



Joint Select Committee on Foreign Affairs

Public Hearing Summary

Wednesday April 03, 2019 at 2:12 p.m.

Topic:

Inquiry into the status of CSME in Trinidad and Tobago.

Committee Members:

The following Committee Members were present for the meeting:

- Ms. Marlene Mc Donald, MP – Chairman
- Mrs. Paula Gopee-Scoon– Vice Chairman
- Ms. Shamfa Cudjoe, MP – Member
- Mr. Avinash Singh – Member
- Ms. Anita Haynes – Member
- Dr. Maria Dillon-Remy – Member

Witnesses who appeared:

Officials of the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs (MoFCA)

- Ms. Reita Toussaint Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
- Mr. Tedwin Herbert Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
- Ms. Jennifer Marchand Director, CARICOM and Caribbean Affairs Division
- Ms. Myrna Huggins Director, Consular Affairs Division
- Ms. Candice Shade Director, Treaties, International Agreements and Legal Division
- Mr. Collin James Foreign Service Officer (FSO), Consular Affairs Division
- Ms. Chamyantie Lal Foreign Service Officer (FSO), Treaties, International Agreements and Legal Division
- Ms. Lynne Mohammed Foreign Service Officer (FSO), CARICOM and Caribbean Affairs Division
- Ms. Saschele Griffith Foreign Service Officer (FSO), CARICOM and Caribbean Affairs Division

Key Issues Discussed with the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs:

1. The gains made by Trinidad and Tobago as it concerns the free movement of skills and labour, the free movement of capital and the right of establishment to businesses;
2. The number of nationals of Trinidad and Tobago that have applied for a skills certificate to work in other CARICOM countries;
3. The number of CARICOM nationals that have applied for the right of establishment and a skills certificate in Trinidad and Tobago;

4. The factors that can hinder a CARICOM national from working in Trinidad and Tobago;
5. The St. Ann's Declaration in December 2018 included a decision to widen the category of persons allowed to enter Member States of CARICOM;
6. The new timeframes for the amendment of legislation to permit the additional five categories of workers was extended from February, 2019 to July, 2019;
7. The procedure for lodging complaints after being denied entry into a CARCIOM country;
8. The number of complaints received by the MoFCA from CARICOM nationals that were denied entry into Trinidad and Tobago;
9. The meaning of the term 'right of establishment' and the benefits to Trinidad and Tobago;
10. The challenges encountered to achieve the full implementation of the CSME;
11. The absence of a mechanism to track persons who may have entered Trinidad and Tobago with a skills certificate under a specific CSME category and changed to another CSME category;
12. The timeframe to review an application form for the skills certificate;
13. The MoFCA's efforts to sensitise the public on the importance of the CSME and the need for a methodology to gauge the MoFCA's outreach efforts;
14. The role and the number of staff of the CSME Unit within the CARICOM and Caribbean Affairs Division;
15. The type of offences that can hinder a CARICOM national from entering a Member State; and
16. The key commitments that emanated from the St. Ann's Declaration and the measures taken by the MoFCA since the St. Ann's Declaration in December 2018.

View the Hearing:

The hearing can be viewed on our YouTube page via the following link:

<https://youtu.be/A4Emp9sRLvw>

Contact Information:

You may contact the Committee's Secretary at jscfa@ttparliament.org or 624-7275 Ext. 2288/2317.

Committees Unit

April 17, 2019