

People's National Movement

Annual Convention

Queen's Park Savannah

Port-of-Spain

November 16, 2014

Draft Policy Statement 2014/2015 (Summary)

This draft policy statement provides the basis for key areas of PNM policy going forward into the next General Election, due in 2015. It is a work in progress and is thus not exhaustive. It is intended to be a summary of some of our major policies.

A more detailed and comprehensive policy document will be available for scrutiny and comment early in 2015, and will include other areas such as Trade and Industry. In particular, a comprehensive policy on National Security will be posted in the near future.

As it is a draft policy statement, we invite comments and recommendations from all stakeholders.

This statement covers the following policy areas (other areas will be included in due course):

Agriculture

Culture and the Media

Education

Energy

Health

Infrastructure

International Relations

Local Government

Macroeconomics

National Security

Self-Employment and Enterprise

Social Sector

Youth and Sports

It should be noted that there is a difference between policy and strategy.

A policy statement is a guide for decision-making. It defines the broad goals and objectives of an organisation.

On the other hand, a strategy deals with the allocation and deployment of human and physical resources so as to achieve the desired goals. A strategic plan, therefore, involves a detailed plan of action designed to achieve a specific result in the context of the broader policy objectives, with more focus on specific issues, such as would be found in an election manifesto.

This policy statement covers the PNM's broad goals and objectives in major areas going forward. Some areas will be covered in more detail than others at this time.

It is now well recognized that the lack of leadership and the absence of specific policies, strategies and plans over the last 4 years have set the country back in its development by 10 years. Hence the need to revisit Vision 2020, to determine what is now required to allow Trinidad and Tobago to achieve developed country status by the year 2030

In developing our policies, we had the benefit of detailed discussions at the historic Hyatt Convention on October 26, 2014, where over 700 delegates of the PNM, from all over the country met to discuss, critique and comment on presentations of draft policy from expert facilitators in a number of key policy areas. The comments, suggestions and recommendations of our delegates at that

Convention are being used to refine and finalise our policy, as we prepare to once more take on the responsibility of governing Trinidad and Tobago.

I will now give some brief details of some of our key policies. Please note that this is a work in progress.

## **AGRICULTURE**

At present, Agriculture contributes just 0.5% of our GDP, while our food import bill is now \$4 billion, an untenable situation. Over the past 4 years, the output of this sector has declined by 15%.

Our priority therefore is to create a strong, modern, prosperous and competitive agriculture sector, in order to improve the nation's food security and reduce poverty.

Agriculture forms the cornerstone of the PNM's thrust towards rural development and we intend to transform this sector into an Economic Growth Sector.

The PNM will implement appropriate policies to increase agriculture's share of our GDP, increase employment in the sector and in particular increase the contribution of agriculture to economic growth and development in rural Trinidad and Tobago. There is consensus that institutional weaknesses have been a major

factor in contributing to the low status of agriculture in the country, and the lack of performance in the sector itself

In addition, chaos and confusion has been created by a number of changes in the structure of the ministry responsible for agriculture policy, oversight and administration.

To address this problem, the key issues and policy framework include:

- Establish an appropriate structure for the ministry responsible for agriculture, and restore and administration to that ministry
- Review the various State and non-State agencies and organizations involved in agriculture to improve governance and improve service delivery to farmers.
- Implement a system to protect the country's agricultural land base;
- Improve the capacity of the land administration to effectively grant, renew, manage and enforce land leases and provide farmers with title and tenure
- Improve land readiness through land management, drainage and irrigation development, and access road development, improvement, and maintenance

- Develop an agricultural sector plan with the view to increasing the sector's contribution to GDP and employment in the sector
- Promote cooperatives and other ways for farmers to combine for economies of scale, mechanization, research and development
- Promote the concept of "Farm to Table" in rural communities and provide farmers with the resources to combine production for local processing, packaging and delivery to consumers, including the export market
- Promote agriculture entrepreneurship particularly among rural youth as a key element of socioeconomic development in rural communities
- Systematically engage farmers on changes to agriculture policy and regulation
- Improve road maintenance, information management, and resource allocation
- Review the subsidy policies and the administration of subsidies and incentives for farmers to simplify, provide faster payment and prevent abuse
- Deal effectively with the risk of praedial larceny
- Build effective and supportive relationships between the universities and farmers, to build and give farmers access to technical assistance

- Consolidate and strengthen research and development and extension capabilities, ensuring that these services reach farmers where and when they are required
- Encourage and promote agricultural practices and a production environment that responds to consumer demands for safe food and environmental sustainability
- Use agriculture policy to promote health and wellness, healthy lifestyles and environmental sustainability, particularly in the testing of chemicals and their use in farming.
- Review the policies for financing farmers and providing credit facilities, recognizing that these policies must support agriculture policies.

## **CULTURE AND THE MEDIA**

The People's National Movement policy on Culture and the Media will focus on the preservation and promotion of this country's unique culture. In doing so, we also intend to facilitate the growth of the creative industries through the fostering of innovation, and creating a media sector capable of taking our message to the world.

We see culture, not just as the celebration of artistic enterprise but also offering an opportunity for economic development through encouraging tourism and a media environment capable of monetising the Trinidad and Tobago culture, thereby making a significant contribution to the diversification of our economy.

Trinidad and Tobago is now seeking to diversify the national economy, and the area of Culture and Media, in which we have produced two Nobel Prizes and several world class performers, presents a timely opportunity to increase the contribution of this sector to the economy, to manage our natural creativity.

At this stage, the PNM believes that there is a greater role for the stakeholders in the creative industries sector to take charge in forging this new direction.

Our policy on Culture and the Media will ensure:

- Special attention is paid to the unique cultures of Tobago, as well as the Indo and Afro-Trinidadian communities in the formation of the national cultural enterprise so that the entire country is mobilised and has a stake in the success of this endeavour;
- The promotion of Trinidad and Tobago culture nationally and internationally forms an important element of promoting this country and as part of our international diplomacy. This will see the play playing subtle



but important role in the international marketing as well as patronage of the arts;

- The provision of access to world-class facilities for artists, media operators, film-makers and other participants in the creative industries that will facilitate the achievement of international standards to be better able to compete effectively on the world stage;
- Facilitation of participation in and enjoyment of all forms of national cultural activity by promoting widespread adoption of new media platforms, especially online and mobile communications, in an effort to create a viable local market for our creative industries that will be the base for our international thrust;
- Facilitation of growth of media and the creative industries by providing an enabling legislative environment free of unnecessary regulatory and bureaucratic restrictions that encourages private sector participation and competition while diminishing the direct role of the state;
- Participation of local communities is encouraged through schools and local government bodies as a means of growing and refining the raw talent that

is abundant across the country, while incubating the next stream of creative capacity;

- The promotion of internationally accepted standards in all aspects of cultural expressions and media endeavours, including access to funding and enhancing the role of private capital formation in the creative industries as a major element of our diversification thrust.

## **Education**

The PNM has been at the forefront of development of education in Trinidad and Tobago. Before the advent of the PNM in 1956, our system of education was elitist and reserved for the privileged few. We changed that and introduced free primary, secondary and tertiary education in this country. We saw the need for creating and enabling easy access to education, most recently with the revolutionary GATE programme, which has caused our country's participation rate in tertiary education to increase by 500% (five-fold) in the 2001-2010 period.

However, our education system is currently in need of serious reform. Problems of school violence, underachievement (particularly among males), relevance, absenteeism, marginalisation and inequity persist. Our curriculum is in need of

modernisation and aging and poorly maintained school infrastructure continues to create issues for many communities across the country. It is not all bad, however, since despite our problems, we have one of the highest literacy rates in the region and our students consistently take the lion's share of awards at CXC and CAPE. Our scholars and skilled workers are world class.

Our education policy will thus build on past successes and focus on key issues of the modern era that need urgent attention and proactive intervention. As we examine our situation today and prepare for the next 10-15 years, we must recognize that the key to our country's future development lies to a large extent in our Young People and a strategy for education of our young people must receive intensive attention.

The mantra of our first Prime Minister, Dr. Eric Williams, - "Discipline, Production and Tolerance" carries a message that is perhaps more relevant to our educational system today than years ago.

The policies to address this include the following:

- Starting at the primary level, and continuing throughout the school system, develop a culture of Discipline, Production and Tolerance. Emphasise these core values in the curriculum.

- Implement a comprehensive, nationwide, modern, efficient, targeted, timely and sustainable maintenance and construction programme to cope with our ageing school infrastructure
- Emphasize the richness of our cultural diversity and eliminate any dissonance that may arise from ethnic, cultural, religious and class differences
- Mobilize the artistic community to take a leadership role in cultural diversification and cultural education
- Ensure that our system of education at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels prepares our young people for the challenging world of science and technology
- Ensure that the education and training of our teachers is adequate to meet the challenges that face our young people including penetration of foreign cultures, technological devices and social media
- Foster, develop and encourage best practices in the administration of the educational system
- Provide clear prospects for advancement by all teachers in their career and profession

- Equip all schools to benefit from technological innovations (not just laptops)
- Ensure that our post-secondary and tertiary education is kept abreast and in sync with what is taking place at these levels throughout the world
- Develop a culture in tertiary educational institutions that leads to innovation, entrepreneurship and wealth creation
- Ensure that our school curriculum and teaching methods are relevant and continuously updated
- Develop and encourage a culture of research and development in all tertiary level institutions, both public and private
- Maintain first world standards in terms of enrolment and participation of our citizens in post-secondary and tertiary education
- Provide appropriate mechanisms for second chances for students at all levels
- Ensure universal, appropriate early childhood education, and maintain and continue our system of universal secondary and tertiary education
- Ensure availability of and easy access to post-secondary and tertiary education in all areas of the country including Tobago
- Promote and encourage continuing education and adult education

- Fully integrate sports, culture, language arts and physical education into the education system
- Harmonize, rationalize and modernize the legislation governing the education sector

## **Energy**

Energy is the lifeblood of the Trinidad and Tobago economy. It contributes over 50% of our GDP (compare this with 0.5% from Agriculture) and 60% of Government revenues. Over the last 4 years, the management of the energy sector has been a colossal failure. The sector has been characterised by declining production, shortfalls, downtime, inertia, procrastination and extremely poor decision-making. In addition, the cancellation and abandonment of several projects and the violation of contractual agreements, all of which supported the continued growth and expansion of the energy sector, have created a difficult situation that we must now confront head on.

To reverse this pernicious trend, we must create partnerships and innovations that foster self-reliance and a resilient energy sector, through an ethical, efficient and evolving regulatory framework by:

- Expanding and integrating all aspects of energy and their support services.
- Facilitating and encouraging the growth of locally owned energy sector companies
- Maximising local content and local value added
- Promoting the development of new industries and innovation and fostering awareness and acceptance of new technologies.
- Meeting international standards.
- Working in partnership with business and labour to maximize output, while ensuring equity and social justice

We must and we will:

- Rebuild our reputation for integrity, transparency and respect for signed contracts and agreements
- Create an environment in which producer companies, both existing and new, become aggressive about seeking new discoveries in oil and gas. This

will include accelerated and decisive negotiation of new gas supply contracts, to replace long-term contracts that are about to expire (in 2015 and 2018, under the next PNM administration), in the best interest of the country and all concerned. This matter has been dragging on too long, and it is not in our interest to wait until our hand is in the lion's mouth to renegotiate these important contracts

- Develop appropriate strategies to monetize the discovery of reserves of natural gas found in deep waters, which are classified as expensive gas
- Ensure that the gas intensive industries, such as petrochemicals and heavy industry, remain competitive and are encouraged to expand existing operations
- Develop strategies to counter the major difficulties which the LNG industry of Trinidad and Tobago (T&T) now faces, including renegotiation of arrangements for a more equitable share of the revenue for all players from the sale of LNG in our major markets in South and Central America, Europe and the Far East
- Recover the projects that have been abandoned with respect to downstream industries that are still relevant, in order to provide the country with the basic building blocks for the manufacturing industry



- Attract and retain first class professionals to the management and boards of State enterprises, while minimizing political risk for these individuals
- Recreate in the minds of the international community that T&T is a preferred destination for investment in the energy sector
- Increase efficiency and overhaul the institutional framework of the State Enterprise sector to ensure that they can meet the demands of a changing global energy environment and respond promptly and effectively to proposals from potential investors
- Ensure that the local private sector obtains a larger share of the activity generated by the energy sector
- Immediately commence discussions with all major players in the Trinidad and Tobago energy sector, upstream, midstream and downstream, similar to the recent “Call for Evidence” by the UK Government, with a view to devising appropriate improvements to our oil and gas taxation regime and gas pricing regime to ensure that we have an attractive, competitive and responsive fiscal environment, that will maximise recovery of our hydrocarbon resources and national income, and put us back on a path to sustained growth in the sector

## Health Care

Many factors combine together to affect the health of individuals and communities. Whether people are healthy or not is determined by their circumstances and their environment. To a great extent, where people live, the state of their environment, genetics, income, education and their relationship with friends and family, all matter to their health. For example, the greater the difference between the richest and the poorest in the society, the greater the difference in their health. We know now that safe water, clean air, healthy work places, safe houses and communities all contribute to good health, as do employment and working conditions.

Health services and the use of health services that prevent and treat diseases also contribute to good health. However, personal behaviour and coping skills, balanced eating, keeping active, absence of smoking, responsible use of alcohol and how we deal with stress and genetics all affect health tremendously.

It with this knowledge that we need to set ourselves on a path in the direction of a "Health in all Policies" approach which give our Ministry of Health the power to influence activities in other sectors once these activities are known to have adverse impacts on population health

As we seek to modernize the national health system we need to remember that the foundation established by "Public Health" is what stands between countries and epidemics or disasters such as Ebola. The modern health system will have at its foundation up-to-date evidence-based public health principles, practices and services supported by regional and national institutions.

One of the desired goals of our health system is achieve to “Universal Health Coverage”. In this region we have always pursued this universal approach by establishing free health services at health centres and hospitals. The requirement at present is for us to assess where gaps exist in service type, complexity of service, service integration, volume and quality. It is for us to close those gaps so as to complete the access to a "Universal Health Package" for the national community.

## Higher Standards of Health Care

A key feature of a modern health care system is "objective standards of care".

Many of the complaints of our citizens using the public and private services relate to standards of care and the accountability of our professionals in both the sectors in the delivery or non-delivery of that care. As a major priority and policy we will ensure that proper standards of care for the national health care system (public and private) are established, supported by the appropriate legislation, regulations and guidelines to make them binding on all health care practitioners and institutions, to improve service delivery and accountability, and to protect the public interest

## Efficiency, Effectiveness and Value for money in the Public Delivery System

There has been a tripling of public resources for health between 2005 and 2014. However, when compared with some of our Caribbean neighbours, the consequent improvement which was expected has not materialized.

Administrative and clinical managers must be held accountable for results, and the regional and national boards must be held accountable for the performance of the administrative and clinical managers.

### Modern Health Information System

A foundation pillar of all modern health care systems is a modern health information system. It is well known that the critical feature of modern banking is the modern evolving information system which supports it. The same standard has to be applied to health systems globally, regionally and locally.

A modern health information system is an imperative and must be maintained accordingly. Another major priority will be to ensure that that accurate and timely information is produced which will tell "who is doing what to whom, where it is being done, and at what cost and objective quality". This will allow for patients to interface with the system for health advice and appointments. Such a system will also service the needs of professionals, both for referrals and the sharing of diagnostics. The system will also support administrators as

they seek to monitor costs, quality and outputs.

### Community involvement and empowerment

There must be national policy to inform the population about health risks and the ways of protecting themselves and minimizing these risks for themselves and their families. This will allow for positive health behaviours to develop in addition to reducing the use of health services.

Major programme areas that will be reviewed and strengthened include

- 1) maternal and child health;
- 2) mental health;
- 3) people and patients with disabilities; and
- 4) caring for the elderly

Financing the Modernization of the Health System

There is no question that the modernization of the health system cannot be left to the government alone. The multi-sectoral approach that will be required to deal with health threats to the population and the importance that public health must play in this suggests that the financing of the modern health system through universal health insurance, especially for vulnerable groups, needs to be as broad based as possible.

As we move to make Universal Health Coverage a reality, and as we seek to incorporate a modern health information system to control costs and lift the quality of health services, the Social Security System and the Business Community should see themselves as equal partners with the government in the modernization drive. It is important that tri-partite discussion be initiated to discuss the method of financial support which will be necessary.

## **Infrastructure**

The PNM Government is committed to providing the nation with a world class infrastructure.

To achieve this, the following policy initiatives will be pursued, among others:

- National Highways Programme
- East/West Corridor Transportation Project
- Bus Fleet Renewal Programme
- Mass Transit System
- North-South Coastal Water Taxi Service
- Upgrade of Government Shipping Services - Fast Ferries
- Air Transport Infrastructure Development
- Modernisation of the Licensing Office
- Modernisation of our motor vehicle and traffic laws
- Comprehensive Drainage Development Programme

As priorities, we will focus on the following specific projects in the first instance:



- Completion of the San Fernando to Pt Fortin Highway in a manner that best serves the national interest and the interest of all affected parties
- San Fernando to Mayaro Freeway
- Wallerfield to Manzanilla Highway
- Port of Spain to Chaguaramas Causeway

Our objective is when this new highway grid is complete, no part of Trinidad will be more than 2 ½ hours away from any other part of Trinidad by road.

East/West Corridor Transportation Project

Removal of traffic lights and construction of overpasses and interchanges from Port-of-Spain to Sangre Grande

Comprehensive national programme of construction, improvement, Management and Maintenance of Main and Secondary Roads and Bridges

Establishment of Roads Authority

Implementation of a comprehensive National Drainage Plan

Establishment of a Transit Authority to coordinate, administer and regulate all forms of Public transportation in accordance with a national transportation master plan

Review of the operation of the Air-bridge and Sea-Bridge to Tobago for efficiency, with greater participation by the THA in the design and provision of the service

Relocation of the Port of Port of Spain to a more appropriate location, in order to facilitate the growth and development of the shipping and sea cargo industry in Trinidad and Tobago

Modernization of the structure and management of the Port Authority for greater efficiency

Construction of a new world class international airport at Crown Point in Tobago

## **HOUSING**

Ensure that affordable housing is available to all citizens regardless of their personal financial circumstances. Abolish stated policy of providing houses ONLY for those who can afford to Purchase units

Establish mechanism for the intervention of a private sector in providing lower and middle income homes for purchase using both private and state lands

Focus on development and infill of existing communities with small and medium sized housing projects.

## **International Relations and Foreign Policy**

It is a priority of a new PNM Administration to ground Trinidad and Tobago's foreign policy on the tangible underpinnings of economic and social development; to transform our Foreign Service to meet the needs of the 21st Century; and to restore Port of Spain to its once held position as the diplomatic capital of the Caribbean.

The PNM's objective to redefine our Foreign Policy based on an analysis of current interests and priorities, particularly on the centrality of trade and investment as principle determinants, warrants a focus beyond our traditional relationships with the United Kingdom, the United States, Africa, India and the CARICOM.

While not proposing any downgrading of relations with our traditional partners, a new PNM Administration proposes to intensify our relations with Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina and Chile in Latin America; Panama in Central America; China; Kenya and Tanzania in Africa; Russia and Eastern Europe; Qatar and Dubai; and Cuba, Curaçao and the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean.

## STRUCTURE

Recognizing what it considers to be a less than adequate response to significant and complex developments in international relations over the past two decades - the impact of economic and political power redistribution; globalisation; cultural fragmentation and modern technology- a new PNM Administration will rigorously pursue the re-structuring of the Foreign Service to reflect a focus on an issues-based paradigm with an emphasis on: economic diplomacy; trade and investment promotion; energy diplomacy; the diplomacy of security and terrorism; the diplomacy of the environment, in particular climate change; public diplomacy; health diplomacy; digital diplomacy; sports and cultural diplomacy; and human rights diplomacy.

## PEOPLE

The PNM believes that the Foreign Ministry needs to be staffed, trained, and adequately resourced to cope with the impact of the massive global changes.

Accordingly, a focal point for a PNM Administration will be on the Recruitment, Training and Retraining, Motivating, Reinvigorating and Re-directing of Foreign Service personnel and to predicate any action it may take to promptly proceed with new recruitment, on a manpower audit to identify vacancies, and skills gaps, as well as the restoration of effective inspectorate capability.

## REGIONAL CO-OPERATION

The PNM has been a consistent and unequivocal advocate of regional co-operation as a principal tenet of its foreign policy, and successive Administrations have worked assiduously to advance the process of regional integration. Since its departure from Government, the Party has become increasingly concerned at what is perceived as a deleterious relationship with our CARICOM partners.

It therefore strongly believes that Trinidad and Tobago needs to invest more time and effort in its relations with CARICOM, to repair relationships that have been damaged over the last 4 years, such as the relationship with Jamaica in particular, and to focus on the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) for which the Secretariat of the latter is headquartered in Port of Spain.

## **Local Government**

As indicated in our 2013 Local Government Manifesto, the PNM views an effective system of local government as an essential component in people-centered development, especially at the community level. Local government in Trinidad has been burdened over the years with complaints of inefficiency and poor delivery and a general perception that by and large local government bodies fail to provide goods and services to the public in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Many reasons have been given for this perception, including lack of funding, inadequate resources, lack of technical staff, lack of autonomy from Central Government, a view that representation at the local level is a “part time” responsibility, deficiencies in the law which render the elected councilors and aldermen powerless to give appropriate instructions to the public servants that manage the corporations, lack of executive authority on the part of the elected Councils, inadequate remuneration for local government representatives, among many other reasons.

The PNM's vision for Local Government seeks to address all of these issues and to remove the constraints, red tape and bureaucracy that prevent local government bodies from doing their work in an effective and efficient manner. Here is our ten (10) point plan:-

1. Secure Funding

Amend the relevant revenue and taxation laws to allow all Local Government bodies to retain the taxes collected within their boundaries. This dedicated source of funding will allow Corporations to acquire the resources to empower their workforce to operate at maximum capacity.

2. Executive Authority

Amend the Municipal Corporation Act to give Local Government Corporations a level of autonomy and executive authority similar to what is now enjoyed by the Tobago House of Assembly.

3. New Responsibilities

The PNM believe that there are several tasks and functions now managed by the Central Government that can be more effectively handled by Local Government bodies. Additionally, the PNM sees no need for a Ministry of Local Government. We believe that the Regional and Municipal Corporations should have a direct relationship with the Ministry of Finance in similar manner to the THA, to ensure adequacy of funding, but that they should be given the autonomy to develop and implement their own regional policies, plans and programmes, within the framework of national policy. We believe that policy at a local level is best developed from the ground up, rather than from the top down

#### 4. Development of a Cadre of Competent Local Contractors

Work done by Local Government bodies should have a truly local flavor and be a stimulus for generating local economic activity and construction capacity, as well as the development of skills within local communities.

#### 5. More Effective Municipal Police



To improve overall law enforcement and public safety, and to assist in the maintenance of law and order within communities, more responsibilities will be given to Municipal Police.

#### 6. Development Control

Provide the Local Government Bodies with additional responsibilities as it relates to planning and building approvals for dwelling houses, simple buildings and small developments, thereby decentralizing the approvals process.

#### 7. Infrastructure Works

Completely restructure and decentralize the system for the implementation of local infrastructure projects, to allow Municipal Corporations to engage directly, suitably qualified local contractors for drainage and roadwork, among other infrastructure projects, to allow work on these projects to commence in a timely manner.

#### 8. Disaster Management

As first respondents in the event of a natural disaster, Local Government bodies must be reformed to allow direct collaboration with the relevant Central Government agencies without the need for intervention of a Minister at first instance,



## 9. Involvement of Civil Society in the Decision-making Process

To address this concern expressed by countless number of citizens, we will create a formal consultative process and forum where NGOs, CBOs and other civil society groups and interested parties can comment on and critique the projects, plans and programs of Local Government bodies before they are implemented, and make recommendations for improvement.

## 10. Regional Development Plans

Detailed regional development plans were done for the 14 Municipal Corporations, these will serve as a guide for the future development; suitably updated, they will form the basis of the PNM's Local Development Program for each Municipal Corporation going forward.

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The PNM intends to establish a Ministry of Rural Development to focus exclusively on rural areas and its speedy development, so as to improve the quality of life and economic well-being of people living there. The intent is to bring all aspects of rural development now scattered in many ministries under one roof, or insure that there is coordination of the plans, projects and activities.

## Macroeconomic Policy

The goal of our macroeconomic policies will be to achieve fiscal balance, high levels of employment and price stability. More specifically in terms of fiscal policy, that is the changes to be made to government spending and taxation to achieve these goals, we will:

- Control the level of Government spending to long term sustainable levels that are consistent with revenue generation capacity
- Address any existing imbalances between capital versus recurrent expenditure since these are significant indicators of the priorities of the government
- Limit the build-up in national debt - especially in times of high energy prices
- Rationalize tax collection efforts
- Enhance contributions to Heritage Fund during windfalls

Our Monetary Policy will be aimed primarily at price and exchange rate stability and policies to alleviate major increases in food prices which have been the main contributor to our inflation problems over the past decade.

One of the major achievements of PNM policy in the 1990s was the floatation of the T&T dollar and the subsequent 20 plus year of relative exchange rate stability. We plan to continue this impressive management of our currency and abate any tendency toward instability of our exchange rate. This will not be done at the expense of using up our reserves at the Central Bank but rather by instilling confidence in the value of the TT dollar

Our incomes policy will emphasize our commitment to having all wages and salaries settled through the collective bargaining process in a timely manner. Fair and sustainable compensation packages for all stakeholders must be a priority without compromising competitiveness in all sectors. Furthermore, we also will create the conditions for growth in private sector jobs

### Economic Diversification

The economic diversification of our country's economy will be a very essential part of our overall economic policy. PNM governments over the years have been

at the forefront of efforts to diversify our economy. For example, where would this country be today if the PNM had not had the foresight and commitment to develop the Pt. Lisas Industrial Estate and our LNG Industry?

During the period 2002-2010, we also set out to further diversify the economy by identifying seven targeted growth sectors. It is to be noted that in his last Budget Address, the Minister of Finance restated the seven growth areas identified by the PNM (they have no ideas of their own). A generous mix of policies, incentives and support institutions were set up to boost entrepreneurship and small business development. All of this was part of the PNM's vision to achieve developed country status by 2020!

We are also mindful that true diversification of our economy has tremendous challenges, some of these include:

- Foreign investment and resources concentrated in energy sector.
- Problems in creating greater value-added, lack of capacity and ability to adopt technology and innovate.
- A risk averse business and financial sector.
- Access to international markets cannot be taken for granted

In acknowledgement of these challenges, our policy will be to create a comprehensive framework to guide the use and investment of revenue from oil and gas in the non-oil sector, and foster greater involvement of the people and the private sector in the process directly. Assure private sector participation, investment and collaboration with the government where necessary. However, we will intervene when necessary to stimulate growth, as history has shown that, at times, the government needs to act as more than a facilitator. We also need to engender attitudinal change towards business ventures and taking risks.

### **Self-Employment and Enterprise Development**

Taken overall, small businesses are among the largest employers of people worldwide and no country can grow and develop without a vibrant and healthy small business sector.

In the United States over 50% of the labour force works in a small business and small businesses have generated two-thirds of the net new jobs in the USA over the last 20 years.

In Europe, over 90% of businesses are considered to be small businesses, with 9 out of 10 SMEs having less than 10 employees. The mainstays of Europe's economy are micro firms, each providing work for two persons, in average. This is probably one of the EU's best kept secrets and we in Trinidad and Tobago must take note of success stories in other parts of the world.

In continuing a trend begun by the PNM in 1970, (The Development of The People's Sector) we have a clear policy of support for small and micro enterprises by providing financial, technical marketing and business development assistance to small and micro enterprises.

Your New PNM Administration will boost entrepreneurship and small business development in the short, medium and longer term on 7 critical platforms:

- Institutional Strengthening
- Enhanced Legislation
- A new and enhanced suite of tax incentives
- More in-depth SME Training



- Expanded and Customized Funding Facilities
- The Establishment of New Business Clusters
- Actualizing the “Fair Share” Program

*This will be achieved through:*

- a. Inclusion of entrepreneurship and innovation in the curriculum at primary and secondary education levels
- b. Breaking the cycle of dependency while ensuring social equity and social justice
- c. The strengthening all state institutions that play a role in funding, training and developing markets for the SME sector.
- d. Establishment of a regime of fiscal incentives, including preferential tax rates and concessions, specifically designed to encourage the growth and development of small businesses.
- e. Removal of duplication and overlap among all agencies that facilitate and support the SME sector

- f. A comprehensive suite of training from the private and public sectors (including academia) as an integral part of loan facilities
- g. Facilitation of business survival, turnaround and growth.
- h. Design of loan facilities to suit the needs of different client groups.
- i. Facilitation and development of SME windows in private financial institutions
- j. Grant funding under specific circumstances as an alternative and supplementary funding source.
- k. Creation of business clusters to produce and provide initially and primarily within the communities in which they operate and thereafter externally.
- l. Protection for local manufacturers against unfair competition from foreign manufacturers and imported goods
- m. Implementation of practical and effective systems to monitor awards of contract by government agencies to ensure that the tenets of the 'fair share' program are strictly upheld in the current term and

further developed and expanded in the short, medium and longer terms.

## **Social Sector**

The PNM believes that the main aim of Social Sector Policy is reduce poverty and improve social justice with the objective of ensuring a more stable society. The party has always stood for a caring society and believes that the state has a role to play in protecting the elderly, persons with disabilities, children and the other vulnerable groups in society.

To achieve this, the PNM intends to implement policies to engender radical, social change in a way that all groups will benefit through the creation of a more harmonious society. While we recognize that the state has an important role to play in this effort, we are fully conscious that governments have not always been the most efficient or effective in implementing social programmes.

Our new policies will seek a transformation in terms of poverty reduction, gender equality, education, penal reform and the creation of a new social compact that sees the people, through community based and non-governmental organizations

(including the faith based ones), playing a greater role in designing and implementing the policies and programmes aimed at improving social justice.

On resuming office the PNM will implement polices to ensure:

- Better targeting of social programmes by greater consultation with those for whom they are intended and ensuring they are implemented as designed with built-in independent monitoring and evaluation procedures;
- Promotion of the access to well paid, sustainable employment as the only way to achieve upward social mobility away from a life of poverty while dissuading dependence on social assistance as a form of long term sustainability;
- Social programmes are targeted to prevention and early recovery, rather than the current focus on maintenance which offers no assistance in lifting persons out of poverty. Under the next PNM administration social impact studies will be given greater weight in the determination of government activity;

- A greater focus on the needs of the elderly, children and other socially disadvantaged groups with a recognition that improvement of their status requires not just increased payments under various programmes but fostering a culture that values our elderly, respects our children and supports the differently abled;
- The adoption of a system of restorative justice as an important element of the penal and judicial systems so as transform our prisons from being incubators of career criminals to preparing inmates for a more productive and purposeful engagement with society;
- Incorporation of civil society, including NGOs and religious bodies, especially at the community level, as partners in the development of a new system of social justice and to achieve greater buy-in and success for our social programmes;
- Promotion and protection of the family as the ideal unit of social organization by providing opportunities and programmes for greater family involvement through activities and incentives.

Youth and Sport *Vision 2030 Overall Youth Policy Objectives:*

- Promote and encourage the participation of the youth in all aspects of sustainable development of Trinidad and Tobago.
- Foster a greater understanding of the needs of young people and provide guidelines for youth development.
- Create an enabling environment for Youth Micro Enterprise and develop a culture whereby young people desire and involve themselves in entrepreneurship by owning their own business.
- Create a system where the intellectual property rights of our Youth are developed and respected.
- Encourage the private sector through fiscal incentives to increase its level of youth employment.
- Develop of a comprehensive Employment Policy for youth which addresses the specific needs of unemployed youth including preparation for the job market and the varying needs of youth in diverse communities,
- Devote special emphasis to the rehabilitation of young offenders as well as a proper support system to assist in their reintegration into society;

- Develop Youth in becoming Leaders in communities across Trinidad and Tobago by exposing them to training in civic responsibility and human rights.
- Establish a Youth Leadership Development Institute that will provide training and interactive seminars on leadership.
- Highlight the positive aspects of youth using young role models to assist in restructuring the perception of young people and using that avenue to disseminate information on critical issues such as sexually transmitted diseases (HIV/AIDS)
- Develop an annual Youth Expo which will include the development of a Radio and TV-based Youth programme which will be a forum for youth to discuss issues which affect them as well as focus on youth upliftment.
- Encourage the youth and general public to be more politically minded that will increase the opportunities for dialogue on youth issues.
- Create a forum for the youth arms of the national parties and independent young voices to debate and discuss issues.
- Provide youth facilities in villages and regions of Trinidad and Tobago that will allow positive recreation and healthy life styles among the young.

- The aim is to give the vulnerable youth a safe haven to “hang out” or “lime” while receiving coaching, counselling and acquiring information on civic responsibility.
- Mobilise youth in their natural setting (their communities) through village sports i.e. small goal, cricket, and basketball and empower them to be economically and socially sound.
- The main focus will be on Sports as a Deterrent to Crime, healthy lifestyles, and Sports for International Recognition.
- *To have a significant number of citizens involved in Sports and Recreational activities at ALL levels.*
- To be a world class sporting nation satisfying local, regional and international needs while providing sustainable employment and contributing to national wellbeing.
- Increase the pool of talent from which world champions can emerge for International Recognition.
- Promote Sports as a way to curb crime and build social skills.



- *To use Sports to reduce the high incidence of chronic lifestyle diseases prevalent in Trinidad and Tobago*
- *To use Sports to foster greater communication and understanding amongst different communities, races, creeds in Trinidad and Tobago*
- To use Sports as a means of dealing with aggression and other forms of youth delinquency in communities and schools in Trinidad and
- Increase sports involvement in educational institutions, in particular primary schools. This can be done by improving the linkages between schools, clubs and communities.
- Inculcate a physical education programme for all educational levels and increase the hours allocated to sport and recreational activities per week.
- Improve the transportation system to sporting facilities and events.
- Foster greater diversity and improve quality of community programmes to capture skills of people within the communities.
- Offer physical therapy classes as a “*must do*” stressing the importance of care after physical activity.
- Increase participation opportunities for underrepresented groups in particular disabled persons, women, girls and the vulnerable youth.

- Improve facilities to make user friendly and more attractive to this targeted group of persons.
- Develop an advocacy programme which would not only highlight the need for total participation but will also stress on improvement of mental, social, spiritual and financial benefits that can be derived from an active lifestyle.
- Improve the availability of information of sports involvement by conducting a National Sport and Recreational Census.
- Create an online information pool so that people, in particular the youth can have easy access to sporting information and schedule of various activities throughout the country.
- Emphasize the growth of an effective Athlete Development System by empowering people to adopt the “cradle to grave” development of an athlete.
- Similar to Brazil establish sports involvement from primary schools by increasing the involvement of competitions such as “Intercol Championships” from the Primary School level.

- Achieve total participation in sports by building relationships within communities and improving infrastructure of existing sporting facilities.
- Offer tax incentives to private and other interest groups to adapt social responsibility into amateur community sporting clubs.
- Given Trinidad and Tobago's strategic location in the region and the presence of many related industries and business, this ought to be an attractive location for major sporting events.
- The impact of professional sports is phenomenal and while Trinidad and Tobago has hosted some international games with some measure of success, more world class events could be staged to add to the country's already global image.
- Capture a greater share of the domestic and international sports market by promoting and developing Sports Tourism to export the sector.
- Promote Marine Sporting Activities.
- Increase market for sporting professionals such sport medical doctors, physiotherapists and sports media.

- Develop Trinidad and Tobago as a sporting brand and form strategic alliances with countries and organisations to enhance the penetration into the sports market.
- Develop a formalised talent identification and recruitment scheme and establish a sports marketing mechanism to promote sports locally.
- Develop and promote a range of activities to maximise facility usage and commercial return.
- Develop a Domestic Sport Research Database by performing a bi-annual survey which will establish benchmarks, improvements to the local sports industry and provide a comprehensive data for sports and recreation locally.
- Encourage industry creativity and development by cultivating innovative strategies to create career opportunities and an apprenticeship system for skills acquisition and research initiatives towards creating marketable products for building the Sports Industry.
- Improve the Infrastructure ensuring it is attractive and up to the International best standards.
- Offer local athletes workshops on how to speak to the media and to become a PRO of local Sports.

- *Create a Sports Institute of Trinidad and Tobago that will capture and hone the skills of young athletes while growing and modernising the Sports Industry.*