, 2015

Trinidad and Tobago Newsday

“*Don’t quiz Rowley*” Thursday, March 10 2016

“*PM to speak at Anti-Corruption conference*” Tuesday, March 8 2016

“*NATUC backs TTTI on Clico*” Monday, February 1 2016

“*Corruption Perceptions Index*” Thursday, January 28 2016

Corey Connelly “*JCC wants CLF bailout documents made public*” Monday, October 5 2015

Corey Connelly “*JCC seeks implementation of public procurement law*” Sunday, October 4 2015

“*TTTI to Howai: Release Clico information*” Monday, August 10 2015

8. Secretariat

8.1 Grants and Donations

Transparency is very appreciative of the tremendous support from our stakeholders and thanks all our sponsors and donors for their kind assistance over the years. Although the grant from JB Fernandes Memorial Trust which allowed us to fund many activities, including our youth and community outreach programmes, expired in December 2015, the support of the Fernandes family remains invaluable. Through its Bilateral Programme Fund, the British High Commission provided a grant to assist in operationalising ALAC over a 7 month period from August 2015 to March 2016. Meanwhile, First Citizens has agreed to provide sponsorship for a period of three years, effective October 2015. Together with our partnership arrangements with the ACCA and British Council, these have greatly assisted us to remain financially sustainable.

IMPACT (Integrity, Mobilisation, Participation, Accountability and Transparency)

In July 2016, Transparency signed an agreement with Transparency International to implement three projects over the next three years specifically focusing on (i) ALAC, (ii) the public sector and (iii) business integrity. IMPACT is a TI initiative aimed at increasing integrity, transparency and accountability in the public and private sectors, while empowering civil society to advocate for changes in policy and practice. IMPACT is funded by Global Affairs Canada.

Promoting Accountability and Good Governance in Community Groups

In August, 2016 Atlantic LNG approved our latest project proposal aimed at equipping CSOs with the knowledge and understanding of governance best practices while successfully implementing our CSO Accountability Toolkit. Entitled “Promoting ac-

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countability and good governance in community groups”, this eight-month project is expected to commence later this year.

European Union Funding Proposal

Transparency has partnered with the British Council and the Rape Crisis Society of Trinidad and Tobago to submit a bid for a European Union (EU) proposal, which is designed to foster the strengthening of community based CSOs to more actively influence governance processes. The project is also aimed at improving the capacity of the CSO sector to contribute to a reduction of violence against women, particularly in rural communities. This partnership would allow for meaningful development of participatory governance to address one of Trinidad and Tobago’s biggest challenges, violence against women. On 13 September 2016 we were notified that our proposal had not been successful.

8.2 Fund Raising Dinner

Transparency hosted its third Annual Fund raising Dinner at Jaffa, Queen’s Park Oval on 16 November 2015. Sir Dennis Byron, President of the Caribbean Court of Justice delivered the keynote address: *Restoring Public Confidence in the Judiciary*. The evening proved to be both enlightening and entertaining. This event has been one of Transparency’s key fund raisers and is a highlight of our annual calendar of events, in our continuing efforts to generate sustainability. Transparency has made approximately one hundred thousand dollars from the Dinner over the last three years.

8.3 Staffing

Ms Anika St Louis, Project Officer, resigned with effect from February 2016 to take up another appointment. Ms Kernika Charles is now Programme Officer, while Mr Benedict Bryan joined Transparency on July 18, 2016 as an on-the-job trainee (OJT) Research Officer. This brings our staff complement to four (4) - still very small in relation to the demands on us to sustain the fight against corruption and to promote good governance in the country!

8.4 Board of Directors

As there were no elections at the Sixteenth AGM on 28 July 2015, the Board remained as follows: Deryck Murray (Chair), Dion Abdool (Vice Chair), Susan Gordon (Secretary), Dr Michael Alleyne, Rishi Dass, Josh Drayton, Dr Kamla Mungal, Lorraine Rostant, Winston Rudder and Jason Stedman. Following the indication that at the next Board Meeting the Board intended to nominate an eleventh Director to serve as Treasurer, Melissa Cobham joined the Board.

Rishi Dass and Winston Rudder resigned from the Board by letters 1 November 2015 and 17 July 2016 respectively.

Since the last AGM the Board has held one Special General Meeting, 15 regular Meetings of the Board of Directors, with an average attendance of six Directors per meeting, one Special Meeting and two Strategic Planning Meetings.

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9. Conclusion

This year marks 15 years of Trinidad and Tobago Transparency Institute as an incorporated not-for-profit company. It was actually formed three years earlier, in 1998, by citizens concerned about escalating corruption in our country. Over these 18 years, we have grown to be recognized as the only credible anti-corruption organisation with no political affiliation or agenda. Despite funding challenges, we continue to make a significant contribution by developing positions, programmes and initiatives pertinent to combatting corruption forces and trends in Trinidad and Tobago.

Although diminishing resources have severely challenged our financial sustainability, especially during the past year, Transparency continues to enjoy the respect of a wide cross section of the national community which looks forward with great interest to our contribution on various issues. .

Moving forward, we will continue to enhance our capacity to better pursue our aims and objectives of reducing corruption in Trinidad and Tobago through the promotion of good governance in both the public and private sectors. We encourage greater involvement (especially through active participation) from members in the development of programmes pertinent to the issues confronting our society. With such support, we are confident that Transparency will continue to represent a force for positive change in Trinidad and Tobago.