

# COMMISSIONING OF THE SOLAR PARK AT THE PIARCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

On Tuesday July 30th 2024, Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (“the Authority”) in partnership with the European Union (EU), the Ministry of Planning and Development, the Ministry of Public Utilities, the Ministry of Works and Transport and the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries formally commissioned the EU funded 0.5MW Solar Park at the Piarco International Airport.

Chairman of the Authority, Mr Christopher Alcazar welcomed the gathering to the Piarco International Airport. He stated that: *“The aviation industry is a key driver of global economic growth, but it also contributes to greenhouse gas emissions. Good corporate social responsibility demands a sufficient response from the Authority to mitigate our environmental impact.*



*One of our strategic objectives, is the upgrade of airport operations to the highest standards through enhanced systems and processes that ensure environmental compliance. The installation of a Solar Park therefore is one project among several environmentally friendly initiatives and strategic approaches that have been implemented to mitigate against the negative effects of climate change.”*

Also in attendance at the ceremony was His Excellency Peter Cavendish, the EU Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago. He emphasized that: *“It was through a grant of EUR 1.5 million (equivalent to 12 million TT dollars), to the Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago, that the EU was able to finance this installation of a large-scale solar panel system at Piarco International Airport. An airport with one of the largest numbers of passenger usage in the Caribbean.”*



His Excellency Peter Cavendish, the EU Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago cont'd ***"The premise of the project was to further effect a 20% reduction in CO2 emissions from aircrafts operating in Trinidad and Tobago by switching approximately 4% of the electricity consumed by AATT from the grid to a renewable source – in this case, solar PV."***

The Honourable Minister of Works and Transport, Senator Rohan Sinanan spoke of the devastating effects of coastal erosion seen throughout Trinidad and Tobago and that this initiative was a step in the right direction to find solutions to the negative effects of climate change.

The feature address was delivered by the Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs, the Honourable Stuart Young. He thanked all stakeholders for their contributions to the successful execution of the project.

In 2018, the Authority engaged in a feasibility study, supported by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and the EU. The study focused on Capacity Building for CO2 Mitigation from International Aviation and the Use of Renewable Energy Sources within the aviation sector in Trinidad and Tobago. The results of that study identified suitable locations at the Piarco International Airport for a solar photovoltaic project that could be developed cost-effectively and compatibly.

In December 2019, the Authority signed a contract for funding with the EU to undertake the Solar Park project under the Global Climate Change Alliance Plus (GCCA+) flagship initiative, which helps the world's most vulnerable countries to address climate change.

In May 2022, the Authority began the construction of the Solar Park at the Piarco International Airport.

The 0.5 MW solar park has a minimum annual generation capacity of 767,034 kWh and the potential to avoid approximately 500 metric tonnes of CO2 emissions annually. The power produced contributes to the Authority's current annual electrical consumption at the Piarco International Airport, with capacity for future expansion.

The Authority is pleased to partner with all stakeholders to confront emerging issues on climate change and implement suitable measures for climate action.

