



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO MANUFACTURERS'

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 12th November, 2015

TTMA CALLS FOR THE USE OF SOUND JUDGEMENT

The Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association (TTMA) stands in solidarity with all unions negotiating for safe working conditions, fair wages and the best interests of their workers. We are empathetic to the workers of Petrotrin who are facing job loss with the state energy company due to the restructuring of the organisation. The TTMA hopes that the government will treat the outgoing workers fairly and with dignity for their contribution to this sector of our nation. Notwithstanding, the TTMA does not support the nationwide shutdown proposed by several unions on September 7th 2018 as such action would adversely affect the interests of the majority of the nation's citizens.

Unfortunately, Trinidad and Tobago is ranked 83rd in the competitiveness index and 102nd in the rating of 'ease of doing business' on our shores. As reported in the 2017 "Review of the Economy", productivity in Trinidad and Tobago's industrial sectors declined by 8.0 percent during fiscal 2015/2016, a steep decline from the 1.4 percent decline recorded in fiscal 2014/2015. Given the low rank of these benchmarks, any call which may decrease productivity even further will only serve to discourage investment and negatively affect the livelihood of a great number of citizens many of whom are struggling to keep afloat in a challenged economy at this time.

TTMA President Mr. Christopher Alcazar emphasised, "The TTMA asks employees to consider the impact their actions would have on businesses small, medium and large which are in varied ways having difficulty in keeping their doors open at this time and many of whom are struggling to maintain their complement of employees from month to month. Our climate for investment is crippled by actions such as these and with an already abysmal productivity index, it is important to look at our collective concerns in the context of our current economic landscape. While we acknowledge that there are many factors which contribute to the low levels of productivity in our nation, poor work ethic in the national labour force has been cited in international benchmarking as the number one problematic factor for doing business in this country for yet another year. Whether we like it or not, Trinidad and Tobago does not exist in a vacuum, but we compete everyday on a global scale. While, there may be need for dialogue or ventilating of concerns between unions and the government, we must be cognisant of the entire picture for the greater good of the survival of business and the ultimate sustainability of employment levels that affect all citizens."

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TTMA Building

42 Tenth Avenue Barataria

Tel: (868) 675-8862

Email: events@ttma.com

Fax: (868) 675-9000

Website: www.ttma.com

Media contact:

Kailash Jaikaransingh

Marketing, Communication and Events

Email: marketing@ttma.com