



**OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**  
**CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT**

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Ombudsman of Trinidad and Tobago files criminal complaint against Corporation CEO**

The Ombudsman of Trinidad and Tobago has initiated summary criminal proceedings at the Port of Spain District Court against Ms. Kathy Ann Mills-Mark, Chief Executive Officer of the Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation, following her failure to attend hearings to which she was summoned contrary to Section 10 of the Ombudsman Act Chapter 2:52.

The Office of the Ombudsman issued two (2) summonses on April 1<sup>st</sup> and April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022, requiring Ms. Mills-Mark to appear before Ombudsman Rajmanlal Joseph on Wednesday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022, to give evidence in two separate complaints against the Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation. The first hearing pertained to a delay in the Corporation addressing a complaint about the construction of illegal structures on a government reserve. The second hearing was in relation to the Corporation's delay in addressing a complaint of the blockage of the roadway at Gittens Street, Tacarigua.

When the hearings were convened at 11:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. respectively as scheduled, CEO Mills-Mark failed to appear and checks with the Office of the Ombudsman's Registry confirmed that no excuse was forwarded from Ms. Mills-Mark or the Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation to explain her absence. To date, the Office of the Ombudsman has not received any lawful justification or excuse for the absence of Ms. Mills-Mark at the hearings to which she was summoned.

Since his appointment on May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the Ombudsman has conducted 102 hearings in relation to 210 matters under investigation. Should public authorities fail to respond to the Ombudsman's requests for information in the conduct of his investigations, he shall so exercise the jurisdiction reposed in his Office by virtue of Section 97 (1) of the Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago. Under Section 97 (1), the Ombudsman shall have the powers of the High Court to summon witnesses to appear before him and to compel them to give evidence on oath and to produce documents relevant to the proceedings before him.

Under Section 10 of the Ombudsman Act 2:52, a person is liable on summary conviction to a fine or to imprisonment for six months who without lawful justification or excuse refuses or willfully fails to comply with any lawful requirement of the Ombudsman or any other person under the Ombudsman Act. Public officials are therefore reminded that prompt collaboration with the Office of the Ombudsman is imperative in avoiding such measures being taken to secure their cooperation.

The Office of the Ombudsman of Trinidad and Tobago remains committed to fulfilling its Constitutional mandate of investigating complaints of administrative injustice and will utilise all legislative measures in its power to facilitate the expeditious execution of its functions.

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