



16 November 2020

Senator the Honorable  
Paula Gopee-Scoon,  
Minister of Trade and Industry,  
Nicholas Tower,  
63-65 Independence Square  
Port of Spain.

Dear Honorable Minister Gopee-Scoon,

It is with great humility and respect we write to you.

You and your fellow ministers have been given a task like none before you have ever had. It has been a hard road and will continue to be for the foreseeable future. For the tireless hours, days, and months of stress and effort that you all have had to face, we, as citizens, thank you.

The yacht services sector is in collapse. International customers being denied entry into the country is destroying the industry so completely and unnecessarily. It is now November, the beginning of the sailing season in the Caribbean. The customers abroad that left their vessels on land in the boatyards in Chaguaramas at the beginning of the year, vessels that have been effectively trapped here, now want to return to reclaim their boats. Under current policy, they are barred from doing so. We understand that arrival by air is problematic and that mechanisms for this are still being looked at carefully by the government. However, arrival by sea is very straight forward and safe.

The Minister of National Security most graciously granted permission to the writer to repatriate nationals from Barbados by boat in these past months. The procedures and protocols are in place and have all been followed regarding quarantine in Chacachacare. All officials could not have been more professional and pleasant.

The protocols for dealing with health and quarantine of sea going vessels have been in place for hundreds of years. Sea vessels by their physical nature are easily quarantined. This form of quarantine cost virtually nothing to the country in way of expense and poses no risk to

nationals. In the modern day we have testing as an additional safeguard to the quarantine period.

So we have the way. What we need now, to save this Industry and the jobs of the workers it employs, is to have the will. There is no medical or scientific reason to block these customers from returning by sea as so very clearly demonstrated by the situation in Grenada, where hundreds of our customers have been given refuge through this pandemic.

We understand quite clearly that politically the government may be criticized by some for opening to non-nationals while we still struggle to repatriate nationals. However, we need to start somewhere. And, bear in mind, we hold some of these people's valuable vessels in possession and expect them to continue to pay us to store them while they are not allowed to return to their sea going homes. For many, the only homes they own.

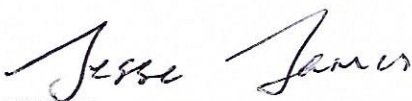
Attached for your reference is the letter from Dr. Roshan Parasram approving the necessary protocols for implementation.

We urge you to consider how easy it is for us to start moving in a positive direction to save this people employing, US dollar earning industry. Grenada is eating our lunch.

Please hold discussion with the Minister of National Security and urge him to allow us to invite our valuable customers in. This, so that we may make a contribution to the country's foreign exchange earnings while saving the livelihoods of the Industry's workforce.

We look forward to your urgent attention to our request.

Yours Truly,



for : Mr. Peter Peake  
President  
Yacht Services Association of Trinidad and Tobago

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