



INDUSTRIAL COURT  
of Trinidad and Tobago



**Her Honour Mrs. Heather Seale**  
**PRESIDENT**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### International Day of Women Judges 10 March

Next Thursday, 20 March 2025, marks the sixtieth anniversary of the Industrial Court of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. This makes today, International Day of Women Judges, particularly meaningful for us, the women judges of this Court who are privileged to serve on the Bench for this Diamond Jubilee. Let us commemorate this significant occasion with both pride and humility. Let us remember our sisters who paved the way and did the heavy lifting for us to be where we are today.

Although the Court was established in 1965, it was not until some twenty-five years later, in November 1980, that the Court welcomed its first female Judge, Her Honour Mrs. Cynthia Riley Hayes, followed by Ms. Ursula Gittens in January 1986. In 2000, the first woman to serve as Vice-President was Her Honour Mrs. Gladys Gafoor. In 2006, the Honourable Justice Eleanor J. Honeywell became the first woman to chair the Essential Services Division. She is now appointed a Justice of Appeal of the Supreme Court of Judicature of Trinidad and Tobago.

While the wait for our first woman Judge was twenty-five years, it took another twenty-one years, in 2011, for the first woman President, Her Honour Mrs. Deborah Thomas-Felix, to be appointed to the Court. Today, the Court features a bench that is almost evenly balanced between men and women. However, our achievements as women in the Court serve as a reminder that this has not always been the case.

On this International Day of Women Judges, we celebrate all the women on whose shoulders we stand. Let us commit to exemplifying the words of the late trailblazing Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg: "***Women belong in all places where decisions are being made. It shouldn't be that women are the exception.***"