



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO PARTICIPATES IN THE FIFTH SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE COMMUNITY OF LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN STATES (CELAC) 25<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2017 – PUNTA CANA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

#### **PORT OF SPAIN: 24<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2017**

Senator the Honourable Dennis Moses, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago will be attending the Fifth Summit of Heads of States and Government of the Community of Latin America and Caribbean States (CELAC) 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2017 and related meetings in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic.

The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) is a regional bloc of 33 Latin American and Caribbean states, formed at the Unity Summit in the Mayan Riviera, Mexico on 23 February 2010. CELAC was formally established on December 3, 2011 and aims to unite all of the Latin American and Caribbean States in order to strengthen the political, social and cultural integration of the region; improve its quality of life; stimulate its economic growth; and advance the well-being of all of its people.

Preceding the Fifth Summit, Minister Moses will attend the Thirteenth Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs on 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2017, where he will assist in laying the groundwork for the Summit declarations.

Trinidad and Tobago's participation at the Fifth Summit would serve to ensure inter alia that aspects of the country's domestic policy are incorporated within the Draft 2017 CELAC Action Plan in order to maximise the benefits of regional engagement. It will also ensure the visibility of the CARICOM region; assist in advancing the CARICOM agenda and guarantee that the issues of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) remain a regional focus. The Fifth Summit would also provide an avenue to deepen relations with CELAC Member States to facilitate technical cooperation in key areas that will assist in the achievement of national development.

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*Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago*

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AND CARICOM AFFAIRS**

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In addition to the General Debate on the Political Declaration, Action Plan and Special Declarations, the Heads of State and Government will engage in discussions on the direction of the CELAC; the development of its extra-regional relationships; and the Third CELAC –European Union (EU) Heads of State and Government Summit to be held in El Salvador in 2017.

During the absence of Minister Moses, Major General (Ret'd) The Honourable Edmund Dillon, Minister of National Security will perform the duties of Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs.

**Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs**