



**Convention on the  
Rights of the Child**

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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD  
Forty-first session  
Geneva, 9 – 27 January 2006

WRITTEN REPLIES BY THE GOVERNMENT OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
CONCERNING THE LIST OF ISSUES (CRC/C/TTO/Q/2) RECEIVED BY THE  
COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD RELATING TO THE  
CONSIDERATION OF THE SECOND PERIODIC REPORT OF  
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO (CRC/C/83/Add.12)

[Received on 23 August 2005]

## PART I

### **A. Data and Statistics, if available**

In cases where the requested data is unavailable for dissemination, the State gives every assurance to the Committee that all efforts are being made to encourage and facilitate the collection, collation and publication of such information in a timely manner.

#### **Estimated Population of 18 Years and Under – 2003<sup>1</sup>**

<b>TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO</b>			
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	<b>BOTH SEXES</b>	<b>MALE</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>
0-18	437,565	220,784	216,780
Percentage (%) of Total Population	34.1	34.4	33.8

<b>TRINIDAD</b>			
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	<b>BOTH SEXES</b>	<b>MALE</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>
0-18	418,283	211,175	207,108
Percentage (%) of Total Population	34.0	34.3	33.8

<b>TOBAGO</b>			
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	<b>BOTH SEXES</b>	<b>MALE</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>
0-18	19,281	9,610	9,671
Percentage (%) of Total Population	35.0	35.4	34.8

<sup>1</sup> Central Statistical Office, 28 July 2005.

**Value Added Health - Current Prices<sup>2</sup>**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>AMOUNT (TT\$)</b>
<b>2002</b>	266,531.40
<b>2003</b>	299,733.10
<b>2004</b>	344,658.30

**Gross Domestic Product of Trinidad and Tobago at Current Market Prices<sup>3</sup>  
2002 – 2004, (Millions of TT Dollars)**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
<b>GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT</b>	<b>51,370.60</b>	<b>55,007.20</b>	<b>55,365.60</b>	<b>66,168.30</b>	<b>71,878.00</b>

**Ministry of Health, Summary of Expenditure, 2003-2005<sup>4</sup>  
(Millions of TT Dollars)**

	<b>2003 ACTUAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>2004 ESTIMATES</b>	<b>2004 REVISED ESTIMATES</b>	<b>2005 ESTIMATES</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,259,798,219</b>	<b>1,441,937,136</b>	<b>1,420,430,230</b>	<b>1,581,374,600</b>

<sup>2</sup> Central Statistical Office, 27 July 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Central Statistical Office, 16 July 2004.

<sup>4</sup> Ministry of Health, *Details of Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure for the Financial Year 2005*, 28 July 2005.

**Ministry of Health  
Health Professionals – Trinidad and Tobago  
2003 - 2004<sup>5</sup>**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
<b>PHYSICIANS</b>	<b>1,038</b>	<b>1,293</b>
<b>DENTISTS</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>265</b>
<b>OPTOMETRISTS</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>PHARMACISTS</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>510</b>

**Ministry of Health  
Nursing Staff (Government and Regional Health Authorities)  
Trinidad and Tobago, 2003 - 2004<sup>6</sup>**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
<b>NURSES &amp; MIDWIVES</b>	<b>2,143</b>	<b>2,313</b>
<b>NURSING ASSISTANTS</b>	<b>1,528</b>	<b>1,461</b>
<b>NURSING AIDES</b>	<b>309*</b>	<b>710*</b>

\* Includes Patient Care Assistants

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<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Health, 28 July 2005.

<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Health, 28 July 2005.

**Ministry of Health  
Expenditure on Vaccines  
Trinidad and Tobago, 2002 - 2005<sup>7</sup>**

PERIOD	EXPENDITURE (TTS)
1/ 10/ 02 – 30/ 09/ 03	4,430,252.43
1/ 10/ 03 – 30/ 09/ 04	4,957,347.53
1/ 10/ 04 – 30/ 06/ 05	2,898,465.85

**Ministry of Health  
Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV Programme  
Trinidad and Tobago, 2002 - 2004<sup>8</sup>**

	2002	2003	2004	TOTAL
Total # of HIV infected pregnant women attending public health facilities	153	156	161	470
Total # of HIV exposed infants	149	153	154	456
Total # of HIV exposed infants tested to determine status	49	27	76	152
Infant Deaths	4	9	0	13
Still Births	4	2	6	12
Mother Deaths	6	4	0	10

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<sup>7</sup> Ministry of Health, 27 July 2005.

<sup>8</sup> Ministry of Health, 27 July 2005.

**Ministry of Health  
Annual Report 2004  
Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS)<sup>9</sup>**

AGE (YRS)	MALE	FEMALE	UNKNOWN	TOTAL
<1	40	38	2	80
1 TO 4	12	9	1	22
5 TO 9	13	13	1	27
10 TO 14	4	1	0	5
15 TO 19	14	39	4	57

**Ministry of Health  
Annual Report 2004  
Paediatric HIV Cases<sup>10</sup>**

PAEDIATRIC HIV CASES*	CASES
Infants of HIV positive Mother	31
Paediatric cases under investigation	138
TOTAL	169

\* Paediatric cases are children <13 years.

**Ministry of Health  
Annual Report – Quarter 1 - 2005  
Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS)<sup>11</sup>**

<sup>9</sup> Ministry of Health, 27 July 2005.

<sup>10</sup> Ministry of Health, 27 July 2005.

<sup>11</sup> Ministry of Health, 27 July 2005.

AGE (YRS)	MALE	FEMALE	UNKNOWN	TOTAL
<1	5	5	1	11
1 TO 4	0	1	0	1
5 TO 9	2	2	0	4
10 TO 14	0	1	0	1
15 TO 19	1	9	0	10

**Ministry of Health**  
**Annual Report – Quarter 1 - 2005**  
**Paediatric HIV Cases<sup>12</sup>**

PAEDIATRIC HIV CASES*	CASES
Infants of HIV positive Mother	5
Paediatric cases under investigation	18
TOTAL	23

\* Paediatric cases are children <13 years.

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<sup>12</sup> Ministry of Health, 27 July 2005.

**Ministry of Health**  
**Annual Report – Quarter 1 - 2005**  
**AIDS Reported Deaths by Age Group and Sex<sup>13</sup>**

<b>AGE (YRS)</b>	<b>MALE</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>	<b>UNKNOWN</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>&lt;1</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>1 TO 4</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>5 TO 9</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>10 TO 14</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>15 TO 19</b>	0	0	0	0

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<sup>13</sup> Ministry of Health, 27 July 2005.

## **B. General Measures of Implementation**

**1. The Committee would appreciate to receive information on activities meant to implement recommendations contained in the Committee's previous concluding observations on the initial report of Trinidad and Tobago (CRC/C/15/Add.82) which have not yet been fully implemented, in particular regarding paragraphs: 25 (coordination); 26 (data collection); 27 (resource allocation for children); 31 (abuse, ill-treatment and domestic violence); 32 (corporal punishment); 34 (alternative care); 35 (reproductive health); 36 (education); 37 (street children); 38 (child labour); 39 (administration of juvenile justice).**

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago regards highly the recommendations contained in the Committee's previous concluding observations on the initial report of the State (CRC/C/15/Add.82). The State wishes to assure the Committee of its commitment to implementing such recommendations in light of its changing legislative and administrative framework.

The Ministry of Social Development maintains the mandate for *inter alia*, social sector planning, development and monitoring, social research, and social impact and review. This Ministry also has the responsibility of monitoring the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the *National Plan of Action for Children* (the NPA).

Subsequent to Trinidad and Tobago's ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and global society's commitment to the World Declaration for the Survival, Protection and Development of Children, an Inter-Ministerial Committee had been appointed by the Ministry of Social Development to monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the *National Plan of Action for Children*. This body is known as *The National Committee to monitor implementation of the National Plan of Action for Children and the Convention on the Rights of the Child* (the NPA Committee).

The work of the NPA Committee has focused principally on activities surrounding the finalisation of the NPA, the contents of which are expected to be forwarded to the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago, for approval, by the end of September 2005. It is intended that various implementation issues related to the Committee's previous concluding observations on the initial report of Trinidad and Tobago (CRC/C/15/Add.82) are to be addressed.

**2. Please indicate whether the Convention on the Rights of the Child has been invoked directly in domestic courts, and if so, please provide examples of such cases.**

As outlined in Paragraph 3 of the *Second Periodic Report of Trinidad and Tobago under the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, when the Government of Trinidad and Tobago ratifies or accedes to a human rights treaty, or any other treaty, such instrument is not automatically incorporated into municipal law. A treaty becomes part of the municipal law only when it is incorporated into domestic statute (approved by Parliament) or if the terms of the treaty representing binding rules of customary international law. Accordingly, the rights under the Convention are only justiciable in the Courts in so far as they have been incorporated by statute

into domestic law or if the Courts accept the argument that these rights represent binding rules of customary international law.

Despite the fact that the Courts give effect to the domestic (implementing) legislation and not the terms of the treaty, it should nonetheless be stated that principles emanating from the Convention on the Rights of the Child have contributed to arguments before the Court. As stated in Paragraph 12 of the *Second Periodic Report of Trinidad and Tobago under the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, there are many instances where the Court has regarded the welfare of the child as of paramount importance.

**3. Please provide information on measures taken for a comprehensive review of all legislation to ensure compatibility with the Convention.**

As outlined in the *Second Periodic Report of Trinidad and Tobago under the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the following legislation was intended to give effect to the terms of the Convention in domestic law:

- **The Children's Authority Act (No. 64 of 2000);**
- **The Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries Act (No. 65 of 2000);**
- **The Miscellaneous Provisions (Children) Act (No. 66 of 2000);**
- **The Adoption Act (No. 67 of 2000); and**
- **The Children (Amendment) Act (No. 68 of 2000).**

Notwithstanding the above, the only legislation to receive the necessary Presidential Proclamation to bring it into force is The **Miscellaneous Provisions (Children) Act (No. 66 of 2000)**, which amended selected domestic statutes in conformity with provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, the remaining four pieces of legislation did not receive the required Presidential Proclamation to bring its provisions into force. This is primarily due to the absence of a physical and administrative infrastructure to cater for the operation of the Children's Authority provided for in Act **No. 64 of 2000**.

As a consequence, in keeping with its Terms of Reference to "*identify ways in which measures can be introduced to enhance the functioning of the present family jurisdiction of the Courts*", a Legislative Sub-Committee of the Family Court Committee (Ministry of the Attorney General) had been formed with the task of commenting on the provisions of **Acts No. 64, 65, 67 and 68 of 2000** and recommending changes thereto. Such efforts are currently underway.

In addition to the above-mentioned initiatives, the Legislative Sub-Committee of the Family Court Committee (Ministry of the Attorney General) has also undertaken to recommend various forms by which The **Hague Convention on Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction** (which the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago had acceded to) could be incorporated into domestic law. The Report outlining such recommendations is in the process of being compiled.

**4. Please provide information on the system of data collection, including the 2000 National Census, and whether it covers all persons below 18 and all areas referred to in the Convention.**

The system of data collection and collation in Trinidad and Tobago is conducted by the Central Statistical Office (CSO), Ministry of Planning and Development. As outlined throughout the *Second Periodic Report of Trinidad and Tobago under the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the CSO collates and presents data under the following age groupings:

- 0 – 4 years;
- 5 – 9 years;
- 10 – 14 years; and
- 15 – 19 years.

Notwithstanding the above, practice has shown that upon special request the CSO is able to compile data which is confined to the age grouping 0 to 18 years.

**5. Please provide information on the implementation of the various national programs for children, including the National Plan of Action for Children.**

The process of finalising the *National Plan of Action for Children* is currently underway by the Ministry of Social Development. This document is expected to be submitted for approval to the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago by the end of September 2005. In the interim however, the following national programmes for children have been implemented:

- *The Adolescent Mothers' Programme* – Ministry of Social Development;
- *The School Book Grant Programme*– Ministry of Education;
- *The School Nutrition Programme* – Ministry of Education;
- *The Textbook Rental/Loan Programme* – Ministry of Education;
- *The Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (YTEPP)* – Ministry of Science, Technology & Tertiary Education;
- *The Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV/AIDS Programme* – Ministry of Health;
- *The Early Childhood Care and Education Programme* – Ministry of Education and SERVOL (Non-Governmental Organisation);
- *The Rehabilitation of Child Labourers Programme*– Ministry of Labour, Small and Micro-enterprise Development, International Labour Organization (ILO), Young Males' Christian Association (YMCA);
- *The Hearing and Sight Testing Programme* - Ministry of Health;

- *The Military Led Academic Training Programme (MILAT)* – Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation;
- *The Military Led Youth Apprenticeship Reorientation Training Programme (MY PART)* – Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation;
- *Project Peace* – Ministry of Education;
- *Helping You Prepare for Employment* – Ministry of Science, Technology & tertiary Education;
- *The RapPort Programme* - Ministry of Health;
- *The Youth Health Project* – Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs; and
- *The Happy Haven School Feeding Programme*– Tobago House of Assembly School Feeding Programme.

**6. Please provide information on the institution in charge of the coordination of the implementation of the Convention, its mandate, resources and activities, both at national and local levels.**

The Ministry of Social Development maintains the mandate for *inter alia*, social sector planning, development and monitoring, social research, and social impact and review. The Ministry of Social Development also has the responsibility of monitoring the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the *National Plan of Action for Children*. This task is facilitated by *The National Committee to monitor implementation of the National Plan of Action for Children and the Convention on the Rights of the Child* (the NPA Committee). The Terms of Reference of this Inter-Ministerial Committee are as follows:

- a) *To review of Trinidad and Tobago's National Report on the follow up to the World Summit for Children;*
- b) *To review and Comment on the Final Outcome Document: "A world Fit for Children" to be submitted by the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly on Children;*
- c) *To revise Trinidad and Tobago's National Plan of Action (NPA) in the context of the anticipated global agenda and plan of action;*
- d) *To facilitate and monitor the implementation of the NPA as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child;*
- e) *To ensure integration of the NPA and the Convention on the Rights of the Child with national planning and budgetary allocation processes;*
- f) *To ensure that a high priority is accorded to programmes for the well-being of children in sectoral plans, programmes and policies;*

- g) To facilitate the preparation of children, families, communities, local government agencies, non-governmental and community-based organization, social, cultural, religious, business and media related organizations in the implementation of the NPA;*
- h) To facilitate the development of mechanisms for the regular and timely collection, analysis and publication of data to monitor social indicators relating to the well-being of children; and*
- i) To submit to the Minister of Social Development...an Interim Report and Plan of Action with respect to a), b) and c) above.*

Reconvened in December 2004, the Committee is supported by the services of a Project Coordinator and Research Technician. Since this time, the Committee's work has focused principally on activities surrounding the finalisation of the NPA, the contents of which are expected to be forwarded to the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago, for approval, by the end of September 2005.

**7. Please provide information on the Ombudsman's Office, including its mandate, functions and resources and on the number of cases investigated and their outcomes, and provide specific information on cases involving children (e.g. number and nature of complaints filed by, or on behalf of children). Furthermore, please indicate how the independence of this Office is ensured, in light of the Paris Principles (General Assembly Resolution 48/134).**

Part II of Chapter 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago establishes the Office of the Ombudsman. Section 93 of the Constitution provides that the principal function of the Ombudsman shall be to investigate any decision or recommendation made, including any advice given or recommendation made to a Minister, or any act done or omitted by any department of Government.

The **Ombudsman Act, Chap. 2:52** makes provision for giving effect to Part II of Chapter of the Constitution. The Ombudsman has a role with regard to children. For example, children who are detained at the Youth Training Centre (which is included under the portfolio of the Prisons Division) can forward their written complaints to the Ombudsman, who is empowered to investigate any violation of the rights of these children.

Upon proclamation of the **Children's Authority Act (No. 64 of 2000)**, the establishment and operation of the Children's Authority will serve as the medium through which all complaints from and on behalf of children (concerning violations of their rights) are registered and investigated.

Constitutional provisions guarantee the independence of the Office of the Ombudsman.

**8. Please provide updated information on activities to increase awareness and knowledge of the Convention among the public at large and children and parents in particular and on**

**training programmes for teachers, social workers and other professionals working with/for children.**

Activities aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of the Convention on the Rights of the Child have been numerous and varied in nature.

Primarily, the tenets and concepts of the Convention were explored and analysed in the presentations of the Honourable Attorney General, (then) Minister of Social Development, Minister of Education and United Nations Development Program Officer at the official launch of the *Second Periodic Report of Trinidad and Tobago under the Convention on the Rights of the Child* in July 2003. Also present at the launch were invited members of Non-Governmental Organisations, the teaching profession (both public and private) and students of schools throughout Trinidad and Tobago. The official launch of the *Second Periodic Report* was also highly publicized by the local media, all of which were invited to the event.

Additionally, various radio programmes focusing on the Convention on the Rights of the Child had been conducted throughout the period 2003 to 2005. Such forums were conducted by the Human Rights Unit (Ministry of the Attorney General), in collaboration with the National Family Services Division (Ministry of Social Development).

Furthermore, the awareness and knowledge of the Convention on the Rights of the Child were heightened in light of the establishment of a *Family Court Pilot Project* in May 2004. The establishment of the *Pilot Project* was the result of combined efforts of the Ministry of the Attorney General and the Judiciary of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. At the official launch of the *Pilot Project*, the Honourable Chief Justice, the Honourable Attorney General and the Chairman of the Family Court Committee made significant references to the concept of the “*best interests of the child*” as outlined in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Similar concepts were espoused by representatives of the Non-Governmental Organisation community.

In light of the preparation for and establishment of the Family Court Pilot Project, various members of the Judiciary, Legal Profession, Social Services Division and Probation Department were sensitized with respect to the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

Notwithstanding the above, the most recent activity to increase awareness and knowledge of the Convention on the Rights of the Child entailed the production and airing of a programme coordinated by the Ministry of Social Development on a widely-viewed local television network (entitled *Gayelle* Television. Similar sensitization and capacity-building activities planned by the Ministry of Social Development are expected to take place throughout 2005 and the following calendar year.

**9. Please provide updated information on the cooperation between the State Party and the international community including non-governmental organization, in the efforts to implement the Convention.**

In June 2003, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (Organisation of American States) and the Ministry of the Attorney General co-hosted a *Workshop on the Inter-American system of human rights and the promotion and defence of the rights of the child*. The coordination of this Workshop coincided with the completion of *Trinidad and Tobago's Second Period Report under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, which was indicative of the

State's commitment to ensuring that the highest international standards are attained in the promotion and protection of the rights of children.

Among the participants at the Workshop were representatives from the Human Rights Unit, Chief Parliamentary Counsel's Department (both of the Ministry of the Attorney General), Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour, Police Division, Prisons Division (both of the Ministry of National Security), Tobago House of Assembly, Coalition on the Rights of the Child (Non-Governmental Organisation), to name a few.

With respect to the implementation of legislation to give effect to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in municipal law, the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is also considering the various legislative provisions of other Commonwealth States which seek to achieve this end.

**10. Please indicate the issues affecting children that the State party considers to be priorities requiring the most urgent attention with regard to the implementation of the Convention.**

The issues affecting children that the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago considers to be priorities requiring the most urgent attention with regard to the implementation of the Convention include:

- The increase in the number of street children;
- Violence and abuse of children (including sexual, physical and emotional abuse, and commercial/sexual exploitation);
- Child labour;
- The rights of children confined to institutions;
- Violence in schools;
- Children living with HIV/AIDS; and
- Children affected by HIV/AIDS.

## **PART II**

English is the official language of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Copies of the Convention on the Rights of the Child have been disseminated to the following entities, to name a few:

- All Government Ministries;
- The Office of the Tobago House of Assembly;

- Primary and Secondary-level schools throughout Trinidad and Tobago;
- National and district libraries throughout Trinidad and Tobago;
- Various Non-Governmental Organisations; and
- Members of the general public.

### **PART III**

#### **Update to the Second Periodic Report of Trinidad and Tobago under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:**

##### **New Bills/ Enacted Legislation**

As outlined in the *Second Periodic Report of Trinidad and Tobago under the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the following legislation was intended to give effect to the terms of the Convention in domestic law:

- **The Children's Authority Act (No. 64 of 2000);**
- **The Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries Act (No. 65 of 2000);**
- **The Miscellaneous Provisions (Children) Act (No. 66 of 2000);**
- **The Adoption Act (No. 67 of 2000); and**
- **The Children (Amendment) Act (No. 68 of 2000).**

Notwithstanding the above, the only legislation to receive the necessary Presidential Proclamation to bring it into force is The **Miscellaneous Provisions (Children) Act (No. 66 of 2000)**, which amended selected domestic statutes in conformity with provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, the remaining four pieces of legislation did not receive the required Presidential Proclamation to bring its provisions into force. This is primarily due to the absence of a physical and administrative infrastructure to cater for the operation of the Children's Authority provided for in Act No. 64 of 2000.

As a consequence, in keeping with its Terms of Reference to "*identify ways in which measures can be introduced to enhance the functioning of the present family jurisdiction of the Courts*", a Legislative Sub-Committee of the Family Court Committee (Ministry of the Attorney General) had been formed with the task of commenting on the provisions of Acts No.64, 65, 67 and 68 of 2000 and recommending changes thereto. Such efforts are currently underway.

In addition to the above-mentioned initiatives, the Legislative Sub-Committee of the Family Court Committee (Ministry of the Attorney General) has also undertaken to recommend various

forms by which The **Hague Convention on Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction** (which the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago had acceded to) could be incorporated into domestic law. The Report outlining such recommendations is in the process of being compiled.

### **New Institutions**

Since June 2003, the Ministry of Social Development has established Halfway Houses/Remand Homes for young male and female offenders.

### **Newly Implemented Policies**

The *National Committee to monitor implementation of the National Plan of Action for Children and the Convention on the Rights of the Child* (the NPA Committee), through the Ministry of Social Development, is currently finalizing its Report which is to be submitted to the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago for approval by the end of September 2005.

The said Report is intended to fulfill the following the following requirements:

- j) *To review of Trinidad and Tobago's National Report on the follow up to the World Summit for Children;*
- k) *To review and Comment on the Final Outcome Document: "A world Fit for Children" to be submitted by the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly on Children;*
- l) *To revise Trinidad and Tobago's National Plan of Action (NPA) in the context of the anticipated global agenda and plan of action;*
- m) *To facilitate and monitor the implementation of the NPA as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child;*
- n) *To ensure integration of the NPA and the Convention on the Rights of the Child with national planning and budgetary allocation processes;*
- o) *To ensure that a high priority is accorded to programmes for the well-being of children in sectoral plans, programmes and policies;*
- p) *To facilitate the preparation of children, families, communities, local government agencies, non-governmental and community-based organization, social, cultural, religious, business and media related organizations in the implementation of the NPA;*
- q) *To facilitate the development of mechanisms for the regular and timely collection, analysis and publication of data to monitor social indicators relating to the well-being of children; and*

- r) *To submit to the Minister of Social Development...an Interim Report and Plan of Action with respect to a), b) and c) above.*

### **Newly Implemented Programmes/Projects and their scope**

#### **The Establishment of a Family Court Pilot Project**

In July 2002, the Family Court Committee (Ministry of the Attorney General) submitted a Report to the Attorney General which recommended that a well-resourced Pilot Family Court Project be established in Port of Spain, dealing initially with certain matters in the Port of Spain High Court and St. George West Magisterial District.

Based on the joint efforts of the Judiciary of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Ministry of the Attorney General, the *Pilot Project* was launched in May 2004 for an initial period of 2 years, under the aegis of a Monitoring Committee appointed by the Honourable Chief Justice.

The jurisdiction of the *Pilot Project* includes:

- **Matrimonial Matters** - divorce, separation, annulment, child custody, property and other ancillary relief, visiting rights, child maintenance and alimony;
- **Child Protection Matters** – abuse and neglect, foster care, termination of parental rights, wardship and adoption proceedings; and
- **Juvenile Matters** – delinquency, runaways, children beyond control, common law relations and family crisis cases.

Upon completion of the Pilot Project it is the intention of the Judiciary to establish a permanent Family Court, with jurisdiction throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

#### **Other Programmes/ Policies**

Additionally, the following National Programmes for Children have been implemented by the State:

- *The Adolescent Mothers' Programme* – Ministry of Social Development;
- *The School Book Grant Programme*– Ministry of Education;
- *The School Nutrition Programme* – Ministry of Education;
- *The Textbook Rental/Loan Programme* – Ministry of Education;
- *The Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (YTEPP)* – Ministry of Science, Technology & Tertiary Education;

- *The Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV/AIDS Programme* – Ministry of Health;
- *The Early Childhood Care and Education Programme* – Ministry of Education and SERVOL (Non-Governmental Organisation);
- *The Rehabilitation of Child Labourers Programme*– Ministry of Labour, Small and Micro-enterprise Development, International Labour Organization (ILO), Young Males' Christian Association (YMCA);
- *The Hearing and Sight Testing Programme* - Ministry of Health;
- *The Military Led Academic Training Programme (MILAT)* – Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation;
- *The Military Led Youth Apprenticeship Reorientation Training Programme (MY PART)* – Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation;
- *Project Peace* – Ministry of Education;
- *Helping You Prepare for Employment* – Ministry of Science, Technology & tertiary Education;
- *The RapPort Programme* - Ministry of Health;
- *The Youth Health Project* – Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs; and
- *The Happy Haven School Feeding Programme*– Tobago House of Assembly School Feeding Programme.

**12 AUGUST 2005**

**MINISTRY OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**