



Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago

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Republic of Trinidad & Tobago

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Media Release

MoU For ICT Devices Signed

A memorandum of Understanding for the supply of 10,100 ICT-enabled devices and sim cards with data plans valued TTD \$15,144,975, was signed this morning at the office of the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT).

The devices are to be delivered to school children through the Ministry of Education.

The MoU was signed by Dr. the Honourable Nyan Gadsby-Dolly, Minister of Education and Mr. Gilbert Peterson S.C., Chairman of the Board of the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT).

Also present at the signing were the Honourable Lisa Morris-Julian, Minister in the Ministry of Education; Senator the Honourable Hassell Bacchus, Minister in the Ministry of Public Administration and Digital Transformation; Ms Lenore Baptiste-Simmons, Permanent Secretary, in the Ministry of Education; Mr Claudelle McKellar, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Administration and Digital Transformation and Mrs Cynthia Reddock-Downes, TATT's Chief Executive Officer.

In an address preceding the signing, Minister Gatsby-Dolly emphasised that home based learning has been a challenge for some children and thanked TATT for responding to the needs of these children, even before a formal call was made for assistance by corporate Trinidad and Tobago.

Senator the Honourable Hassel Bacchus, Minister in the Ministry of Public Administration and Digital Transformation, who also spoke at the ceremony, thanked TATT not only for the provision of the devices, but the release of additional spectrum that allowed Internet service providers the capacity to cater for the 30 to 40 percent increase in demand at the start of the Covid-19 outbreak in Trinidad and Tobago.

Directors: Mr. Gilbert Peterson, S.C. (Chairman), Dr. Kim Mallalieu (Deputy Chairman), Mr. Nikolaiski Ali, Dr. Beverly Beckles, Mr. Oliver Elcock, Mr. Terrence Henry, Professor St. Clair King, Mr. Michael Lucien, Mrs. Kalana Prince-Wilson, Mr. Stephen Tang Nian.

The cost of the equipment and Internet access will be covered by TATT through its Universal Service Fund (USF).

The USF is prescribed in the Telecommunications Act Chap 47:31 and is funded from a combination of TATT revenues and through contributions from providers of public telecommunications services in Trinidad and Tobago who in turn provide the services.

The responsibility of the USF is to facilitate connectivity to unserved and underserved communities in Trinidad and Tobago as well as provide connectivity and affordable access to schools, libraries, public health institutions, and other public institutions as well as support for persons with disabilities.

The objectives of this initiative with the Ministry of Education are to:

- a. facilitate access and Internet connectivity to e-learning platforms and resources to underserved students through the provision of ICT-enabled devices as well as access to the Internet via a mobile network;
- b. facilitate and foster online participation on e-learning platforms and resources by underserved students;
- c. reduce the digital divide by promoting the digital inclusion of underserved students without access to Internet-enabled ICT devices and Internet connectivity; and
- d. mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, so that the digital divide is not exacerbated, by promoting increased access to ICT devices and Internet connectivity.

Digicel (Trinidad & Tobago) Limited and Telecommunications Services of Trinidad and Tobago Limited are responsible for procuring the devices and providing Internet services.

Corporate Communications Department
Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago

Captions:

In photo sitting from left are: the Honourable Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly, Minister of Education signing the MoU; Mr. Gilbert Peterson, SC, Chairman of the Board, Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago also signing the MoU whilst Senator the Honourable Hassell Bacchus, Minister in the Ministry of Public Administration and Digital Transformation looks on. Standing at back and looking on are from left: Ms. Lenor Baptiste-Simmons, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education; Mrs. Cynthia Reddock Downes, Chief Executive Officer of TATT and the Honourable Lisa Morris-Julian, Minister in the Ministry of Education;

In photo standing from left are: Ms. Lenor Baptiste-Simmons, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education; The Honourable Lisa Morris-Julian, Minister in the Ministry of Education; the Honourable Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly, Minister of Education; Mr. Gilbert Peterson, SC, Chairman of the Board, Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago; Senator the Honourable Hassell Bacchus, Minister in the Ministry of Public Administration and Digital Transformation; Mr. Claudelle McKellar, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Administration and Digital Transformation; Mrs. Cynthia Reddock Downes, Chief Executive Officer of TATT