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## **SHANGHAI AND PORT OF SPAIN MAYORS SIGN LETTER OF INTENT TO BECOME SISTER CITIES**

*Port of Spain, Trinidad – Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2022.*

Trinidad and Tobago and China continue to strengthen their bilateral relationship through mutual respect and sustained cooperation. A Letter of Intent has been signed between His Worship, The Mayor of Port of Spain, Alderman Joel Martinez and the Mayor of the Shanghai Municipal People's Government, Gong Zheng. The auspicious event took place at the Port of Spain City Corporation on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2022. Also in attendance were His Excellency Fang Qiu, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Republic Trinidad and Tobago; Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, Senator The Honourable Dr. Amery Browne; CEO of Port of Spain City Corporation Mrs. Annette Stapleton-Seaforth and members of the Port of Spain City Council, among other specially-invited guests. A live event also took place at the Office of the Mayor in Shanghai, China to formalize the signing of the document, which was streamed online to an eager international audience.

In his address, Mayor Joel Martinez reaffirmed the Council's commitment to tackling a number of shared priority areas for social, economic and cultural development. This includes poverty alleviation, climate change and green development, digital economy, food security, and industrialization among other focal areas. "Today both Port of Spain and Shanghai will officially signify our intentions to continue working together towards our cities' development in the areas of finance, trade, culture, sports, public health and education with the possibilities that our friendship will lead to us becoming Sister Cities in the future," he said in his address to attendees. He stressed on the importance of technical co-operation between both countries, as a collaborative effort to work in alignment with the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago's Vision 2030 and the People's Republic of China's Global Development Initiative (GDI). The Mayor of Port of Spain also made mention of the local Chinese Embassy's collaboration with the Port of Spain City Corporation in July 2022, to award five (5) Trinidad and Tobago students with scholarships which aided in their educational advancement.

The signing of the Letter of Intent signals a continuation of the trade and cultural partnerships between both countries. Mayor Gong Zheng, who has been in office since 2020, recently oversaw the launch of the Shanghai International Sister Cities Hub Project, which covers ninety-two (92) cities from fifty-nine (59) countries and regions around the world. Launched in September 2022, the programme aims to build a one-stop service platform for exhibition, trade and communication of sister cities' economy, trade, culture and technology.

After the signing of the letters of intent at the Port of Spain City Corporation, cultural entertainment was also present at the celebratory event - including traditional Moko Jumbies and



a Chinese Lion Dancer, which mimics a lion's movements in a lion costume to bring good luck and fortune.

This Letter of Intent between Shanghai and Port of Spain represents the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) Sister City agreement in 2022 for Trinidad and Tobago's capital city, following a signing with the Mayor of Kumasi, Ghana in October and the confirmation of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Mayor of Georgetown, Guyana in November.

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