

EOC Observes Zero Discrimination Day 2022

THE Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC) joins United Nations member states to observe Zero Discrimination Day (ZDD) 2022.

ZDD is a global movement that focuses on raising awareness and taking action to ensure that everyone can live a life of dignity and have access to opportunities by ending all forms of discrimination and promoting inclusion. UNAIDS launched the first ZDD in 2014 and it has been observed March 1 every year since. The theme for 2022 is "Remove laws that harm, create laws that empower."

The Equal Opportunity Act is a law that empowers; it seeks to prohibit certain kinds of discrimination, and to create a mechanism for those who have been discriminated against to get redress. It operates in four broad areas and on seven status grounds; it prohibits employers, educators, the providers of goods and services and the providers of accommodation from treating with people adversely because of any one of the following inherent and personal attributes: their race, ethnicity, sex, religion, origin, marital status or any disability that they may have.

It should be noted that the act fills critical gaps and created a remedy that had not existed before the legislation to address and bring justice for those who had been discriminated against. These include:

* The ability to lodge complaints against private individuals and public or



private companies.

* The ability to seek discrimination-specific redress.

The act is progressive and continues to be a work in progress. The commission is empowered to make recommendations to the Attorney General to amend and update the act, as deemed necessary from time to time. As the needs of so-

ciety are recognised, recommendations for appropriate amendments to the act to protect a wider spectrum of human rights will be sent to the Office of the Attorney General for consideration.

If you have been discriminated against, you can lodge a complaint on the EOC's website or send an e-mail to complaints@eoc.gov.tt.

To find out more about the Equal Opportunity Act, the Equal Opportunity Commission and all its services, visit: Website: www.equalopportunity.gov.tt

Facebook: EOCTT

LinkedIn: Equal Opportunity Commission of Trinidad and Tobago

YouTube: Equal Opportunity Commission TT

UNAIDS excerpt

EXCERPT from UNAIDS' campaign publication on Zero Discrimination Day:

On Zero Discrimination Day this year, under the theme "Remove laws that harm, create laws that empower," UNAIDS is highlighting the urgent need to take action against discriminatory laws.

In many countries, laws result in people being treated differently, excluded from essential services or being subject to undue restrictions on how they live their lives, simply because of who they are, what they do or who they love. Such

laws are discriminatory – they deny human rights and fundamental freedoms.

States have a moral and legal obligation to remove discriminatory laws and to enact laws that protect people from discrimination. Everyone has a responsibility to hold states accountable, call for change and contribute to efforts to remove discriminatory laws.

On Zero Discrimination Day, March 1, we celebrate the right of everyone to live a full and productive life – and live it with dignity and free from discrimination.