**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Trinidad and Tobago**

**to be delivered at the**

**Fourth Cycle Universal Periodic Review of Belize**

**45th Session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group,**

**Monday 29 January 2024**

***Time allotted: 1 minute, 50 seconds***

Thank you, Mr. [Vice] President.

Trinidad and Tobago thanks the Government of Belize for its comprehensive report and welcomes our fellow Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Member State’s robust engagement in this fourth cycle.

Recognising that this review takes place against the backdrop of the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the passage of Hurricane Lisa in 2022, and the deepening climate crisis, we commend Belize for the meaningful progress made since its third cycle.

We highlight, in particular, the adoption of a new medium-term policy #Plan Belize; the development of a comprehensive policy framework to combat climate change; the increased national budget for health; and national digitalization efforts. Recalling the recommendation made by Trinidad and Tobago at the last review on efforts to further stem dropout rates for primary and secondary schools, we welcome the introduction of the Education Upliftment Project in 2021 and its focus on secondary schools in vulnerable and at-risk communities.

We also note the varied challenges highlighted in its national report, as the Government of Belize continues to pursue policies to improve the implementation of its human rights obligations.

Accordingly, in a constructive spirit, Trinidad and Tobago recommends that Belize:

1. Strengthen its national coordination and reporting mechanism, with the continued support of OHCHR, to meet its reporting obligations to treaty bodies; and
2. Continue to pursue efforts to bolster climate resilience and adaptation through collaboration with local, regional and international partners.

Trinidad and Tobago wishes the Delegation of Belize a successful review.

I thank you.