



JANUARY 13<sup>TH</sup>, 2025.

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **MINISTRY OF TOURISM, CULTURE AND THE ARTS ADDRESSES INACCURATE REPORTING IN AN ARTICLE IN THE TRINIDAD EXPRESS NEWSPAPERS REGARDING CRUISE SHIP ACTIVITY**

The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts notes the information published in an article by the Trinidad Express Newspapers on January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025 titled “Cruise ships skip Tobago over SoE”, on page 8 of the daily newspaper. The article suggests that two (2) cruise ships, The *Norwegian Jade* of Norwegian Cruise Lines and the *Costa Fortuna* of Costa Cruises have both cancelled their calls to the Port of Scarborough, Tobago due to the ongoing State of Emergency announced by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The article does not reflect the accurate reasons behind the ships’ absence from the Port of Scarborough, Tobago at their scheduled time of arrival.

To provide clarity on the matter the Ministry contacted cruise ship agent Mr. Charles Carvalho of Carvalho’s Cruise Services Ltd, the lead cruise ship agent locally, and as he was quoted in the article referenced above. The accurate information derived is as follows:

- 1. The Norwegian Jade:** This Vessel was scheduled to dock at the Port of Scarborough, Tobago on Friday January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 8:00 A.M. Mr. Carvalho stated that, “*Information received from the Norwegian Jade indicates that the call was actually cancelled months ago, prior to the declaration of the State of Emergency.*”
- 2. Costa Fortuna:** Mr. Carvalho advised that, “*Costa Fortuna cancelled her December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 call to the Port of Scarborough, Tobago about two (2) days before, due to flight delays of over three hundred (300) of their passengers. The cruise line decided to wait a day at one of the previous ports on their schedule, on the said passengers. This resulted in the cruise line skipping the call to the Port of Scarborough, Tobago. Additionally, this call was several days before the State of Emergency was announced.*”

It is to be noted that the *Costa Fortuna* is scheduled for five (5) other calls to the Port of Scarborough, Tobago during the 2024/2025 Cruise Season and no cancellations for these calls have been reported.

The Ministry wishes to assure the public, stakeholders, and international partners that Trinidad and Tobago remains a welcoming destination for cruise ships and other visitors at this time. The State

of Emergency, does not restrict, retard or reduce the entrance of tourists to any of our ports of entry. In addition, planning for any given Cruise Season occurs in advance and as such, reduced calls for the current 2024/2025 season was not influenced by the ongoing State of Emergency.

The Ministry encourages members of the media to confirm information before publishing, and desist from reporting uncorroborated claims that may be to the detriment Trinidad and Tobago's tourism sector. The Ministry remains available to provide accurate and up-to-date information to ensure transparency and accuracy in reporting.

**END**