

His Excellency Dennis Francis

President of the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

Ambassador Dennis Francis has had a career spanning approximately 40 years in the Diplomatic Service of Trinidad and Tobago. For 18 of those years of unbroken service, he held the rank of ambassador until his compulsory retirement from career service in 2016. According to Mr. Francis, he has the distinction of being his country's longest-serving ambassador. Before demitting office as Director of Multilateral Relations, he functioned as Senior Adviser to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on all multilateral-level matters, including climate change and the negotiations on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

His transfer back to Port of Spain in 2011 capped the posting of Ambassador Francis as Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations Office at Geneva, as well as Permanent Representative to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Human Rights Council. He was accredited concurrently to specialized agencies of the United Nations system in Vienna and Rome, besides having bilateral accreditation as Ambassador to Austria and to Italy. Ambassador Francis was appointed Permanent Delegate to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

In 2010, during a period of renewed engagement in multilateral trade negotiations, Ambassador Francis was elected to the sensitive position of Chairman of the WTO Negotiating Group on Rules, covering anti-dumping, subsidies and countervailing measures, including fisheries subsidies. He also served as Chairman of the Committee on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights in regular session, as well as Chairman of the Commonwealth Group of Developing Countries (2007-2008).

He has led many national delegations, including to the first universal periodic review of Trinidad and Tobago in the Human Rights Council in October 2011 and to the twelfth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, which was held in Accra, Ghana, in 2008.

The assignment of Ambassador Francis in Geneva in 2006 followed a seven-year tour of duty as High Commissioner of Trinidad and Tobago to Jamaica and Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago to the International Seabed Authority. During that period, Ambassador Francis was accredited as Ambassador (non-resident) to Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti. When he demitted office in Jamaica, he had held the position of Dean of the Diplomatic Corps for almost two years. Ambassador Francis took an active interest in the issues before the International Seabed Authority, leading to his election to the Chairmanship of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority in 2003.

In July 2021, he completed a three-year assignment as Chairman of the Trinidad and Tobago National Commission for UNESCO.

Ambassador Francis co-facilitated a training course entitled "Protocol and diplomacy: a guide for the modern professional" at the Diplomatic Academy of the Caribbean. As Lead Technical Adviser to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, he was intimately involved in the conceptualization process for that institution. In 2018, Ambassador Francis co-authored a book entitled *Heads of Mission: A Handbook*, which has received regional and international acclaim. In 2020, Ambassador Francis returned to the University of the West Indies, his alma mater, as a Visiting Scholar at the Institute of International Relations, at the St. Augustine Campus. He is a graduate of the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University in Washington, D.C. (1985).

Ambassador Francis is married to his best friend, Joy Thomas-Francis, and they have three adult sons.