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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **T&T Representative Elected as Vice President of Committee of Experts on Violence (CEVI)**

The Honourable Ayanna Webster-Roy, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister and the Gender and Child Affairs Division wishes to congratulate Ms. Sherna Alexander Benjamin on her election as one of the Vice Presidents of the Organization of American States **Committee of Experts on Violence (CEVI)**. Her appointment will aid in combatting violence against women globally and marks a significant milestone as it is the first time a representative from Trinidad and Tobago has been elected into a leadership position on the CEVI.

Ms. Alexander Benjamin also serves as the Principal Expert of the Committee of Experts to the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESCEVI). She has over ten years of experience as a macro social worker, human capital, and social development practitioner working towards social and economic transformation. She has collaborated to create solutions for addressing, preventing, and responding to all types of violence in both public and private settings. She is also founder of the Center for Nonviolence, Research, and Development (formerly Organization for Abused and Battered Individuals).

The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women, adopted in Belém do Pará, Brazil in 1994, establishes violence against women as a violation of their human rights. The MESCEVI was established in 2004 as a systematic and ongoing multi-lateral evaluation methodology between the States party to the Convention and CEVI. The Committee of Experts is the technical part of the MESECVI, responsible for the analysis and evaluation of the implementation of the Convention. It is composed of independent Experts that are appointed by each of the States Party and serve the MESECVI in a personal capacity.

As we conclude the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is pleased to have a representation of this nature. We applaud Ms. Benjamin for her dedication to the advancement of women's empowerment and development. This is a great achievement for our nation as it welcomes female representation in decision making on the international platform.

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