

10 POINTS FOR AUGUST 10 MSJ'S MANIFESTO



The MSJ – Creating a Balance

This Manifesto – 10 points for August 10th - is based on our Roadmap for Recovery and Changing of T&T, presented on May 7th. We were the only Party to prepare such a Roadmap. It is also based on some of our Policy Documents and, in particular the section on Governance, prepared by us in 2014. We are therefore being consistent in our proposals for the transformation of T&T. To view these documents in full go to www.msjtnt.org



The MSJ – Creating a Balance

Our Manifesto is not a full listing of all the changes that we believe are necessary for this transformation, but is limited to what the MSJ can achieve with our Five MP's. We therefore focus this Manifesto on the actions that we will take as your Representatives and how we will use our Votes in Parliament to push the Government to implement major reforms.



Point 1. Representation for All – Creating the Balance!

People are crying out for proper representation. They say they don't see their MP. The purpose of the General Elections is to elect persons to the House of Representatives. The first responsibility of an MP is to Represent. MSJ MP's will be totally focused on representing all their constituents.



Point 1. Representation for All – Creating the Balance!

Our 5 MP's will listen to you, work with you and organise to solve all the problems in your area – infrastructure; community facilities; water and other needs. We will visit you regularly; hold town and community meetings and communicate via social media to update you on what's happening in the Constituency and Parliament. We will get your views on how you wish us to vote on Bills before Parliament.



Point 2. MSJ MP's in Parliament – Creating the Balance!

People want a different Voice in the Parliament. A Voice of Conscience. A Voice for the People, of the ordinary woman and man, not for the Status Quo and the elites.

The MSJ is that voice.

We will Create the Balance between the PNM and UNC. We will not be a part of a coalition, nor seek Ministerial positions. We will act independently of both, in the interests of the people and country.



Point 2. MSJ MP's in Parliament – Creating the Balance!

With 5 MP's, the MSJ will not be the Government. We will however have significant power as the Government will need our support to pass legislation. The MSJ MP's will say – in return for our support, there is a list of reforms that we want passed – reforms for better governance. We will only support good legislation & policies. We will not oppose for opposing sake or to make the Government “look bad”.



Point 2. MSJ MP's in Parliament – Creating the Balance!

MSJ MP's will Speak Truth to Power, using all the mechanisms of Parliament to protect the people from abuse by Government & strengthen accountability by: participating in Joint & Select Committees; Moving Private Motions; Contributing to Debates and Moving Amendments to Bills; Putting Questions to Ministers and the Prime Minister.



Point 2. MSJ MP's in Parliament – Creating the Balance!

We will use our votes to push the Government to implement reforms for good governance, transparency and accountability.

These are things that neither the PNM nor the UNC have implemented when they were in Government. They have to be pushed to act. Our MSJ MP's will do the pushing – with your support!

We will report regularly to our constituents and the national community on our efforts to get reforms: a conscious and organized people is what is needed to get change

We will therefore represent the interests of the many, not just the few



Point 3. Decent Jobs & Incomes for All, Equitable Wealth – Creating the Balance

The MSJ is not only about creating jobs. Those jobs have to come with a decent pay and proper conditions of work. The MSJ is also committed to a more equitable distribution of wealth since at the end of the day a person must be able to own an asset – land or a home or a business – that can generate income. This is what social justice means.

The country's resources must benefit all, not just the few!

This is stated in the Preamble to the Constitution



Point 3. Decent Jobs, Incomes and Wealth for All – Creating the Balance

We The People of Trinidad and Tobago “Respect the principles of social justice and therefore believe that the operation of the economic system should result in the material resources of the community being so distributed as to subserve the common good, that there should be adequate means of livelihood for all, that labour should not be exploited or forced by economic necessity to operate in inhumane conditions but that there should be advancement on the basis of recognition of merit, ability and integrity”



Point 3. Decent Jobs & Incomes for All – Creating the Balance

MSJ – the only Party to defend workers. We will continue to do so in Parliament.

- We call for the immediate signing of the sale agreement of the Refinery to OWTU's company – this will create thousands of decent jobs

- In the Budget 2020-21 we will propose: Additional OJT employment for young people to strengthen the: Consumer Affairs Division; the OSH Agency; the Labour Inspectorate; the NIS and Tax Data; as Assistant Teachers given the need for smaller class sizes/online learning post Covid (see our Roadmap for details)



Point 3. Decent Jobs & Incomes for All – Creating the Balance

In Parliament we will:

- Advocate for an end to short term contract employment so workers can plan for a future;
- Stand for reform of labour legislation to protect workers. Including amending the Industrial Relations Act – easier for workers to join and be recognized by a trade union; replace Workmen's Compensation Act; Update Occupational Safety and Health Act; Retrenchment and Severance Benefits Act and Companies Act re workers severance pay when company goes into liquidation/bankruptcy.
- Appointment of Industrial Court Judges by Independent Body



Point 3. Decent Jobs & Incomes for All – Creating the Balance

Propose a move from a minimum wage to a living wage

We will push for these important reforms to bring the country's labour laws up to date by moving Private Members' Motions if necessary complete with Draft Bills ready to be debated and passed.

We will engage the labour movement to support these reforms and seek consensus with the business community.



Point 3. The Wealth and Income Gap – Creating the Balance

MSJ's Policy – The Social Economy, Not Mega-Projects that Benefit a Few.

This is a Co-operative Model that Builds on our culture of Sou-Sou, Len Han, and a very powerful credit union movement

Some Immediate Actions:

- Convert CEPEP into Community Co-Ops owned by the workers; give them training and the responsibility of maintaining community facilities and assets
- Link micro and small business with access to capital through credit unions
- Co-Op companies to engage in constructing infrastructure work in communities



Point 3. The Wealth and Income Gap – Creating the Balance

- Local content Policy for multinationals
- Firms from communities and small business to get fair share of state contracts
- Update the legislation for Credit Unions
- Deeds for persons who have been living on state and private lands for a generation or more
- Security of tenure for Farmers
- Provision of land for traditional users of marijuana for them to engage in commercial farming of the herb; co-ops for them to produce oils, etc and to retail the herb and related products



Point 3. The Wealth and Income Gap

– Creating the Balance

- Ensuring that the self-employed are part of the NIS, thus strengthening the NIS system and, over time, reducing the amount required to fund the Senior Citizens' Pension.
- Passage of the Rent Control legislation
- Publishing of the “Fair Price” for food items and Hardware goods, to strengthen consumer power and mitigate against price gouging
- Some of these we will require legislation, others can be implemented administratively. Yet others the MSJ will initiate in our constituencies and nationally



Point 4. Agriculture and Food Security – Creating the Balance

The MSJ will work with farmers to:

- Push for the implementation of a land use policy that would protect agricultural land;
- Ensure that all bona fide farmers get security of tenure
- Address issues of water supply and irrigation; flood mitigation
- Have all state lands – ex-Caroni and Petrotrin lands – suitable for agriculture put into productive use



Point 4. Agriculture and Food Security – Creating the Balance

- Support for the cocoa and coffee industries;
- Increase the school feeding programme using only local produce;
- Incentivise export producers of agricultural products and also those businesses that substitute local produce for imported goods
- Caricom Food Security Plan



Point 5. Education Reform – Creating the Balance for all Young People

- Skills Training & Apprenticeship programmes to equip young people with marketable skills
- Facilitating youth in business through co-operatives
- Supporting micro and small enterprises – access to capital, marketing – links to the credit union movement
- The MSJ will initiate these in the constituencies that we represent



Point 5. Education Reform – Creating the Balance for all Young People

Reform of the education system

Through our soon to be re-launched Foundation, the MSJ will have a process of public support for major education reform:

(see for example our roadmap for recovery)

Review of the SEA

We will take these to the Parliament to get the Government to implement these reforms



Point 6 – Health Care is a Human Right – Creating a Balance

In our Roadmap for Recovery the MSJ identified health care as a key priority. The

Covid pandemic has made this point dramatically. We need to ensure that there is first class health care for all.

In Parliament the MSJ MP's will advocate for major health care reforms so that money and privilege do not determine whether a citizen gets the best care available.



Point 7. Sustainable Development – Creating a Balance – climate change

- As Detailed in our Rodamap
- Minimise new mega-projects – and refocus investment in the maintenance of our extensive physical capital.
- Retrofit buildings to withstand natural disasters
- Extensive infrastructure work – drainage, land slips etc to mitigate natural disasters
- Investment in renewable energy
- Solid Waste management



Point 8. Diversification – Creating a Balance for Sustained Development

- The MSJ will advocate for a permanent Economic Development Board
- In Our Roadmap we identified a series of actions that can result in economic diversification.
- In the 2020/21 Budget Debate our MP's will propose these actions. We will back this up by generating widespread public support



Point 9. Good Governance – Creating the Political Balance of Power

In our Policy Document on Governance the MSJ has developed many proposals for reforming the country's governance – placing power in the hands of the people where they live and reducing the power of the central government; and making government more accountable and transparent. These include:

- Local Government Reform
- Constitution Reform
- Political Party Finance and Campaign Law
- Autonomy for Tobago



Point 9. Good Governance – Creating the Political Balance of Power

- Public Service Reform, including reforming the Service Commissions
- Reform of the Judiciary - making the Judicial and Legal Services Commission more efficient and its work more transparent ; reforms to speed up the process of court cases and trials
- Reform of the Prison Service
- Changing how the Executive (Cabinet) Functions
- Strengthening the Police Complaints Authority
- We shall be strong advocates of these and will use our voting leverage in Parliament to push the Government to implement these reforms



Point 10. Crime and Corruption – Creating the Balance of Justice

Consistent with our Policy Documents we believe that Corruption and White Collar Crime are central to the violent crimes in the country. We therefore will advocate for:

- A Special Prosecutor, properly resourced, whose sole task is to investigate white collar crime and corruption
- Strengthening the powers of the Financial Investigation Unit – making it an independent body with investigative power
- Full implementation of the Public Procurement law immediately



Point 10. Crime and Corruption – Creating the Balance of Justice

Violent crimes have to be addressed at two levels:

1. Eliminating Domestic Violence . The MSJ advocates for:
 - state resources for more shelters for abused women and children,
 - Provision for the detention of a person who has threatened violence against a partner/child so as to determine the risk and to avoid an act of violence
2. Gangs, murders and guns. The MSJ advocates for:
 - Community interventions – mentoring in schools; home work centres; reformed education system; skills training , co-ops and small business development; creation of decent jobs , sports and culture - all to give youth a focus and hope for the future



Point 10. Crime and Corruption – Creating the Balance of Justice

- Bail restrictions for persons apprehended with weapons of “war”
- Prison reform so as to reduce repeat offenders and to minimise the Remand Yard becoming a “school of crime”
- Ensuring that state contracts do not finance gangs and gang activities
- Intelligence driven policing
- Eliminating corruption in the police service – officers who support/facilitate gangs and criminal activities



VOTE MSJ and CREATE A BALANCE!

On August 10th we invite the electorate in:

- Diego Martin Central – Renee St. Rose
- La Brea- Marlon Greaves
- Point Fortin – Ernesto Kesar
- Fyzabad- Radhaka Gualbance
- Pointe-a-Pierre- David Abdulah
- To Vote for your MSJ candidate.
- Put your X by the Balanced Scale



VOTE MSJ and CREATE A BALANCE!

We are offering you a way forward to bring about change. You cannot do the same thing over and over and expect to get change. All you will get is exchange. Most times you do not have a choice as it's only the red and yellow on the ballot. This time you do have a real choice. You have the MSJ – the balanced scale.

- If you know that you need change
- If you want to do something different because the country needs a different party, a new voice in Parliament
- If you want proper representation
- Then all you have to do is to VOTE MSJ!
- And together we will Create a Balance!

