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MEDIA RELEASE

AATT AND THE EU COMMEMORATE WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY AND PARTNER TO BUILD A SOLAR FARM AT THE PIARCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

On June 5th 2020, Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (“the Authority”) accomplished its maiden milestone in the journey to the completion of the landmark project to implement a European Union (EU) funded solar park at the North Terminal, Piarco International Airport. In commemoration of World Environment Day and the alignment of the occasion with the goals for the project, the Authority hosted a Tree Planting Ceremony.

The solar park, which will be located north of the Piarco International Airport, was borne from a feasibility study, supported by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and the EU. The study focussed 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 solar park will generate a clean, sustainable, green, renewable source of energy that is key to fighting climate change.

In preparation for construction of the solar park on the site, vegetation must be removed to ensure there is no obstruction of light rays to the installed solar PV panels. Therefore, the Authority initiated the tree replanting activity to allow the value of the removed shrubbery to continue within the community, so as not to alter the net effect of Carbon Dioxide absorption.

At the event, the Chairman of the Authority, Mr Keith Thomas stated, “The appeal of the Solar Farm is largely aided by the achievement of the main objective to contribute to Trinidad and Tobago’s Paris Agreement and the intended nationally determined contribution to reduce overall carbon emissions by 15% through the year 2030. The project also improves Trinidad and Tobago’s resilience to climate change by introducing renewable energy as an energy source for electricity generation not only to the airport but to the country.”

Mr Hayden Newton, General Manager of the Authority stated that, “The replanting of trees is significant. We are doing this in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic and the start of hurricane season, as we understand the impact of climate change on our lives and livelihood. The replanting of trees today symbolises the Authority’s recognition of its corporate social responsibility to our environment and our commitment to climate action for the sake of future generations.”

His Excellency Ambassador Arend Biesebroek Head of Delegation of the European Union to Trinidad and Tobago stated, “We can all see the negative effects of climate change: coastal erosion, increasingly intensive rainfall, floods, and prolonged period of droughts. We all agree that it is important to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and limit global warming to try to avoid an aggravation of these negative effects. The EU has therefore made environmental protection and climate action a top priority, not only at home but also in cooperation with our partner countries. This solar park, financed through the GCCA+ initiative, is an example of our commitment. I am very pleased that I could contribute to the development of this initiative.”

The Authority has actively been taking strides, supported by the EU, to commit to climate action initiatives, in fulfilment of its corporate social responsibility to the environment and future generations.

ABOUT GCCA+

Global Climate Change Alliance Plus (GCCA+) is a European Union flagship initiative aimed at helping the world’s most vulnerable countries to address climate change. This EU initiative helps mainly Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) increase their resilience to climate change. <https://www.gcca.eu/>

This Release has been issued by Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago
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