

## **REPORT ON ACTIVITIES FOR PERIOD OCTOBER 2014 – JULY 2015**

(Prepared for the 16<sup>th</sup> AGM to be held on the 28<sup>th</sup> July, 2015)

### **1. Introduction**

This report outlines the activities of Trinidad and Tobago Transparency Institute (Transparency), the national chapter of Transparency International (TI), undertaken in the period between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meetings of the Institute.

These activities were carried out following, for the most part strategic decisions set in the Strategic Framework 2012-2015 in the fulfilment of Transparency's vision of "a world in which government, politics, business, civil society and the daily lives of people are free of corruption" our and mission to work towards "a country and region that are free of corruption".

### **2. Promoting Public Sector Integrity**

Having regard to the disastrous consequences which corruption in the public sector can have on the entire society, during the period under review, Transparency's main areas of concentration have remained development of the Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC), ensuring integrity in the process of public procurement by seeking to advance progress in completing the modalities for implementation of The Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act, advocating for legislative reform in the area of political party and campaign funding, promoting public awareness of the need for whistleblower protection legislation and lobbying for transparency and accountability in collection of revenues derived from the energy sector.

#### **2.1 Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC)**

Since the milestone achievement of launching the Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC) in December 2013, Transparency has continued to develop/strengthen the operations of this institution.

However, despite the initial provision of vital start-up resources and components by the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, we have not been able to access additional funding. The challenge is to identify long-term funding to maintain a sustainable ALAC and we are continuing discussions with potential international and private sector donors. Meanwhile, we are grateful to the British High Commission for a short term grant to be awarded with effect from August 2015 until February 2016.

Citizens who have encountered corruption can go to ALAC for advice and assistance in forwarding their complaint to the appropriate authorities for investigation, We anticipate that pursuit of corruption-related complaints will enhance the transparency and accountability of public institutions, encourage appropriate structural and institutional reform and mitigate the powerlessness which can be felt by the average citizen when faced with corruption. In addition the information gathered through ALAC should reveal specific problem areas that require attention and also contribute to an assessment of actual rather than perceived corruption.

Transparency believes that each citizen will become involved in the fight against corruption, once provided with a simple, effective, credible tool and worldwide experience with ALAC has proved it to be such a tool.

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ALAC hopes to benefit from the support and cooperation of the national anti-corruption agencies, which have pledged collaboration, the Hugh Wooding Law School, whose interns conduct interviews of complainants, assess merits and prepare dossiers for transmission to the appropriate investigative agency and of certain senior members of the legal fraternity who provide guidance.

### **2.2 Reform of Public Procurement Legislation**

The Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Bill was passed by Parliament on 19 December 2014 and received Presidential assent on 14 January 2015. The Public Sector/Civil Society Group (PSCSG), of which Transparency is a founding and active member, has been working closely with the Ministry of Finance and the UNDP (which has 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, it being deemed desirable that these be solidly in place before the General Elections so as to avoid the possibility of any subsequent erosion.

Government has set up the Procurement Implementation Steering Committee which has drawn up a detailed plan of implementation with timelines. By means of an UNDP consultant, Procurement regulations are being drafted and a code of conduct for procurement developed. Training of staff at all Ministries, statutory Boards and State enterprises is in train so as to ensure the Act's proper implementation and smooth roll-out.

Partial proclamation of the Act has been agreed upon and an Oversight Committee has been established to perform a watchdog role and to assist and oversee the work of the Procurement Implementation Steering Committee. The Oversight Committee is mandated to ensure the implementation of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act 2015 as quickly as possible.

The ten-member Committee is chaired by Timothy Hamel-Smith and includes two PSCSG members, Winston Riley and Ravi Suryadevara, as well as Victor Hart. Its other members are experts in areas such as project financing, project management, engineering and construction and public sector service.

Transparency continues 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 Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (TTEITI) continued to receive Transparency's support by its ongoing membership of the TTEITI Steering Committee charged with overseeing EITI implementation in Trinidad and Tobago. Currently, Transparency is one of six organisations representing civil society on the Steering Committee and makes a strong contribution.

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TTEITI has achieved significant milestones since Transparency's 2014 AGM. In September 2014, T&T's second EITI Report was published covering fiscal year 2012. On 23 January 2015, T&T was elevated from being a Candidate Country, a designation conferred on it when it joined the EITI in March 2011, to Compliant Country status, the highest level of membership. Mrs. Clare Short, Chair of the EITI Board of Directors, made the announcement on 27 January 2015 during her first visit to T&T. In 2015, the TTEITI Steering Committee began engaging the mining sector (quarries and asphalt) on the EITI with the aim of building capacity to make the companies ready for full participation in the EITI reporting process in the not too distant future. On 8 July 2015, a new memorandum of understanding on the implementation of TTEITI was signed with the Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs.

T&T is now one of 48 EITI member-countries worldwide that are rich in natural resources of which 31 have achieved Compliant Country status. T&T is gaining in recognition as the EITI Caribbean Champion as it pursues the spreading of the EITI message to Guyana, Suriname, Jamaica and Bahamas, in the first instance, with plans for taking it further afield in 2016. TTEITI Steering Committee continues to play its role in the EITI worldwide movement and, in June 2015, participated in and made a meaningful contribution to the EITI Regional Conference in the Americas held in Lima, Peru.

TTEITI is a coalition of government, companies, civil society groups, investors and international organisations formed to encourage transparency and accountability in the exploitation of minerals and other extracted resources. The EITI was founded, in part, as a result of TI's lobby with other civil society organisations and other groups to reverse the situation where many countries, although rich in natural resources, are amongst the poorest in the world.

### **2.4 Code of Ethical Political Conduct**

The Code is an initiative of Archbishop Joseph Harris who brought together representative religious, civil society, private sector organisations and a trade union representative<sup>1</sup>, who together agreed on the establishment and provisions of the Code. Through Chair Deryck Murray Transparency was a significant contributor to the Code.

The Code is intended to promote inter alia:

- Fostering of democracy through peaceful, free and fair elections conducted at regular intervals in which voters are permitted to cast their ballots freely, without interference, fear, intimidation or bribery.

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<sup>1</sup> the Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic Churches, Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha of Trinidad and Tobago, Trinidad and Tobago Transparency Institute, Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Network of NGOs, Trinidad and Tobago Publishers' and Broadcasters' Association, Communication Workers' Union/FITUN, Inter Religious Organization of Trinidad and Tobago and ASJA.

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- Promotion of respect for human rights, the pursuit of civil and political liberties, the tolerance of divergent opinions, full and active participation of all in the political process.
- Encouragement of participation in the electoral process by the People and to uphold their right to make political choices.
- Promotion of an election process free from violence.

In September 2014 the Code was signed by the Founding organisations - see footnote (1) - and by the main political parties: United National Congress (UNC), People's National Movement (PNM), Congress of the People (COP), Independent Liberal Party (ILP) and Movement for Social Justice (MSJ). It was subsequently endorsed by the Democratic Development Party (DDP) and the Association of Independents (AOI).

The Council for Responsible Political Behaviour was officially launched on 25 March 2015 and comprises eleven members, including one representative of each of the five signing political parties, and six representatives of the other Founding signatories.

The mandate of the Council is to:

- Conduct public education around the Code and issues that civil society would like politicians to address on the platform.
- Monitor election campaign activities and the conduct of parties and their candidates.
- Network with bodies involved in monitoring elections in Trinidad and Tobago and with regional and international bodies which place governance as an important objective.
- Actively engage different networks which can bring moral suasion to bear on the conduct of political parties.
- Implement related activities consistent with the spirit of the Code as mandated by the broader body of civil society.
- Report to the broader body of civil society, and through it, to the public.
- Rate the behaviour of political parties, coalitions and their candidates, in accordance with the Code and based upon time periods, as decided by the Council and made public.

At this time there are no consequences or punitive sanctions available in instances of breach of the Code only “name and shame”.

With several elections scheduled over the next few years a functioning Code and Council are vital.

Transparency continues to monitor the work of the Council.

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### 2.5 I Paid A Bribe

The *I Paid A Bribe* website is a simple tool to empower citizens and enable them to become directly involved in the fight against corruption. Transparency was chosen as the pilot project for this new TI tool to be used by all Chapters.

However, we have been legally advised of the possible threat of defamation suits with such online corruption reporting. Transparency therefore proposes to develop a pilot project using ALAC as a filter during the testing period.

### 2.6 Youth Arm

The Youth Arm was established to facilitate the development of an ethical society in Trinidad and Tobago in which youths (15-35) become the catalyst for change.

During the past year, our Youth Arm hosted some 20 meetings, 10 of which were from January to May 2015 at the University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine. These meetings focused on developing proposals for commencing campus activities as well as general Youth Arm business.

Recognising outreach as an important element in developing a corruption free society for the nation's youth, the group focused on the following:

#### Club visits

The Youth Arm visited four UWI clubs: Caribbean Civilization Club, Habitat for Humanity UWI Campus Chapter, Afrikan Society and the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship group. These club visits allowed us to educate students on matters of corruption, ethical leadership and integrity as well as to invite them to the Youth Arm Forum.

#### “Time to Get Transparent” Forum

On 27 March 2015, the Youth Arm hosted a Forum entitled *Time to Get Transparent* which featured presentations by several Transparency directors, including Dr. Kamla Mungal on *Ethical Leadership*, Mr. Dion Abdool on *Board Governance*, Mr Josh Drayton on *Ethics and Integrity*, Mr. Ronald Ramcharan on *Financial Accountability* and Mr. Deryck Murray who encouraged the attendees to uphold their integrity and to be of high ethical standard. The invited Guilds and student leaders of institutions participated in stimulating discussions.

#### Secondary School Visits

The Youth Arm commenced a series of visits to fifth and sixth form students throughout Trinidad and Tobago in an effort to educate and raise awareness on anti-corruption strategies. The first school visited was NorthGate College. The students and teachers were excited and grateful to be part of such a thought-provoking venture and contributed to the discussion on corruption while suggesting ways of combating it. This initiative is scheduled to continue in September 2015.

#### Camp Visits

Following a meeting with Atlantic LNG, the company agreed to partner with Transparency re their vacation camps. . As a result, the Youth Arm visited Point Fortin's

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Finest Atlantic LNG junior camp on 13 and 21 July 2015. Their junior camp hosts children between the ages of eleven and thirteen.

Three more visits to other camps in the country are scheduled: two on August 3 and another on August 10. The objectives of these camp visits are:

1. To empower the youth to be drivers of change.
2. To initiate discussion among the attendees on issues of morals, ethics, integrity, and transparency.
3. To sensitise attendees of the importance of integrity and morality.
4. To raise awareness of Transparency Youth Arm amongst teenagers providing information concerning our goals, objectives and activities.

### **3. Civil Society Strengthening**

Transparency's Vice Chair delivered welcome remarks at the Civil Society and Transparency Challenge Workshop, held on May 06. He thanked the British Council and the ACCA for partnering with Transparency in this important initiative. He also reminded participants that Transparency's CSO toolkit was launched three years ago at the very same venue – Arthur Lok Jack Graduate School of Business.

The CSO Accountability Toolkit consists of 17 tools geared towards assisting organisations in conducting their operations with transparency, thereby improving accountability standards. Since its launch, 15 workshops have already been held throughout Trinidad and Tobago, with 300 plus persons and over 100 civil society organisations benefitting.

Transparency developed the CSO Toolkit in 2010 in collaboration with the Commonwealth Foundation. It was part of a larger project in which the Foundation worked with One World Trust to develop similar accountability toolkits for CSOs in Belize, India, Uganda and the Pacific Islands.

### **4. Anti-Corruption Outreach Activities**

#### **4.1 Anti-Corruption Conference**

Participants at our annual ACC held on 20 March 2015 were privileged to enjoy a rich and varied programme provided by a number of distinguished local, regional and international presenters. These included: Dr Terrence Farrell, Catherine Kumar, Afra Raymond, Ian Chinapoo, Rev Sir Wes Hall, Hazel Brown, Christopher Hamel-Smith SC, Sterling Belgrove, Vernon Ramesar; from the British Council Director Julian Baker and Dr Bob Arnot; from Canada, Professor Michel Drapeau. They were thoughtful, pointed and candid in their presentations and provided clear recommendations on dealing with various corruption issues.

The key issues were: whistleblowing protection legislation; integrity, ethical leadership and sustainable development; impact of culture on legislation; governance devel-

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opment in the Caribbean; principled leadership, leadership by example; effect of media and judiciary on corruption and governance.

This year's conference was a result of our newly emerging partnership with the British Council. Other sponsors were: REPSOL, the Canadian High Commission, Ros-tant DDB, the British High Commission, ACCA, Visual Art, Caribbean Airlines and Pt Lisas Industrial Port Development (PLIPDECO). Cheze Casimire, winner of the 13-15 age group essay competition read her essay at the beginning of the conference.

### **4.2 UN Anti-Corruption Day 9 December, 2014**

Transparency observed last year's Anti-Corruption Day on December 9 to conclude a week of events on the theme of "whistleblowing". The event took place in Woodford Square where Cecilia Salazar performed extracts from her role of Gene Miles, the whistle-blower who denounced the gas station racket in the 1960s. Brown Cotton and Freetown Movement also performed at the event which attracted a small but enthusiastic crowd.

### **4.3 Release of 2014 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)**

The annual release of the CPI engenders immense interest and debate at the national level, attracting the attention of government, the business sector, media houses, political analysts and the general public. TTTI launched the CPI at a press conference on 3 December, 2014 at its office.

175 countries/territories were ranked in the 2014 Index. Trinidad and Tobago's ranking dropped from 83 to 85 and its score remained the same at 38. The ranks and scores of other Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries were:

Barbados 17 and 74

Bahamas 24 and 71

St. Lucia 23 and 71

St. Vincent and the Grenadines 29 and 67

Dominica 39 and 58

Jamaica 85 and 38

Suriname 100 and 36

Guyana 124 and 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 held by business leaders and other analysts. 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.

TI noted that the 2014 Index shows that "economic growth is undermined and efforts to stop Corruption fade, when leaders and high level officials abuse power to appropriate public funds for private gain".

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### **4.4 Republic Bank's Power To Make A Difference Initiative**

In 2013, under its *Power To Make A Difference* Initiative, Republic Bank Limited (RBL) provided Transparency with a grant to promote the objectives of our youth development programme, including an essay and a poster competition last year for young people aged 13 to 25 on the overall theme of *Youth against corruption*.

The essays were judged by Transparency's Director Dr Michael Alleyne. Renowned Caribbean artist Jackie Hinkson was the judge in the poster competition.

Winners and their families attended the Prize Giving ceremony on 10 October 2014 at Transparency's Office. Transparency was represented by Mr Dion Abdool, Vice Chair and Ms Susan Gordon, Secretary while Republic Bank Limited was represented by Mr. Anthony Subero, General Manager, Internal Audit and Ms. Avalene Harris, Communications Officer, Group Marketing & Communications.

.Cheze Casimire, winner of the essay competition in the 13-15 year age group category read her winning essay at this year's ACC on 20 March.

## **5. International and Regional Meetings**

### **5.1 Annual Membership Meeting**

Transparency's Chair Deryck Murray participated in TI's Annual Meeting of Members (AMM) from 17 to 24 October 2013 in Tunisia.

### **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 participated in workshops and conferences in St Maarten and Cayman Islands, in addition to continuing to work with the "Chapters in formation" in Jamaica and Guyana.

### **5.3 TI Integrity Survey**

A team from TI went to St Maarten in December 2014 for an integrity survey, headed by Zoe Reiter, Regional Programme Manager, Americas Department. Transparency Vice Chair Dion Abdool was our representative on this team

## **6. Collaboration with Government Agencies and CSOs**

### **6.1 National Open Data Readiness Assessment**

Director Jason Steadman participated in this senior stakeholder session on April 23 2015, hosted by the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Finance and the Economy. A follow-up meeting has been proposed.

### **6.2 Institute of Internal Auditors – Meeting of T&T Chapter – Public Accountability and Corporate Oversight in the Public Sector**

Vice Chair Dion Abdool was invited to address the meeting, which was held on May 28 at Carlton Savannah Hotel. His presentation was on *The Role of Transparency in Public Oversight*.

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### **6.3 British High Commission – Discussions re Transparency’s position on anti-corruption issues**

On June 16, Director Dr Kamla Mungal represented Transparency at a meeting initiated by the British High Commission, with Justice Zainool Hosein, Charman, Integrity Commission; Kate Smith, Director of the Americas Directorate of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office; Charles Moore, Charge d’Affaires; and David Robinson, Criminal Justice Advisor to Trinidad and Tobago.

The meeting discussed several areas where the High Commission could provide support to the Integrity Commission, e.g. exchange of commissioners and advocacy for institutional strengthening of the Commission.

Ms Smith indicated that EITI is a big focus for Prime Minister David Cameron and she commended TTEITI on becoming EITI compliant. She advised Transparency to update her on TTEITI’s progress and initiatives to assist Guyana in this area.

Mr Robinson has requested a meeting with Transparency, Integrity Commission and the Crown Prosecution Service to discuss how we can work together to address the issue of corruption.

### **6.4 Civil Society Board**

In November 2012 Transparency was invited by the Ministry of National Diversity and Social Integration to *Dialogue sessions aimed at establishing a Civil Society Board* to coordinate and communicate the opinions and views of Civil Society Organisations in Trinidad and Tobago on key issues of policy, governance, social services delivery and matters of national interest. At the Ministry’s invitation to nominate a Representative and an Alternate, Directors Dr Michael Alleyne and Mr Jason Stedman were nominated.

Following on several meetings, the Ministry organised election for the formation of a National Board to which all registered CSOs were invited. The elections were held on 29 September 2014 but attracted a lower level of participation than anticipated. Nonetheless out of the results there emerged a group of representatives who proceeded to form their own organization called the National Association of Civil Society Organisations (NASCO).

This group is at present actively engaged in working out all the requirements for registration as a legal entity and is preparing a proposal to be send to the Ministry. The representative of Transparency has been contributing to the deliberations and discussions of the Group and awaits the submission of the NASCO proposal and eventually the reaction and response of the Ministry.

Transparency remains committed to the establishment of a Civil Society Board as a platform for influencing formation of Government policy and a vehicle for furthering its own aims and objectives.

A response from the Ministry is eagerly awaited as to the way forward for the establishment of a national Civil Society Board.

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### 6.5 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)

In June 2015, Transparency entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the British Council, to provide for the establishment of mutual co-operation in the area of good governance.

Transparency also signed an MOU with the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) to promote the highest standards of professionalism, integrity and ethics in business.

## 7. Outreach Activities

### 7.1 Town Hall Meetings *Plenty Pepper*

Transparency continued with its popular series of Town Hall Meetings *Plenty Pepper* to engage the residents of selected communities throughout Trinidad and Tobago in discussion on various current corruption-related issues. Since the 15th AGM three Town Hall Meetings have taken place:

- Iere High School in Siparia on 12 December 2014 at which presentations were made by Dr. Roger Hosein who spoke on *The Imperative of Diversification* and Isaac Jakie the youth speaker who is also a member of Transparency's Youth Arm, The event was well received by the attendees including some personnel who were attached to the school. They were pleased that their community was considered for such an event.
- Chaguanas on 9 June 2015, at which journalist and researcher Dr. Sheila Rampersad, delivered the feature address on the topic *Safe in the Dark: How Journalism Sheds Light*. The Youth Speaker was Shaquille Baird, a final year UWI student majoring in International Relations who is also a member of Transparency's Youth Arm. Dr. Rampersad was forthright in clarifying the significance of journalists in making the public aware of topical issues. It was also suggested that her presentation be repeated in tertiary institutions where students in courses related to media studies and politics can benefit from her research in the field.
- Point Fortin on 7 July, at which energy economist Gregory McGuire, a native of the Point Fortin area spoke on *Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and the Economy*. His audience was captivated by his presentation as Point Fortin is an energy-based industrial area. The Youth speaker was Mr. Keegan Bharath, member of the Trinidad and Tobago Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative Youth Advisory Committee.

### 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 its on-going series of press releases/articles in the local media.

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The following press releases were circulated:

October 2014 – Transparency Essay and Poster Competition Prize Giving Ceremony

7 November 2014 – Call for Whistle Blower Protection

3 December 2014 – Corruption Perceptions Index 2014: Clean Growth at Risk

6 December 2014 – Trinidad and Tobago Transparency Institute to Observe International Anticorruption Day (ACD) 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014

10 March 2015 – International Anti-Corruption Conference to be held in Trinidad and Tobago

6 January 2015 – Allocation of \$55 Million as a gift to Christian Churches

1 February 2015 – Transparency Reaffirms that Highest Moral Rectitude is demanded of Holders of Public Office

18 March 2015 – The Importance of Transparency’s Anti-Corruption Conference on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March

12 May 2015 – The Power of the Majority

3 June 2015 – Transparency necessary in CLICO pay out

Transparency received positive publicity for events such as ACC 2015, with newspaper reports featuring presentations by Dr Terrence Farrell, Sir Wes Hall and Chairman Deryck Murray. Our recent SGM was also reported, featuring extracts from the address by Dr Bishnu Ragoonath.

## **8. Secretariat**

### **8.1 Grants and Donations**

JB Fernandes Memorial Trust, Transparency’s main donor to date has allowed us to utilise the balance of the fund to continue our youth and community outreach programmes.

Through its Bilateral Programme Fund, the British High Commission has agreed to provide a micro grant to assist in operationalising ALAC, for the period August 2015 to March 2016. Transparency has also applied for a grant through the Economic Diplomacy Fund to develop a Business Ethics Training Programme for implementation

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in Caribbean countries. If this contract is awarded, it will be for the period September 2015 to February 2016.

### **8.2 Fund Raising Dinner**

Transparency hosted its second Annual Fund raising Dinner at Jaffa, Queen’s Park Oval on 4 December 2014. Professor David Lewis of Middlesex University delivered the keynote address: *Providing Whistleblowing Protection in Trinidad and Tobago*, at what is now one of Transparency’s key fund raisers and which is a highlight of our annual calendar of events.

This year’s Dinner is scheduled to be held in November at Jaffa. We hope that members will support this as the Board continues efforts to generate “new” funds to support the important work of our organisation.

### **8.3 Staffing**

Transparency was successful in obtaining the services of Mrs. Eileen Benjamin-Ryan to fill the position of Programme Manager on contract. Ms. Kernika Charles is our Project/Research Officer as well as the Chairperson of the Youth Arm of Transparency.

### **8.4 Board of Directors**

At the Fifteenth AGM on 25 September 2014, Winston Rudder was nominated and elected to the Board of Directors and Ronald Ramcharan, Josh Drayton and Lorraine Rostant were re-elected as Directors. Those elected joined Deryck Murray (Chair), Dion Abdool (Vice Chair), Susan Gordon (Secretary), Dr Michael Alleyne, Rishi Dass, Dr Kamla Mungal and Jason Stedman as the new Board.

Since the last AGM the Board has held 10 regular meetings and one Special General Meeting with an average attendance of 7 Directors per meeting, one Strategy Meeting and one Board retreat.

## **9. Conclusion**

During the period under review, Transparency continued to be plagued by funding issues, which have impacted on our ability to fully implement our strategic plan, as envisaged. However, Transparency continues to enjoy the respect of a wide cross section of the national community which looks forward with great interest to its contribution on various issues. A solid working relationship is maintained with the Government and our relationship with other Civil Society Organisations has been consolidated and strengthened.

The complexity of the national agenda requires a significant contribution by Transparency and greater involvement from members would be welcome in the development of positions, programmes and initiatives pertinent to the issues confronting our society. With such support, we are confident that the organisation will continue to represent a force for positive change in Trinidad and Tobago.