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Central Bank Governor Larry Howai leads High-Level Visit to Chief Secretary Farley Augustine

SCARBOROUGH, TOBAGO. April 24, 2026 – Governor of the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago, Larry Howai, accompanied by Deputy Governor – Dr. Dorian Noel, the Bank’s Board of Directors and members of the management team, paid a visit to the Honourable Farley Augustine, Chief Secretary of the Tobago House of Assembly (THA) and members of the Assembly today, April 24, 2026. The engagement forms part of Governor Howai’s ongoing programme of strategic stakeholder engagements as he advances the Central Bank’s mandate in service of all citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, with particular attention to Tobago’s distinct needs.

The visit was substantive in scope, covering a range of issues critical to Tobago’s economic well-being, including financial literacy, digital payments modernisation, the macroeconomic outlook, and opportunities for deeper institutional collaboration. The visit was timely as it coincided with the Bank’s April Board meeting held in Tobago. At the meeting, Governor Howai signalled the Bank’s readiness to build capacity through continued research and statistical support to assist the THA in strengthening its economic modelling capacity; a commitment that will help address longstanding data gaps that have historically limited evidence-based policymaking in Tobago.

The delegation engaged the Assembly on the broader macroeconomic context, including the domestic economic outlook and foreign exchange developments, while acknowledging that Tobago’s micro-economy is “far more nuanced” and distinct from that of Trinidad, often requiring tailored policy consideration. The meeting also explored avenues for further collaboration, including discussion of the IDB’s Loan Facility for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), which holds significant potential for Tobago’s private sector.

A central outcome of the meeting was the reaffirmation of the partnership between the Central Bank’s National Financial Literacy Programme (NFLP) and the THA’s Financial Literacy Secretariat (FLS), with the re-establishment of the National Financial Education Committee (NFEC) on the agenda. Governor Howai underscored the Bank’s commitment to ensuring that financial education reaches Tobagonians at every level of society. The Bank’s Vacation Internship Programme (VIP), which continues to provide meaningful opportunities for Tobago-based university students, was highlighted.

The THA also confirmed its support for the Central Bank’s ongoing Public Consultation on the Draft Payment Systems and Services Bill and accompanying Regulations, with Governor Howai noting that Tobago’s participation is vital to shaping legislation that serves the full national community. An in-person consultation session is carded for Tobago in May.

The visit also provided an opportunity to brief the Assembly on the Central Bank’s upcoming priorities over the next six to twelve months. This includes the rollout of the Bank’s new five-year Strategic Plan (2026–2031), discussions on the Series 2026 \$100 banknotes with the new Coat of Arms due in August 2026, AML/supervisory compliance developments, and the piloting of Supervisory Technology (SupTech).

Governor Howai expressed confidence in the productive relationship between the Central Bank and the THA, noting that the discussions were both candid and forward-looking. “The work we are doing on behalf of the people of Tobago is deliberate and ongoing,” Governor Howai stated. “This visit reflects our commitment to ensuring that the Central Bank is not simply present in Tobago; but that we are engaged, we are listening, and we are acting.”

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Photo: Central Bank Governor, Larry Howai and Chief Secretary Farley Augustine (centre) flanked by senior officials of the Tobago House of Assembly and members of the Bank’s management team and Board of Directors. (Link to photo).