



# E - News Brief

## Trinidad and Tobago Transparency Institute

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ISSUE No. 11 - NOVEMBER 12TH, 2021

### What We Have Been Doing

#### Transparency International's Annual Membership Meeting (AMM)

##### TTTI's Chair, Dion Abdool elected to TI's International Board

Transparency International (TI) held its Annual Membership Meeting (AMM) online from 6th to 7th November, 2021. This major event in the Movement's calendar was addressed by TI's Chair (Delia Ferreira Rubio), CEO (Daniel Eriksson) and Board Committee Chairs on day one. A Financial Update Report for 2021 and Budget Outlook 2022 were also presented. Voting on resolutions, meeting of Board candidates and elections were held on day two of the AMM.

Elections to TI's Board of Directors followed addresses, debate and several lengthy round table discussions where National Chapter representatives and Individual Members were given the opportunity to interview all the election candidates. The results of the elections disclosed that TTTI's Chair, Dion Abdool; Executive Director of TI Georgia, Eka Gigauri and the Executive Director of TI Chile, Alberto Precht were elected to TI's Board of Directors.



In Mr. Abdool's address to the membership he noted the challenges faced by chapters, the need for partnerships, sharing of experience/successful initiatives and investment in youth. According to Mr. Abdool, 'A strong movement, strong secretariat and strong chapters are required to facilitate change as we work for the common good of all.' Upon his appointment, Mr. Abdool was congratulated by TI's membership and Chair, Delia Ferreira Rubio who noted that he will be an excellent addition to the Board. The Chair noted that prior to being a Board member, Mr. Abdool had demonstrated commitment to the Movement and to TI and its Board.

This is the first time that we have had representation from TTTI and the Caribbean at the level of the international Board.

[Click here](#) to view TI's Media release on the AMM.

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At the AMM TI's CEO Daniel Eriksson presented a report on activities of the Secretariat for the period 2020 to 2021 to the membership. Two resolutions were passed relating to Human Rights and Corruption and to Restoring Rule of Law after the COVID-19 pandemic. The first resolution underlined that democracy has been one of the victims of the pandemic. As a matter of priority, TI will promote collective action initiatives of its members and partners to strengthen the call for strong democratic institutions to guarantee the defence of civic space.

TI's Chair, Delia Ferreira Rubio in her message to members made note of two critical issues - the defence of civic space and strengthening of the rule of law in the context of the pandemic being used as an excuse to undermine good governance and the rule of law and to restrict freedoms and access to information.

### **Establishment of the Research and Education Committee**

On 13th September, 2021 TTTI's newly established Research and Education Committee (REC) held its first meeting. The purpose of the REC is to provide oversight and guidance on TTTI's research/education activities in order to: develop and enhance TTTI's research capacity and education outreach.

The Committee is chaired by TTTI's Vice-Chair, Martin Farrell and research conducted by the Committee will inform TTTI's Board decisions as well as public and media engagements. Other members of the Committee are Dave Clement, Fayola Denoon, Andella Ramroop, Shawn Mahase, Avyaan Ferguson-Awai, Barbara Chandler-Bridgewater, Dr. Kamla Mungal, Corey Harrison, Director of Personnel Administration (Ag), Service Commissions Department and TTTI Director - Jason Stedman.

The Committee also has an Advisory Group which comprises of TTTI Founder - Reginald Dumas, TTTI Director - Reynold Cooper, Neil Rolingson, Dr. Bishnu Ragoonath and David Thomas.

As an immediate output, the Ethics Toolkit Sub-Committee (ETSC) which is part of the Research and Education Committee is working on developing a TTTI Centre for Ethics Training and Ethics Toolkit entitled - Giving Voice to Excellence in the Public Service. The Toolkit will outline ethical tools which can be used by Public Servants to build ethics programs in Ministries/Departments.

TTTI members who are interested in volunteering their services on this committee can contact the Secretariat via email at [admin@transparency.org.tt](mailto:admin@transparency.org.tt).



### **Civil Asset Recovery and Management and Unexplained Wealth Act, 2019**

In September 2021, TTTI provided comments to Guardian Media on the impact of the Civil Asset Recovery and Management and Unexplained Wealth Act, 2019. TTTI noted that based on the information available to the Institute since its passage in April 2019, two (2) matters have commenced under the Act. One matter in 2019 involved offences of Drug Trafficking and Money Laundering and another in 2019 involved the offence of possession of cocaine for the purpose of trafficking.

Additionally, with the prevalence of allegations of corruption, the expectation was that a greater number of matters would have been brought before the Courts under the Act. Whilst it may be a bit premature to adjudge the efficacy or effectiveness of the Act, TTTI is of the view, based on the available information, that, it may be useful to examine the legislation, its implementation, the structures around it, and outcomes thus far to determine if the legislation is achieving its purpose. TTTI will continue to monitor the application of the Act as it is a fundamental plank in the fight against corruption.

### **FATF Recommendation**

TTTI's Chair, Dion Abdool continues to channel efforts into the FATF standards. TTTI has been working with TI and other national chapters to prepare a proposal with recommendations to strengthen the FATF standards. Some suggestions are for the FATF to provide more detailed guidance to jurisdictions on what the minimum requirements for an effective beneficial ownership transparency regime are; while suggesting additional measures that should be taken by these jurisdictions to further build their frameworks based on the level of risk. These proposed changes will also allow FATF to better assess compliance with the standards and the effectiveness of regimes.

Members should note that FATF standards will be implemented in over 200 jurisdictions. TI will submit a final proposal on 3rd December, 2021.

### **TTEITI and TTTI Beneficial Ownership Disclosure Sensitization Campaign**

The Trinidad and Tobago Extractive industries Transparency Initiative (TTEITI) Steering Committee (TTEITI SC) in partnership with TTTI will be continuing its work on Beneficial Ownership Disclosure (BOD) in Trinidad and Tobago, through grant funding from the British High Commission (BHC) in Port of Spain.

This project seeks to equip stakeholders with the capacity to improve national BOD through the development of non-technical virtual information toolkits, capacity building workshops, gap analysis report and a public sensitization campaign.

TTEITI and TTTI has a history of pioneering work on BOD. In 2018, the TTEITI SC through grant funding from the BHC embarked on the first phase of its BOD project. The goal of that project was to provide the Government with a template of how BOD can be practically applied in Trinidad and Tobago using the extractive sector as a model. This was achieved through the development of a free, easy to access BO Register for the oil and gas sector. The register can be viewed on the TTEITI's website.



## **TTEITI and TTTI Beneficial Ownership Disclosure Sensitization Campaign cont'd**

The following year, the TTEITI SC and TTTI embarked on the second phase of its BOD project, "A National Public Sensitization Campaign on BOD in T & T", this time, through grant funding from the Delegation of the European Union in T&T. This project assisted T&T to better meet its international obligations as they relate to secret company ownership disclosure, the disclosure of politically exposed persons (PEPs) and to deter anti-terrorist financing. The project's goal was achieved as statistics and materials from this project were included in the country's reporting to FATF in February 2020. This contributed to T&T being removed from the FATF "Grey List".

In light of the abovementioned successes and an ongoing demand for additional sensitization on BOD in T&T, the TTEITI SC in partnership with the TTTI through grant funding from the BHC, will be continuing its national BOD sensitization efforts, this time, with a focus on law enforcement agencies and the business community. This six-month project is scheduled to commence this month and conclude in May 2022.

## **Membership Survey**

TTTI's Membership Committee chaired by Director, Reynold Cooper invited members to participate in a short survey to assist TTTI in its efforts to better support our members. The survey has since closed and the Board is currently reviewing the feedback received. The Membership Committee is also presently drafting a policy to offer membership to persons under 18 and preparing lifetime membership packages.

## **Final IMPACT Audit and Report**

In October 2021, TTTI completed its final reports and Audit for the our Global Canada Affairs IMPACT grant. The Audit was conducted by BDO for the period of April 1, 2018 to June 30, 2021. In the Audited financial statement (FS), BDO noted that the FS presented fairly, in all material respects, the financial performance of TTTI.

## **Fund raising Policy and Strategy**

To improve the sustainability of the organization, TTTI has developed a fund raising policy and strategy. The strategic framework outlines fundraising activities that are in alignment with TTTI's vision, mission, strategy, and priorities. All activities are also championed by the Board of Directors who noted that this is a substantial step forward in better positioning the Institute. A copy of TTTI's Fund raising Policy can be [found here](#).

TTTI also partnered with Hott Shoppe to host a Curry Que fund raising event in August 2021. Over 500 tickets were sold and on behalf of the Institute and the Fundraising Committee, Chair Donna Jack-Hill heartfelt appreciation is expressed to all corporate and individual members who made this venture a resounding success.





### **Fund raising meetings with USAID, UNCAC and PADF**

As the Institute continues its pursuit for funding to support its projects and operations, in September 2021, TTTI's Chair Dion Abdool met with representatives from the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Iñaki Albisu, Regional Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNCAC and Mr. Abdool discussed the work of both organisations, nexus between debt relief and corruption as well as the availability of funding for organizations (as Affiliates or member) for work on parallel reports and the Transparency Pledge.

USAID representatives Phillip Schwehm, Senior Development Advisor, Eastern & Southern Division and Valerie Laboy, Political and Economic Chief of the Embassy of the United States of America presented the mandate of USAID and partnership opportunities available for TTTI. Discussions to continue with UNCAC and USAID as there are some partnership opportunities available in the short to medium term.

The Chair together with Trevor Munroe (NIA Jamaica) and Fred Collins (TI Guyana) also had preliminary discussions with the Pan American Development Fund (PADF) regional representatives. The meeting was facilitated by TI- S Regional Coordinator, Luciana Torchiaro.

### **Movement Summit**

As Transparency International (TI) moves towards executing its Global Strategy 2021 - 2030, TI hosted a summit for national chapters and colleagues to share ideas, participate in discussions on global trends; and coordinate collective actions towards strategic objectives and commitments. Commencing on 29th September – 1st October, 2021, Chair, Dion Abdool; Secretary, Susan N. Gordon and Programme Officer, Kernika Charles participated in a series workshops entitled:

- Monitor, Expose, Mobilise: Safeguarding Public Resources during a turbulent decade
- Who is opening the gates for Kleptocrats?
- Leadership Through Activism
- Beyond the CPI: National Efforts to Measuring Corruption
- Building TI's work on Gender and Corruption into a broader anti-discrimination approach
- TI Business Integrity Programme: The way forward to create impact in the real world
- Survival and Resistance: How to remain operational and push back against civic space restrictions
- Transparency and Accountability in COVID-19. What have we learnt? Where do we need to go?
- Victims' Compensation & Movement Cooperation for Cross-border Enforcement
- Strategic Priorities and how to turn them into coordinated Action and Support
- Show Me The Money!



Mr Abdool was also a panelist on the TI Business Integrity Programme: The way forward to create impact in the real world workshop where he shared some of TTTI experiences and lessons learnt in implementing our BICA project.



### Aligning National Strategies to the TI Global Strategy

Transparency International (TI) invited TTTI's Chair, Dion Abdool to participate in a Podcast to discuss TI's new strategic plan and provide useful ideas as to how chapters can turn words into action when it comes to implementing the global TI strategy locally. Daniel Bruce, Chief Executive Officer of TI United Kingdom also participated in the Podcast.



### Gender-sensitive Corruption Reporting Mechanisms

TTTI's Chair, Dion Abdool participated in a webinar hosted by Transparency International on 21st October, 2021. The purpose of the webinar was for Chapters to learn and share experiences, good practices on gender-sensitive corruption reporting mechanisms. Movement colleagues also elaborated on how ALAC activities were adapted to increase corruption reporting by women and girls, and work on sextortion/sexual bribery cases.



### Domestic Violence Act of Trinidad and Tobago

To commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Domestic Violence Act of Trinidad and Tobago the CEDAW Committee of Trinidad and Tobago (CCoTT) as part of the Alliance for State Action partnered with TTTI to execute a series of educational and public awareness activities on the evolution of the Domestic Violence Act. Billboards and daily social media posts formed part of the awareness campaign.

### Point Fortin Finest Leadership Development Program

In July and August 2021, TTTI's Vice Chair, Martin Farrell and Programme Officer, Kernika Charles delivered presentations to the participants of Atlantic's Point Fortin's Finest Leadership Development programme. The leadership programme is a youth development initiative which brings together the top achieving SEA students.

TTTI's presentations were focused on ethics, integrity and leadership. The students were also exposed to the work of TTTI and its efforts towards promoting good governance. The students and their parents are currently in communication with TTTI to be inducted as Integrity Ambassadors of TTTI's School Integrity Club Project.



### Atlantic LNG World of Work Programme Partnership

In August 2021, TTTI partnered with Atlantic and The Barcam and welcomed two interns through their World of Work programme. Over the internship period, Ronaldo Mapp and Cian Mohammed assisted with the Institute's activities, while showing willingness to learn and support the Institute. Atlantic and The Barcam extended gratitude to TTTI for the time and expertise in mentoring the interns.

### Director Movement

Director, Dr. Kamla Mungal recently resumed full time employment and due to a potential conflict of interest Dr. Mungal ended her tenure as a Director of TTTI. The Board congratulated Dr. Mungal on her new appointment and extended sincere thanks for her service to TTTI as a Director. Dr. Mungal will continue to contribute to the Institute as a member.



## Baseline Study of Private Sector Anti-Corruption Policies

From August 2021, TTTI completed a Baseline Study of Private Sector Anti-Corruption Policies report. The report was prepared following research and feedback via a survey which was circulated to business chambers in Trinidad and Tobago. Members would note that the Business Integrity Country Agenda (BICA) is an initiative of Transparency International which proposes an evidence-based reform agenda that seeks to improve the business integrity environment and ultimately reduce corruption in and from the country's private sector.

Appreciation is extended to the National Advisory Group (NAG) members and business chambers. The report is currently being reviewed by Transparency International.

## NGO Governance and Accountability Fundamentals Project

From August 23rd – 26th, 2021, TTTI facilitated eight workshop sessions for Atlantic LNG sustainability partners (NGOs). The objective of the workshops were to improve the capacity of the NGOs as well as equip them with Good Governance and Accountability tools.

The modules covered at workshops were Financial Accountability; Board Governance and Accountability; Strategic and Organizational Planning as well as Effective Reporting and Record-Keeping. Over the four (4) days the seven (7) NGOs shared their experiences and expressed appreciation for the accountability tools learnt at the workshops. A special thank you is extended to the TTTI Directors who facilitated and supported the sessions.





## Best practices in Public Procurement Analysis

TTTI was invited to attend a series of workshops on best practices in public procurement analysis and monitoring hosted by Transparency International Ukraine (TI Ukraine), K-Monitor and EconLab. On August 31, 2021, the first workshop held was entitled – **‘Best practices of TI Ukraine: Public BI Module – a tool for public procurement analysis’** which consisted of an in-depth presentation by Sergii Pavliuk, BI ProZorro Project Manager, TI Ukraine, who illustrated how analytics can increase transparency and accountability of the public procurement sector while developing a Business Intelligence tool.

On September 17, 2021, the second workshop **‘Best Practices of K-Monitor: Red Flags Tool to Monitor Risky Tenders in Hungary’** was held. This workshop consisted of a presentation by Sandor Lederer, Director of K-Monitor. During the event, the speaker shared the experience of Hungary in developing risk indicators and implementing the Red Flags tool. Red Flags is the tool designed by K-Monitor and Transparency International Hungary in 2015 that allows detection of risky tenders based on algorithmic indicators. The main purpose of the instrument is to create an early warning system for journalists and watchdogs to foster the investigation of suspicious tenders in Hungary.

Also on September 17, 2021, the third workshop, **‘Best Practices of EconLab: ZINDEX Public Buyer Rating’** consisted of a presentation by Jiri Skuhrovec, Chairman of EconLab. During the workshop, Mr. Skuhrovec shared the experience of EconLab in developing and implementing the public buyer rating called ZINDEX. The tool has been functioning in Czech Republic for 10 years already and has significantly improved the conduct of tenders and had a measurable impact on the activity of over 50 public buyers. Legal Officer, Bernadine Henry represented TTTI at these workshops.

## Private Sector Civil Society Group (PSCSG)

TTTI’s collaboration with the PSCSG continues. Our latest joint release is below.

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The Private Sector Civil Society Group (PSCSG) once again feels compelled to LOUDLY call out the Government (GORTT) based on its ongoing procrastination and failure to operationalize the Office of the Procurement Regulator (OPR).

The 3rd Amendment of Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act of 2015 (PPDPPA) was brought to Parliament by the Government in November 2020 after intense lobbying and outcry from the public, and was finally assented to by the President of the Republic on December 27th, 2020. The next step in the process was the amendment of the Draft Regulations to bring it in line with the amended PPDPPA. The Original Draft of the PPDPP Regulations, 2019 can still be found on the [OPR’s Website](#).



The PSCSG is aware however that the Amended Draft Regulations were in fact supplied by the OPR to the Legislative Review Committee (LRC) and Ministry of Finance (MoF) on Jan 25th, 2021, after several meetings between their respective legal teams. It is therefore over four months since The Amended Draft Regulations were submitted by the OPR to the LRC with no tangible progress.

Based on our direct ongoing queries to the OPR, we were informed that the OPR finally met with the LRC on Monday 3rd April 2021, and representatives of the OPR were asked to be excused from the meeting so discussions could be held among Senior Ministers, on the Government's policy position in respect of certain issues that touch and concern Government Procurement. More alarmingly, we were informed that the meeting was adjourned to a "date to be decided." Are we to believe that the Government still has policy issues with The Act (PPDPPA) or the Amended Regulations?

The Act is now six years old and this Government amended it three times between 2016 and 2020; while The Draft Regulations have already been in the public domain for two years, so amendments to the latter should be reasonably limited to the Amendments to the Act. The PSCSG has to question why this process of ratifying the Amended Regulations is taking so long and more importantly, why there is no commitment for a date to bring the amended regulations to Parliament for resolution? What this means for the public is that the full operationalization of the OPR remains glaringly outstanding as it still needs to be empowered with The Regulations.

In the meantime, Public Bodies continue to spend limited public funds without independent oversight by the OPR. The ongoing pandemic cannot be used by the Government as an excuse to delay its work on any part of this process. The OPR took one month to amend the Draft Regulations during pandemic conditions.

The procrastination and broken promises of the GORTT to deliver accountability and efficiency related to public procurement continues to be a great travesty for the citizens of this country. We call on to the powers that be to address The Draft Regulations now.

### Coming Up

1. **Annual General Meeting:**  
December 2021
2. **25th Anniversary of TTTI : 2022**

**Contact us to get involved!**