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# **Remarks by His Excellency Raphaël Varga van Kibéd Ambassador of the Kingdom of The Netherlands to Trinidad and Tobago Representative of Country with largest contributions to the Joint SDG Fund**

On the launch of the project:  
Modernising Trinidad and Tobago's Statistical Ecosystem  
through Enhanced SDG Data Development

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26th July 2022

- Honourable Penelope Beckles, Minister of Planning and Development; Friends from the Trinidad and Tobago Central Statistical Office; Your Excellencies and colleagues from the diplomatic corps; members of the press and all our development partners. All protocols observed. A very good evening to you all.
- What a beautiful and sustainable day today!! This morning the honourable Minister of Planning and I were at the sod turning event for the construction of a Solar Park at Piarco International Airport funded by the European Union in partnership with the Government of Trinidad & Tobago. This Solar Park will contribute to the reduction of the airport's carbon footprint.
- And now this evening it is an absolute pleasure to be invited to deliver the feature address for being the largest contributor to the Joint SDG Fund present, which is financing the project we are launching tonight.
- The Kingdom of The Netherlands is a strong supporter of UN Development System Reforms and the ambitions of the Joint SDG Fund. We very much support UN coordination & UN agencies working together. We believe this can lead to sustainable change in-country, and The Netherlands encourages UN agencies to actively think, plan, implement & evaluate together.



- The project we are launching tonight is a great example of this inter-agency coordination; it will be implemented by a team of United Nations agencies: the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), with coordination support from the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office in Port of Spain. We certainly appreciate that donors are also being actively engaged.
- Which brings me to the content of tonight's project launch, starting with a little Dutch background. The Dutch central bureau of statistics, Statistics Netherlands, is a longstanding member of the UN Steering Group on the SDG statistics. In this role Statistics Netherlands was closely involved in developing the first and especially the second edition of the Road Map for SDG statistics, which is used by many nations worldwide in developing their own SDG statistical and coordination roles.
- Statistics Netherlands has a long tradition of helping other countries develop and establish reliable and impartial statistics, by providing technical assistance to a wide range of countries worldwide.
- This is done through offering technical assistance and training abroad, by receiving delegations at its own offices to provide training and workshops, but also through exchanges of expertise and best practices in formal meetings and conferences of international organizations such as the EU, OECD, UN, World Bank, ISI, and many other more statistically oriented organizations.
- Statistics Netherlands also widely shared its expertise in developing timely and relevant indicators to monitor the Covid crisis - which is obviously also very relevant in terms of the SDGs – and is playing a key role in developing the Green Deal indicators for the European Commission, which also touches on many SDGs.
- Closer to home here in the Caribbean, The Kingdom of The Netherlands is now looking at how best to measure well-being and the SDGs on the Dutch Caribbean islands of Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba, in close cooperation with the Statistics Netherlands office on Bonaire.
- And from closer to home, to actually home: this evening's Joint SDG Fund project, "Modernising Trinidad and Tobago's Statistical Ecosystem through Enhanced SDG Data Development" is an incredible initiative. The aim is to modernise, expand and strengthen the National Statistical System by improving the collection and use of data on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.
- Soon the system will be able to deliver quality, user-oriented and timely statistics on the economy, social needs and the environment. This is critical to making effective, evidence-based decisions and to monitoring the achievement of programme and policy objectives.
- You can imagine that KNL is proud to be a part of these important developments. I wish all partners – the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the different implementing agencies – an incredible amount of success!
- Thank you



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