



CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS AND STAFF ASSOCIATIONS OF BARBADOS

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PRESS STATEMENT

TO: THE NEWS EDITOR, ALL MEDIA HOUSES
FROM: DENNIS DE PEIZA, GENERAL SECRETARY, CTUSAB
REF: PS/NYM/301217
DATE: 30 DECEMBER 2017
SUBJECT: NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE FROM THE CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS AND STAFF ASSOCIATIONS OF BARBADOS



As the year 2018 commences, the Congress of Trade Unions and Staff Associations of Barbados (CTUSAB) extends best wishes to the people of Barbados for a productive and rewarding year. In like manner these sentiments are expressed to the government of Barbados and the Barbados Private Sector Association, both members of the Social Partnership and to all registered trade unions and staff associations on the island.

In reflecting on 2017, it has been a challenging year for the nation. The economic and fiscal crisis which has been a major problem, remains a hurdle to be crossed in the New Year. It therefore imperative that focus remains on the implementation of those strategies which have been identified to aid the economic recovery of Barbados.

Labour shares the view that it is important to have the economy of Barbados restored to a state of buoyancy within the shortest possible time frame, so that the island can reposition itself to be competitive in the global market place. Following on this, CTUSAB reaffirms its commitment to working with the government and the private sector towards the attainment of this goal.

The Congress cautions that the goal of attaining economy recovery hinges on government's initiatives that will help to stimulate growth, and on a commitment of the local business community to invest in new business ventures. The actions by these partners can serve the two-fold purpose of creating new employment opportunities so as to absorb the pool of available Barbadian labour and in attracting business partnerships with foreign investors.

CTUSAB takes this opportunity to urge local businessmen and entrepreneurs to be more creative and innovative in their business exploits and to direct attention to producing products and services for export.

In this recovery effort, the Congress remains mindful that the labour force has to play its part and therefore calls on all workers to be productive, commit to the delivery of quality service, and to demonstrate a good work ethic.

As CTUSAB reflects on the challenges facing the labour movement in 2017, it holds the view that there is increasing tension in the labour relations environment, and attributes this to the lack of respect shown for the trade unions and staff associations by those in managerial positions in ministries and agencies of government, and within some private sector organizations. The failure to engage in consultation and dialogue, and the apparent unilateral approach taken in addressing outstanding issues, have led to the souring of relations. This unfortunately has forced unions and staff associations to seek redress in the law courts of Barbados. CTUSAB opines that the apparent disconnect could be easily remedied, where there is a commitment by all parties to the collective bargaining process.

Inasmuch that it seems that there are growing challenges being mounted to the demands of labour, CTUSAB posits that the time is right for the reunification and consolidation of the labour movement. The decision in 1991 to form the Coalition of Trade Unions and subsequently in 1995 to established the Congress of Trade Unions and Staff Associations of Barbados, has proven to be a decisive step in the history of industrial relations in Barbados. It is important for today's leadership of trade unions and staff associations to recognize the value of having a united rather than divided labour movement.

As we journey through this troubling period of our history, CTUSAB calls for the recommitment of the social partners to working together for the good of the nation, if its economic and social well-being is to be rescued and protected from any potential internal and external shocks.

It is to be expected that the severity of the economic crisis facing the country and the consequential social fallout, are topical issues to be addressed in the upcoming general elections campaign. It is the Congress' hope that maturity will be exercised in addressing these issues and on promoting meaningful strategies to resolve them, rather than directing attention towards dividing the nation for mere political expediency. The Congress supports the sentiment that there is a need for a unified Barbados as it works for a common cause.

It is for Barbadians to demand that from our politicians' exemplary behaviour and the exercise of decorum throughout the period of political campaigning, as this is essential to maintaining the political stability for which Barbados is known. It is to be impressed on the minds of Barbadians, that the political stability of the country remains paramount to securing investors' confidence; which is vital to the country's economic recovery and its continued growth and development.

CTUSAB urges all Barbadians and the members of the Social Partnership to enjoin with it in identifying with growth and development as the watch words for 2018; and further, to commit to redoubling all individual and collective efforts to help the nation realize this goal.



DENNIS DE PEIZA
General Secretary

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