

REMARKS

by

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At the Opening Ceremony of the ILO/Cinterfor 41st Technical Committee Meeting

Monday, 8 July 2013

Senator the Honourable Fazal Karim, Minister of Tertiary Education and Skills Training, with responsibilities for the National Training Agency and Technical Vocational Education and Training(TVET)

Mr. Carl Francis, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development, Trinidad and Tobago

All other protocol observed.

Ladies and gentlemen, special invited guests, members of the media and participants the Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training (ILO/Cinterfor). Today at this 41st Technical Committee Meeting ILO/Cinterfor, it is a great opportunity for us to share and celebrate three important milestones, the 50th anniversary of ILO/Cinterfor and 50 years of Independence of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, also 50 years since ILO was established in the region-Trinidad and Tobago. This 41st Technical Committee Meeting of the ILO/Cinterfor follows two very important events held here in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago last week:

- the 8th ILO Meeting of Caribbean Ministers of Labour, and
- the 37th CARICOM Heads of Government Meeting which marked the 40th anniversary of the establishment of CARICOM.

Both meetings followed the International Labour Conference held in Geneva in June 2013.

The ILO Director General, Mr. Guy Ryder participated personally in the 8th ILO Meeting of the Caribbean Labour Ministers where he addressed the delegates and highlighted among others, high youth unemployment rate around the world and the mismatch of skills.

It is my distinct pleasure ladies and gentlemen to also warmly welcome the Ambassadors of, Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Mexico and Spain, who are interested in the activities of the ILO and may wish to take this opportunity to interact with the delegations from their respective countries.

I also warmly welcome the Members of the Governing Body of the ILO, including Trinidad and Tobago. I wish to pay special tribute to Sir Roy Trotman, former spokesperson of the Caribbean Workers' group at the ILO Governing Body, representative of the Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL). Sir Roy Trotman has a wealth of knowledge and experience of the activities and exchanges in the national and international trade unions and with ILO/Cinterfor.

This 41st Technical Committee Meeting of ILO/Cinterfor is an opportunity for all of us to share and learn from each other over the next three days. Ladies and gentlemen, permit me also to recognize the personal interest of Honourable Mr. Fazal Karim, then Chief Executive Officer of the National Training Agency of Trinidad and Tobago (NTATT) who played a critical role in the 36th Technical Committee Meeting of ILO/Cinterfor, held in La Antigua, Guatemala in July 2003. His enthusiasm in technical and vocational training provided the opportunity to keep the Technical Committee Meeting in the Caribbean in 2013.

I would also like to take this opportunity to encourage all participants of the 41st Technical Committee Meeting of ILO/Cinterfor to play a pivotal role and contribute to the consultation process of Post 2015. To date, national consultations in the Caribbean have taken place in Grenada, Saint Lucia, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. However, it is imperative that skills development, employment and social protection floors are included in the new Sustainable Development Goals, of [The Post-2015 Development Agenda](#).

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for the opportunity to present remarks on behalf of the ILO Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean at this important gathering. I wish you a successful and productive meeting over the next three days.
