



15, August 2011

Ms Ida Le Blanc,  
National Union of Domestic Employees ( NUDE),  
Wattley Trace,  
Mt Pleasant Road,  
Arima,  
Trinidad and Tobago.

Dear Ida,

I write on behalf of CAFRA (Trinidad and Tobago) and CAFRA members throughout the region to congratulate you and all domestic workers on the achievement of the Domestic Worker Convention adopted at the 100<sup>th</sup> International Labour Conference on June 16, 2011. We can only agree with the ILO's Director-General, Juan Somavia, when he called it a historic moment for domestic workers worldwide. As a delegate to this conference you were there to be part of this important milestone.

Congratulations are due because this victory is the result of the hard and sustained work of the late Clotil Walcott, visionary leader of the National Union of Domestic employees who with her colleagues James Lynch and Salisha Ali founded this organisation in 1982. Clotil's legacy was ably continued by you Ida and other members of NUDE both locally and internationally in the cause of improving the working conditions of domestic workers.

In these efforts supported by the local women's movement, special mention must be made of Ms Constance Thomas, who during her tenure at the regional office on the ILO in Trinidad and Tobago became a friend of the workers of the region and in particular took up the case of decent work for domestic workers as part of her personal agenda.

Today as we celebrate this historic occasion and remember all those who are no longer with us we are reminded that progress, though hard and sometimes daunting, with the right strategy and commitment will be achieved in the end.

While this is the end of a long struggle it is also the beginning of a new era. We hope that using this convention, conditions for domestic workers can be improved in Trinidad and Tobago and the region more generally and that finally as Clotil demanded during her lifetime, domestic workers (or household assistants as they are named in the Industrial Relations Act) will be officially defined as workers.

We appreciate the effort made over the years to improve the conditions of work of these predominantly women workers, performing work that is necessary but often undervalued and unappreciated, and wish NUDE every success in the future.

In sisterhood,

Tara Ramoutar,  
National Representative,  
CAFRA – Trinidad and Tobago

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Ms. Brenda Gopeesingh - Envoy for Women  
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