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### Media Release

The Banking, Insurance and General Workers Union (BIGWU) believes that the current retrenchment exercise is not simply the result of changing market conditions. Rather, it raises serious questions about the strategic decisions and management of One Caribbean Media over the past fifteen years.

Employees did not determine the company's investment strategy. They did not decide where capital would be allocated, which businesses would be acquired, or how the organisation would position itself in response to the rapid digital transformation of the media industry. Those decisions rested squarely with the Board of Directors and senior executive management.

The workers faithfully carried out their responsibilities, continued producing quality journalism, maintained customer relationships, and upheld the reputation of the Trinidad Express under increasingly challenging circumstances. Yet they are now being asked to bear the consequences of decisions over which they had no control.

The Union believes shareholders are entitled to ask whether the company's strategic leadership has delivered the expected results.

When Dawn Thomas assumed leadership in 2011, One Caribbean Media was a highly profitable organisation, reporting pre-tax profits of approximately TT\$95.5 million, followed by more than TT\$100 million in 2012. These strong financial results provided management with an opportunity to invest aggressively in the future of its flagship media operations.

Instead, significant resources were directed into diversification initiatives, including the acquisition of Green Dot Limited in 2017. While diversification is a legitimate business strategy, shareholders are entitled to ask whether sufficient investment was simultaneously made to modernise the Trinidad Express and the company's other media platforms to compete effectively in an increasingly digital marketplace.

Across the world, successful media organisations responded to technological disruption by investing heavily in digital news platforms, subscription models, multimedia journalism, data analytics, audience engagement and new revenue streams. It is reasonable to ask whether One Caribbean Media moved with the same urgency and vision.

If the company now finds itself reducing its workforce once again, shareholders must determine whether this reflects unavoidable market realities or shortcomings in strategic planning, investment priorities and corporate leadership.

Retrenchment should never become the default response to the consequences of failed or inadequate strategic decisions. Workers should not repeatedly pay the price for management decisions in which they had neither input nor authority.

The Union therefore calls upon the Board of Directors to accept accountability for the company's strategic direction and to provide shareholders, employees and the public with a clear explanation of how the organisation arrived at this point. Transparency demands not only an explanation of why jobs are being eliminated, but also whether different strategic choices could have preserved both employment and the long-term strength of one of Trinidad and Tobago's most respected media institutions.

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