



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago  
Ministry of Digital Transformation



Executive Sessions on

# DIGITAL LEADERSHIP IN THE CARIBBEAN

May 15 – 16, 2023

Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago





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# DIGITAL LEADERSHIP IN THE CARIBBEAN



## Introduction

The Caribbean region is continuing to show meaningful progress in the ways in which governments conduct business and provide public services, through the adoption of digital transformation strategies. According to the 2022 United Nations E-Government Development Index (EGDI), all member states of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) surveyed, except Haiti, placed in the “High” development group. Nevertheless, citizen impatience with the pace of digital reforms and their ongoing preference for accessing public services through non-digital channels continue to be formidable challenges, requiring more ambitious and nuanced digital transformation agendas. To deliver on these new agendas, regional knowledge exchanges on digital policy development, that leverage the successes and insights gained from each country’s journey, are critical.



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The Ministry of Digital Transformation in Trinidad and Tobago (MDT), on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, in partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU), wishes to create an enabling space for the region's most senior policymakers with portfolio responsibility for digitalisation, in which they can address collaboratively some of the most common impediments faced in the digital transformation of the state. By contributing, from their unique set of competencies, knowledge and professional experiences, these executives will learn from each other and enhance the knowledge base for Caribbean digital policy and practice.





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## Workshop Objectives

The Executive Sessions will seek to:

- Facilitate a comprehensive understanding among executives of cross-border challenges and opportunities to advance digital transformation in the Caribbean;
- Support strategy development for confronting and addressing impediments to public sector innovation at the regional, national and organisational level; and
- Chart joint action among the Ministers, with support from the IDB and CTU, in the areas of research and innovation to advance the digital agenda.



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## Workshop Format

The Executive Sessions will provide six (6) substantive sessions focusing on practical guidance on the most salient topics for Caribbean digitalisation such as (i) electronic identity and interoperability platforms; (ii) cybersecurity for critical infrastructure; and (iii) cross-border data governance. The Executive Sessions will feature in-person presentations by renowned digital thought leaders and offer a helpdesk setting where questions can be asked and answered confidentially. Moreover, they will foster an esprit de corps among the policymakers by facilitating peer exchanges on their digital policy successes that reflect the unique sensitivities, strengths and institutional settings that typify the Caribbean experience. Policy makers will also have facilities available for technical advice in real-time, by having their designated technical advisor(s) attending the sessions virtually. An open session with specially invited guests representing the region's private sector and civil society will also allow policymakers to gain perspective on the imperatives of championing a more engaged and trusting digital citizenry.



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**INDICATIVE AGENDA – Day 1**  
May 15, 2023

## 9:00 – 9:40 **Welcome and Opening Remarks** (Open to Media)

- **Welcome and Introductions:** Wendell Constantine - *Host*
- **Remarks:** Rodney Taylor - *Secretary General, CTU*
- **Remarks:** Robert L. Le Hunte - *Executive Director for the Caribbean Country Department, IDB*
- **Opening Address:** Senator the Honourable Hassel Bacchus - *Minister of Digital Transformation*

## 9:40 – 10:45 **Presentation on the Digital Government Transformation Guide** (Closed Session)

*Attendees will receive a primer on the key elements for a holistic and comprehensive digitalisation agenda based on the IDB's recent publication, Government Digital Transformation Guide and on securing the return on investment for digitalisation, with commentary from a panel of digital experts.*

**Presenter:** Benjamin Roseth - *Senior Modernization of the State Specialist, IDB (virtual)*

**Moderator:** Denyse White - *Deputy National Chief Digital Officer, Ministry of Digital Transformation*

- Commentators:**
- **Victor Gauto** - *Country Economist, IDB*
  - **Francis Maude** - *Founder and Chairman, FMA Consulting Group*
  - **Cleveland Thomas** - *Area Representative for the Caribbean, ITU*

10:45 – 11:00

**BREAK**



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# DIGITAL LEADERSHIP IN THE CARIBBEAN



## COLLABORATION ON CARIBBEAN DIGITAL INNOVATION

### 11:00 – 12:15 Foundational Elements for Digital Government Excellence: The Digital Innovation Infrastructure Ecosystem (Closed Session)

*Having the benefit of a bespoke policy brief on considerations for data centres to ensure the security and sovereignty of government data as well as cloud computing for achieving critical business and technology goals, the Ministers will deliberate in small groups as well as plenary the contours of a regional pilot initiative to advance the digital agenda.*

**Facilitators:** Senator the Honourable Hassel Bacchus – Minister of Digital Transformation, Trinidad and Tobago

**Remarks:** Valeriya Ionan – Deputy Minister for Eurointegration/ Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine  
(virtual)

12:15 – 1:15

LUNCH

### 1:15 – 2:30 Foundational Elements for Digital Government Excellence: Electronic Identity and Interoperability (Closed Session)

*Siim Sikkut, recognised globally as one of the 20 most influential people in Digital Government, will impart lessons on how to achieve digital government excellence in the Caribbean based on international case studies of digital identity and interoperability platform development. The Ministers will then deliberate in small groups as well as plenary the contours of a regional pilot initiative to advance the digital agenda.*

• **Moderator:** Devindra Ramnarine – Digital Transformation Adviser, Ministry of Digital Transformation





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## COLLABORATION ON CARIBBEAN DIGITAL INNOVATION

### 4:00 – 6:00 Rethinking Caribbean Citizenship in the Digital Age: Data, Rights and Innovation (Specially Invited Guests)

*In the near future, can the social contract between Caribbean citizens and the state be re-imagined as an outcome of digital policy? This session invites a public discourse and critique of ICT governance in the region towards identifying priorities for a viable regional strategy to expedite creation of a CARICOM single ICT space.*

- **National Anthem and Opening Prayer**
- **Welcome and Introductions:** Wendell Constantine - Host
- **Remarks:** Tariq Alli - General Manager - Caribbean Country Department, IDB
- **Remarks:** The Honourable Penelope Beckles-Robinson - Minister of Planning and Development, Trinidad & Tobago
- **Feature Address:** Mr. Gervase Warner - President and Group CEO of the Massy Group of Companies
- **Moderator:** Devindra Ramnarine - Digital Transformation Adviser, Ministry of Digital Transformation
- **Speakers:**
  - Hebert Paguas - Executive Director, e-Government, Information Society and Knowledge Agency (AGESIC), Uruguay
  - Honey Dacanay - Director-General, Policy and Service, Government of Canada (virtual)
  - Siim Sikkut - Managing Partner at Digital Nation
- **Key Takeaways:** Devindra Ramnarine (Moderator)
- **Expression of Appreciation** - Wendell Constantine - Host

### Moderated Discussion

### 6:00 – 7:00 Cocktail Reception for Invited Guests





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INDICATIVE AGENDA – Day 2

May 16, 2023

## 9:00 – 9:30 Building Digital from the Core: Lessons from India's Aadhaar Experience

(Closed Session)

*This session will reflect on the experience of India in developing its digital infrastructure and biometric identity system towards creating a pathway for full digital citizenship and participation in the digital economy for its people.*

- **Moderator:** Fazal Ali – Digital Transformation Consultant, IDB
- **Speaker:** Abhishek Singh – President & CEO, NeGD (National eGovernance Division) and Managing Director, Digital India Corporation, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India (virtual)

## 9:30 – 10:45 Foundational Elements for Digital Government Excellence: Cybersecurity

(Closed Session)

*Having the benefit of a bespoke policy brief on considerations for regional cybersecurity systems and approaches, the Ministers will deliberate in small groups, as well as in plenary, on the contours of a regional pilot initiative to advance the digital agenda.*

- **Moderator:** Miguel Porrua – Sector Principal Specialist – Digital Government, IDB
- **Speakers:** Ariel Nowersztern – Sector Senior Specialist – Cybersecurity, IDB  
Wayne Nakhid – Deputy Chief National Digital Officer  
Safa Shahwan Edwards – Deputy Director, Cyber Statecraft



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## INDICATIVE AGENDA – Day 2

May 16, 2023

### 10:45 – 11:30 Finalisation of Plan of Action/Commitment on Caribbean Digital Collaboration

- **Key Takeaways:** Senator the Honourable Hassel Bacchus – *Minister of Digital Transformation, Trinidad and Tobago*
- **Closing Remarks:** Wendell Mitchell – *National Chief Digital Officer, Ministry of Digital Transformation*

11:30 – 12:30

LUNCH

### 1:30 – 6:30 Special Meeting of Caribbean Telecommunications Union