



## International Anti-Corruption Day: December 9, 2016

### United Against Corruption for Development, Peace and Security

The Integrity Commission of Trinidad and Tobago joins with the United Nations in celebrating International Anti-Corruption Day today, December 9, 2016. This year the theme is “United against corruption for development, peace and security.”

International Anti-corruption Day was launched by the General Assembly of the United Nations on October 9, 2003 as a way of raising awareness of corruption and highlighting the role of the United Nations Convention in combating and preventing corruption and fraud.

Attitudes on corruption are changing around the world. Since the day was first celebrated, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, say intolerance towards corruption has grown. As recently as ten years ago, corruption was only whispered about. Today there are signs of growing intolerance toward corruption. This is evidenced by the increasing number of persons worldwide who are being tried and convicted for the crime.

The official reason given by the UN for creating this day is that it was “concerned about the seriousness of problems and threats posed by corruption to the stability and security of societies, undermining the institutions and values of democracy, ethical values and justice and jeopardizing sustainable development and the rule of law.”

In Trinidad and Tobago the Integrity Commission is the agency that receives and investigates complaints regarding alleged breaches of the Integrity in Public Life Act

(IPLA) or suspected offences committed under the Prevention of Corruption Act. The IPLA provides for improved governance in public life by requesting declarations of assets, liabilities, income and interests in relation to persons in public life and persons performing public functions. The Commission is of the view that all ‘Persons in Public Life’ and those exercising public functions abide by the IPLA and further that they **“do the right thing always.”**



At the Integrity Commission we seek to ensure that those who serve the nation do so with integrity, dignity and respect so that public resources are used fairly and for the benefit of all people of the nation.

Integrity means making the correct choice when faced with right and wrong. It encompasses adherence to ethics and morals and is linked with honesty. Write or e-mail us if you have evidence of a violation of the Integrity in Public Life Act by persons who exercise public functions.

The Commission provides a safe and confidential mechanism enabling public servants and citizens generally to disclose wrongdoings. Any person who knowingly and mischievously makes or causes to be made a false report or misleads the Commission by giving false information – or by making false statements or accusations – is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine of \$500,000 and to imprisonment for ten years. The Commission’s goal is to enhance public confidence in our institutions by adherence to a Code of Conduct and Principles for Managing Ethics in the Public Service.

The Integrity Commission administers also a **Code of Conduct** that identifies steps towards “Integrity in Public Life” and good governance. The Code of Conduct provides guidance for ‘Persons in Public Life’ and ‘Persons Exercising Public Functions’ to ensure that they perform functions and administer public resources in an effective, efficient and transparent manner.

For public officials, the Code of Conduct demands that they “be fair and impartial and afford no undue preferential treatment to any group or individual.” It demands that persons functioning and administering public resources arrange their private interests – whether pecuniary or otherwise – in such a manner as to maintain public confidence and trust in their integrity. Codes of Conduct are now part of standard practices for organizations.

The Commission takes opportunity during this end of year season to remind ‘Persons in Public Life’ who receive gifts, personal benefit or social obligations in excess of \$5,000 that they are required to describe the circumstances under which each gift; fee or benefit is given or accepted.

**DO THE RIGHT THING ALWAYS!**

December 8th 2016