

**INTERVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR
UNTOC 14TH Session WRG 11-12 September 2023, Vienna, Austria.**

Mr. Chair,

Distinguished Delegates, I thank you for the opportunity to make this intervention on behalf of the GORTT and to build on my colleagues contribution.

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago not only understands but highly values the need for international and multilateral cooperation. To this end, Trinidad and Tobago is a party to various multilateral treaties dealing with criminal matters, mutual legal assistance and international cooperation in criminal matters inclusive of the UNTOC Convention.

Trinidad and Tobago has taken measures to effectively implement a solid legal framework and best practices to aid in the fight against transnational organised crime and The **Mutual Assistance Cooperation in Criminal Matters Act Chap. 11:24 (“MACMA”)** is a prime example that illustrate Trinidad and Tobago’s commitment to aligning our domestic legislation with the UNTOC.

Holistically, MACMA has established the framework for the provision of mutual legal assistance through international and multilateral cooperation. A 2021 amendment to MACMA has further strengthened Trinidad and Tobago’s ability to provide international cooperation and by virtue of **Act No. 9 of 2021, sections 32, 33 and 40 of the MACMA** were amended to allow Trinidad and Tobago to provide mutual assistance in criminal matters.

These changes enable Trinidad and Tobago to extend mutual assistance in criminal matters to a non-Commonwealth country, provided that both countries are signatories to a treaty containing provisions related to criminal matters. However, they do not have an existing arrangement for mutual assistance in criminal matters. Furthermore, upon an application of the requesting country, the Attorney General may, by Order, subject to negative resolution of Parliament, declare the treaty as an arrangement to render mutual assistance.

These proposed amendments seek to expand the range of countries to whom mutual legal assistance can be provided to, for countries which are parties to several multilateral conventions such as the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), by way of Attorney General Orders under these amendments.

Mutual legal assistance can also be provided in administrative matters and informally under section 5 of the MACMA, where coercive measures such as court orders are not

required and where no bi-lateral treaty or arrangement such as recognised under the Harare Scheme is present. Again these amendments will greatly enhance the ability of the Central Authority Unit to provide such assistance where coercive measures are required under such multilateral treaties.

In conclusion, Trinidad and Tobago remains unwavering in its dedication to combating the pervasive threat of transnational organized crime and our legislative efforts are a testament to our commitment to upholding global standards.

I thank you.