

**Information Note for Participation to the  
UNCCD XII Regional Meeting for  
Latin America and the Caribbean  
July 31<sup>st</sup> – August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2007**

**Location of the meeting:**

***Crowne Plaza Hotel, Port-of-Spain***

The Crowne Plaza Hotel, Port-of-Spain is in the very heart of the city and on the waterfront; it offers easy access to downtown shopping, museums, and cultural sites. The Crowne Plaza is a short distance from a number of restaurants and the city's nightlife.

With 243 rooms, inclusive of executive floors, suites, a business centre, pool, fitness centre and 4 elevators for guests' that can transport them to the fully rotating 360 Degrees Restaurant. The hotel also has ten meeting rooms that can accommodate from 10 to 550 persons.

**Accommodation:**

For accessibility reasons, arrangements have been made to obtain a concessional rate for participants in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Port-of-Spain that will host the Conference. Participants are **strongly advised** to lodge in this hotel.

Participants should book their rooms directly by fax to the following number: 1-868-624-4677 preferentially **on or before** July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2007. In the fax exact dates of reservations should be specified.

The negotiated rate includes a Full Buffet Breakfast at the Olympia Restaurant:

<b>Negotiated rates for bed and breakfast</b>	
Single	US \$155.00 (plus taxes)
Double	US \$175.00 (plus taxes)

In order to benefit from the above special rates negotiated with the hotel a minimum of 60 rooms must be booked by the participants of the Meeting. Participant should therefore indicate that s/he would be attending the Conference organized by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the UNCCD Secretariat when making booking.

**Participants are also strongly urged to check with the Hotel before finalizing booking as should the minimum 60 rooms not be booked by Meeting Participants, the Hotel will charge the regular rates which are indicated in the Further accommodation section below.**

For more information on the Hotel, please go to [www.crowneplaza.com/trinidad](http://www.crowneplaza.com/trinidad).

**Further Accommodation:**

Hotel	Room Rates (US\$)	Travel Time via Taxi
<b>Ambassador Hotel</b> <sup>1,2</sup> 99A Long Cir. Road, St. James. Tel: 1 (868) 628-9000 Fax: 1 (868) 628-7411 Email: ambassador@wow.net Website: n/a	Single Standard: 110 Double Standard: 145 Single Executive Room: 200 Double Executive Room: 240	25 min
<b>Cascadia</b> <sup>1,2</sup> Ariapta Road, St. Anns, Port-of-Spain. Tel: 1 (868) 623-4208/9 Fax: 1 (868) 627-8046 Email: marketing@cascadiahotel.com Website: <a href="http://www.cascadiahotel.com">www.cascadiahotel.com</a>	Single Standard: 110 Double Standard: 145 Single Executive Room: 200 Double Executive Room: 240	25 min
<b>Crowne Plaza</b> <sup>1,2</sup> 1017 Wrightson Road, Port-of-Spain. Tel: 1 (868) 625-3361-8 Fax: 1 (868) 625-4166 Email: eoffice@cplazahotel.com Website: <a href="http://www.crowneplaza.com/trinidad">www.crowneplaza.com/trinidad</a>	Single Standard: 248 Double Standard: 273 Single Executive Room: 478 Double Executive Room: 508	n/a
<b>Hilton</b> <sup>2</sup> Lady Young Road, Port-of-Spain. Tel: 1 (868) 624-3211/3111 Fax: 1 (868) 624-4485 Email: reservations.trinidad@hilton.com Website: <a href="http://www.hitoncaribbean.com/trinidad">www.hitoncaribbean.com/trinidad</a>	Single Standard: 215 Double Standard: 230 Junior Executive Suite: 295 Superior Executive Suite: 380	12 min
<b>Hotel Normandie</b> <sup>1,2</sup> 10 Nook Avenue, St. Ann's, Trinidad. Tel: 1 (868) 624-1181 Fax: 1 (868) 624-0108 Email: home@normandielt.com Website: <a href="http://www.normandielt.com">www.normandielt.com</a>	Single Standard: 138 Double Standard: 155 Single Executive Room: 155 Double Executive Room: 178	15 min

Hotel	Room Rates (US\$)	Travel Time via Taxi
<b>Kapok</b> <sup>1,2</sup> 16-18 Cotton Hill, St. Clair, Trinidad. W.I. Tel: 1 (868) 622-5765 Fax: 1 (868) 622-9677 Email: stay@kapokhotel.com Website: <a href="http://www.kapokhotel.com">www.kapokhotel.com</a>	Single Standard: 201 Double Standard: 220 Single Executive Room: 225 Double Executive Room: 245	15 min
<b>Marriott</b> <sup>2</sup> Invader's Bay, Audrey Jeffers Highway, Port-of-Spain. Tel: 1 (868) 627-55555 Fax: 1 (868) 627-6317 Website: <a href="http://www.marriott.com">www.marriott.com</a>	Single Standard: 254 Double Standard: 254 Single Executive Room: 285 Double Executive Room: 285	25 min
<b>The Chancellor</b> <sup>1,2</sup> 5 St. Ann's Avenue, St. Ann's, Port-of-Spain. Tel: 1 (868) 623-0883 Website: <a href="http://www.thechancellor.com">www.thechancellor.com</a>	Single Standard: 149 Double Standard: 169 Single Executive Room: 182 Double Executive Room: 218	25 min

<sup>1</sup>Includes All Taxes

<sup>2</sup>Includes Daily Continental Breakfast

**Note that Taxi Fare to Meeting from Hotel (one way) = US\$10 - \$14**

### **General Information on Trinidad and Tobago:**

**Official Name:** Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

**Location:** The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago comprises two islands at the southern-most end of the Caribbean archipelago. Trinidad – the larger of the two islands – has an area of 4,828 sq km (1,864 sq mls) and is situated 10 km (7 miles) from the east coast of Venezuela. Tobago is 32 km (20 miles) off the north-east coast of Trinidad and has an area of 300 sq km (116 sq mls).

**Capital:** Port-of-Spain

**Official Language:** English

**Climate:** There are two seasons, which are distinguishable by rainfall – the 'dry' season which lasts from January to May and 'rainy' season which extends from June to December. August is considered the peak of the rainy season, while May and October are usually the hottest months of the year. The annual rainfall is

approximately 2,000mm. Temperatures vary between 23 degrees Celsius (73 degrees Fahrenheit) and 32 degrees Celsius (90 degrees Fahrenheit) between the sister islands.

**Local Time:** Trinidad and Tobago is on Eastern Standard Time, which is four hours behind Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

**Taxes:** Hotels and guest houses add a 10% government tax to all bills. They may also add additional service and utility charges. There is a 15% VAT (Value Added Tax) on all goods and services. Businesses registered to charge the VAT have a certificate of registration prominently displayed at their place of business.

**Currency:** The Trinidad and Tobago, or TT, Dollar floats against the US Dollar at an average rate of TT\$6.30 to US\$1.00.

**Electricity:** Trinidad and Tobago has either 115 or 230-volt AC on 60 cycles.

**Tips:** In Trinidad and Tobago, tipping is considered a gesture of kindness and gratitude for a service well done. Most do not expect tips, but if you choose to, your gesture will be welcomed.

**Drivers License:** To drive in Trinidad and Tobago you must possess a valid international driver's permit or one issued in: The Bahamas, Canada, England, France, Germany or the United States of America.

**Business Hours:** 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**Population:** 1.3 million

**Religions:** Predominantly Roman Catholic and Hinduism. Protestant, including Anglican, Baptist, Pentecostal and Seventh-day Adventist, as well as Islam and traditional African faiths are also represented.

**Economic Profile:** Trinidad and Tobago has earned a reputation as an excellent investment site for international businesses. A leading performer the past four years has been the booming natural gas sector. Tourism is a growing sector, although not proportionately as important as in many other Caribbean islands. The 2002 to 2006 period has been marked with increasing economic trends, fueled by high oil prices. The total GDP has doubled during this period and now stands near US\$ 90 billion.

**Emergency Numbers:**

Police:	999
Fire:	990
Coast Guard:	634-4440
Ambulances:	990

**Public Hospitals close to the Meeting:**

Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex: 645-4673  
Port-of-Spain General Hospital: 623-2951

**Private Hospitals close to the Meeting:**

St. Clair Medical Centre: 628-2451  
West Shore Medical: 622-9878

**Entry Requirements:**

*Visas and Immigration/Necessary Documents*

- ◆ Valid passport
- ◆ Return ticket and documents allowing entry into the other country of destination
- ◆ Financial support
- ◆ Visa (if required)
- ◆ Visitors arriving within five days from a yellow-fever-infected area require a vaccination certificate.

American and Canadian citizens and European Union residents require a passport valid at least three months longer than the intended stay, and do not require a visa for visits up to three months. All visitors must also have an onward or return ticket.

Citizens of other countries may require a visa. Consult your nearest Trinidad & Tobago consulate/diplomatic mission or call the Trinidad & Tobago Immigration Division at 868-623-3571 or 868-623-3572. The visa application form is available on the Government of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago's website at [www.gov.tt/services](http://www.gov.tt/services)

List of invited countries requiring a visa	List of invited countries not requiring a visa
Bolivia Chile Colombia Cuba Dominican Republic Ecuador El Salvador Guatemala Haiti Honduras Mexico Nicaragua Panama Paraguay Peru	Antigua and Barbuda Argentina Bahamas Barbados Belize Brazil Costa Rica Dominica Grenada Guyana Jamaica St. Christopher and Nevis St. Lucia St. Vincent and the Grenadines Suriname Uruguay Venezuela

**Airport Departure Tax:**

- ◆ There is a departure tax of TT\$100.00 or approximately US\$18.00 for passengers under 60 years of age departing on international flights.

**Places of Interest around Port-of-Spain:**

**Fort George**, which overlooks St James and much of western Port of Spain, was initially built in 1804 as part of a complex of fortifications that protected the island and its main harbour of Port of Spain. “The Fort” was a key military position in a network of fortifications and sea defences but ceased to be a military establishment in 1846 and was converted into a signal station in 1902, which continued to be in operation until 1964.

The facility is now used as a good spot for bird-watchers interested in Trinidad's songbirds, or for those who wish to get away from the city to take advantage of the pristine surroundings to wind down at the end of a long day at work.

**The Botanic Gardens** are located in Port-of-Spain on the northern side of the Queen's Park Savannah. The gardens were established in 1818 by Governor Woodford, it is one of the oldest gardens in the West Indies which has had a continuous existence.

Today, the 25 hectares of beautifully landscaped gardens consist of approximately seven hundred (700) trees of which thirteen percent (13%) are indigenous to Trinidad and Tobago. Trees in the gardens represent every continent of the world.

**The Emperor Valley Zoo** was established in 1952, the primary objective of the zoo was to expose the residents of Trinidad and Tobago to the native fauna and fragility of the ecosystems there. The zoo currently has collections of over 2000 individuals and over 200 species.

**The National Museum & Art Gallery**, on display are works by Trinidad and Tobago artists plus a number of exhibits about the cultural history of the twin island Republic.

**The Queen's Park Savannah** is the largest open space in the city of Port-of-Spain and is the world's largest roundabout, because of the one-way traffic around it. It is situated at the northern end of the city. It extends over 80 hectares of land that was formerly sugar estate. It is one of the largest water catchment areas in Port of Spain and is well loved by the country's citizens as an area of rest, sport, recreation and exercise.

#### **Other Places of Interest in Trinidad:**

**Asa Wright Nature Centre and Lodge** is a 720-acre nature centre, nestled on the slopes of the Northern Range of the island of Trinidad. It is an internationally renowned nature/bird reserve and is an ideal destination for students of tropical ecosystems and natural history, and is of particular interest to birdwatchers.

**The Caroni Swamp Bird Sanctuary** is the home of the National bird of Trinidad, the Scarlet Ibis. It is a large wetland on the Northwest coast, and is a place known for its striking stillness and incredible beauty.

**The Pitch Lake** at La Brea in the southwest of the island is the largest natural asphalt lake in the world - and well worth a visit if only for the sheer incongruity of a giant tar pit in the midst of tropical beauty.

**The Pointe-a-Pierre Wildfowl Trust**, is a wildlife reserve, which encompasses two lakes and about 25 hectares of land within a major petrochemical complex. "The Trust", is a wetland habitat, and is also a peaceful haven where members and visitors may relax; enjoy bird-watching, photography and interpretative trails.

For more information on Trinidad and Tobago please visit the web site of the Tourism Development Company Limited at [www.visittrinidad.com](http://www.visittrinidad.com) or [www.tdc.co.tt](http://www.tdc.co.tt).

#### **Safety and Security**

Visitors to Trinidad and Tobago should exercise reasonable caution when conducting shopping or site-seeing activities throughout the country. Visitors are advised not to walk alone or in unfamiliar areas, particularly after dark, and to stay aware of their surroundings in areas where large numbers of people congregate, such as shopping malls or within the city centre.

Traffic moves on the left in Trinidad and Tobago. Most vehicles are right-hand drive, but left-hand drive vehicles are permitted. Rental cars are available, and are generally right-hand drive. Seatbelts are required for drivers and front seat passengers.

### **Disclaimer**

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago disclaims all responsibility for medical, accident and travel insurance, for compensation for death or disability, for loss of or damage to personal property and for any other loss that may be incurred during travel time or the period of participation. In this context, it is strongly recommended to secure prior to departure international medical insurance for the period of participation.