TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO (EIGHTH MEETING)

A. With reference to Article 7—Public Sector (UNCAC), cite and summarise any measures that:
   i. Establish and strengthen systems to ensure transparency and accountability in the recruitment, hiring, retention, promotion and retirement of public officials in criminal justice institutions, including where specific procedures exist for the recruitment and hiring of senior officials in criminal justice institutions, if they are different from other civil servants.

In Trinidad and Tobago, the Public Service Commission is largely responsible for the recruitment, hiring, retention, promotion and retirement of public officials in the prison service. The Public Service Commission Regulations, and the Prison Service Act, Chap 13:02 (and subsidiary legislation, the Prison Service (Code of Conduct) Regulations), have conferred on the Commissioner of Prisons for the Trinidad and Tobago Prisons Service (TTPrS), authority to, inter alia, recruit and promote officers, up to a certain rank. Vacancies for the position of Prison Officer I are advertised nationally, with the Superintendent of Prisons making an initial selection of candidates who have satisfied the legal qualifications listed in the vacancy announcement. Background checks are usually carried out at this stage. Candidates are required to attend an interview with a panel of senior prison officers, and may also be required to take a written test.

The Public Service Commission is directly responsible for the recruitment and promotion of senior officials in the Prison Service, from the rank of Assistant Superintendent of Prison to Commissioner of Prisons. Promotional examinations are available for senior officers in the Service, and consideration is given to the results of these examinations, as well as seniority, educational qualifications, merit and ability.

In the case of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS), the Commissioner of Police (COP) is empowered to manage the Police Service, and to ensure that the human, financial and material resources available to the Service are used in an efficient and effective manner. This power is guided by the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago Chap 1:01, the Police Service Act, Chap. 15:01 and the Police Service Regulations Chap 15:01. These offer strict procedures and guidelines related to the recruitment, hiring, retention, promotion and retirement of officers.
In the TTPS, recruits are required to submit a non-intimate DNA sample and a police certificate of character upon application. Once shortlisted by the Recruiting Officer, candidates are required to attend an interview with a panel of senior officers. If successful, candidates must then submit to a polygraph test, a psychological test and a test for dangerous drugs. Additional background checks and vetting may be required, depending on the unit to which they are assigned. Performance assessments, examinations and a probationary period, are tools used in the promotion of officers.

In the case of the TTPS, the Police Service Commission (PSC) was established to oversee the recruitment of senior officials, namely, the posts of Commissioner of Police and Deputy Commissioner of Police. The Commission functions as an independent body with a constitutional mandate to execute the following core responsibilities:

(i) Appoint persons to hold or act in the office of Commissioner of Police and Deputy Commissioner of Police.
(ii) Make appointments on promotions and confirm appointments.
(iii) Remove from office and exercise disciplinary control over the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of Police.
(iv) Monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of the discharge of their functions.
(v) Prepare an annual performance appraisal report in such form as may be prescribed by the Commission respecting and for the information of the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of Police.
(vi) Hear and determine appeals from decisions of the Commissioner of Police, or any person to whom the powers of the Commissioner of Police have been delegated, as a result of disciplinary proceedings brought against a police officer appointed by the Commissioner of Police.

Additionally, the Police Complaints Authority (PCA), an independent, civilian oversight body, primarily established to investigate criminal offences involving police officers, police corruption and serious police misconduct, advises and recommends to the TTPS, ways and means of strengthening systems for transparency and accountability.

11. Implement adequate procedures for the selection and training of individuals for public positions considered especially vulnerable to corruption in criminal justice institutions and the rotation, where appropriate, of such individuals to other positions.

With regard to training in general, the Research and Developmental Training Department of the Prison Service is responsible for identifying and meeting the training needs of the Service. In the case of Second Division Officers, the Superintendent of the respective stations, are responsible for nominating candidates for the training courses offered by the Service. In the case of First Division Officers, in determining nominees
for training opportunities, consideration is given for those requiring relevant training in order to be eligible for promotion or lateral movement.

In the case of the TTPS, performance appraisals, requests of certain units and divisions, and the TTPS strategic plan, guide the general work plans of the Police Training Academy and the Human Resource Department. As is the case with the TTPs, heads of the various stations, units and branches are responsible for nominating officers and civilians for training opportunities.

Within the TTPS, the rotation of officers across the various units and divisions, is employed in order to, inter alia, safeguard against corrupt practices or behaviour.

iii. Prescribe criteria concerning candidature for and election to public office for members of criminal justice institutions, if applicable, as well as measures to enhance transparency in the funding of candidatures and of contributions to political parties, where applicable.

As per the Police Service Act, Chap 15:01, regarding political activities, a police officer is disqualified from membership of the Senate, the House of Representatives, the Tobago House of Assembly, or a Municipal Corporation. The Prisons Service (Code of Conduct) Regulations, Chap 13:02, similarly disqualifies members of the TTPs from membership in the Senate, House of Representatives, Tobago House of Assembly, or a Municipal Corporation.