

Draft Terms of Reference Civil Society Board (CSB)

1 *Brief Overview*

- 1.1 The experience of Civil Society involvement in making policy and influencing legislation has been restricted to informal ad hoc consultation. In that connection, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) is now taking steps to formalise the role of Civil Society through the establishment of a *Civil Society Board (CSB)* given that Civil Society has become an important actor in National Development.

2 *Board Membership*

- 2.1 *Civil Society Board Members* must be one of the two *Civil Society Delegates* elected to represent a registered *Civil Society Organization* and affiliated *Civil Society Sector*. Not more than two (2) persons representing the same *Civil Society Sector* shall be appointed to serve as a Board Member. The Board Members shall serve for two years but are eligible for re-appointment on one further consecutive occasion.
- 2.2 *Civil Society Organizations* may not replace a Board Member until the end of his or her term of office, unless he or she resigns, dies or otherwise becomes incapacitated, is temporarily unavailable during his or her term of office or misconducts himself in office or in relation to his duties, or otherwise brings the organization into disrepute, in which case the other *Civil Society Delegate* will take his or her place as a Board Member either temporarily or until his or her term of office is scheduled to terminate.
- 2.3 *Civil Society Board Members* shall be appointed by the *Civil Society Organization* based on a preferential voting system every two years. Each *Civil Society Organization* shall have one vote, to be cast by the senior *Civil Society Delegate*.

3 *Mandate*

The *Civil Society Board* shall:

- 3.1 consider the form and content of the **People's Charter** and the National Commitment and make recommendations to the *Economic Development Board* for any changes considered appropriate.
- 3.2 establish the *Secretariat to the Civil Society Board* to provide technical and administrative support to the CSB. An interim Secretariat would be established and operationalized by the Office of the Prime Minister until such time as the CSB formally establishes, whether by way of appointment, confirmation or ratification, the Secretariat to the CSB.
- 3.3 establish the *Stakeholder Advisory Councils* as it considers appropriate from among individual Board Members and relevant experts in their respective fields to deal with issues at a local and regional level relating to such Civil Society Sectors as education; health; justice and security; business; agriculture; labour; environment; social development for poverty alleviation; construction; culture and heritage; sport and Tobago Affairs.
- 3.4 consult with the *Economic Development Board* as necessary on national issues to solicit the views of the *Civil Society Organisations* to enable such views to be taken into account when making recommendations to the Prime Minister or the Cabinet.
- 3.5 ensure consultation between the relevant *Stakeholder Advisory Council* and the *Economic Development Board* on any matters arising with respect to any *Civil Society Sector* to enable their views to be taken into account when making recommendations to the Prime Minister or the Cabinet.
- 3.6 support *Civil Society Organisations* whenever they can carry out public service works more effectively than governmental agencies in the areas of education, charitable and social work.
- 3.7 undertake a nationwide sensitization and consultation process to:
 - i. inform the citizenry about the role and function of the **CSB**; and
 - ii. highlight the importance of the involvement of *CSOs* and individual citizens in the process of good governance.