

## RATING RELEASE

July 2, 2025

### **CariCRIS reaffirms 'high creditworthiness' ratings of the NIF's TT \$4.0 billion debt issue (Series B, C and D)**

*CariAA*            **(Regional Scale Local Currency)**  
*ttAA*             **(National Scale Local Currency)**

Caribbean Information and Credit Rating Services Limited (CariCRIS) has reaffirmed the ratings currently assigned to the TT \$4 billion bond (Series B, C and D) of The National Investment Fund Holding Company Limited (NIF or the Company) of *CariAA* (Local Currency Rating) on the regional rating scale and *ttAA* (Local Currency Rating) on the Trinidad and Tobago (T&T) national scale. These ratings indicate that the level of creditworthiness of this debt obligation, adjudged in relation to other obligations in the Caribbean and within T&T is **high**.

CariCRIS has also maintained a **stable** outlook on the ratings. The stable outlook is based on the high likelihood that NIF will remain profitable over the next 12 to 15 months. This is expected to be supported by the stable credit risk profiles and performance of the Company's underlying assets. The outlook is also supported by the high likelihood of sufficient dividend flows from the Company's underlying assets to enable timely coupon payments.

NIF's ratings continue to be supported by the stable credit quality of the Company's underlying assets, which consistently provide a steady flow of investment income (dividends) and sufficient cash flows to meet interest payments. Additionally, given that the NIF is 100% owned by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT), there is the likelihood of support if needed. These rating strengths are, however, tempered by the discretionary nature of NIF's cash flows, primarily sourced from dividends. Further, there remains a high concentration risk given that 67.8% of the Company's core earnings were derived from 1 entity in 2024, Republic Financial Holdings Limited (RFHL). This risk, however, is somewhat mitigated as RFHL is a large, geographically diversified group, with operations in sixteen territories including T&T, Barbados, Guyana, Suriname, the Eastern Caribbean, Cuba and Ghana. Further, RFHL's primary subsidiary, Republic Bank

Limited, is the largest commercial bank in T&T and one of the largest in CariCRIS' sample of regional commercial banks.

**Rating Sensitivity Factors:**

**Factors that could, individually or collectively, lead to an improvement in the ratings and/or outlook include:**

- Improvement in the credit risk profile of the GORTT
- Improvement in the credit risk profiles of Trinidad Generation Unlimited (TGU) and Republic Financial Holdings Limited (RFHL)

**Factors that could, individually or collectively, lead to a lowering of the ratings and/or outlook include:**

- A deterioration in the credit risk profile of the GORTT over the next 12 months
- A deterioration in the cash flow adequacy ratio to less than 1 time sustained for 2 financial periods
- A deterioration in the credit risk profiles of TGU and RFHL
- Breach of any covenants of the bond

**ABOUT THE COMPANY**

**The National Investment Fund Holding Company Limited**

The National Investment Fund Holding Company Limited (NIF or the Company) is a special purpose investment company created by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) to monetize the Government's assets. These assets are held in the form of shares of various corporate entities in Trinidad and Tobago (T&T). The NIF initially issued a bond in the amount of TT \$4.0 billion consisting of 3 tranches (series) in 2018 as follows:

1. Series A - TT \$1.2 billion with a tenor of 5 years at a fixed rate of 4.5% (Repaid in August 2023)
2. Series B - TT \$1.6 billion with a tenor of 12 years at a fixed rate of 5.7%
3. Series C - TT \$1.2 billion with a tenor of 20 years at a fixed rate of 6.6%

In August 2023, the NIF issued a new bond, Series D, of TT \$1.2 billion with a tenor of 17 years at a fixed rate of 7.1%. Series D was used to refinance Series A which matured in August 2023.

The NIF's bond issue is tax free for investors and is structured to remit semi-annual coupon payments. The principal for each tranche is repaid in the form of a bullet payment upon the maturity of the respective tranche. The existing bond issues remain secured by a debenture on the shares of the companies owned by the NIF, with a total value of TT \$6.9 billion as at April 8, 2025 (Table 1), down from TT \$7.9 billion as at August 2018<sup>1</sup> (initial bond issue date).

**Table 1**  
**NIF Underlying Assets and Respective Values**

Company	Market Capitalisation* (TT \$)	% Shareholdings owned by NIF	Value of shares* (TT\$)	% of NIFHL's Portfolio
Republic Financial Holdings Limited	18,464,727,776	25.9	4,788,672,312	69.6
Trinidad Generation Unlimited	1,108,859,000	100.0	1,108,859,000	16.1
Angostura Holdings Limited	2,891,776,072	30.0	866,562,005	12.6
The West Indian Tobacco Company Limited	1,372,269,600	5.4	74,098,518	1.1
One Caribbean Media Limited	181,544,457	23.0	41,730,553	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,019,176,904</b>		<b>6,879,922,388</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Share price data for RFHL, AHL, WITCO and OCM accessed in April 2025 from TTSE

Valuation for TGU was based on the latest internal valuation calculation as recognised in their December 2024 Financial Statements

The NIF's income consists primarily of dividends from its underlying assets and is the primary source from which the interest and principal repayments on the bond will be made. A sinking fund was established to accumulate funds that would be applied toward principal repayment. The funds contained in the sinking fund are invested in Government of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) guaranteed debt and investment grade corporate entities domiciled in Trinidad and Tobago (T&T) and earn additional income for the Company.

The NIF engaged First Citizens Trustee Services Limited<sup>2</sup> as the Trustee for the transaction, to manage all cash flows pertaining to the secured assets. These services include but are not limited to the receipt of dividends from the underlying assets and payment of funds to investors. The arranger and the lead broker for the transaction was

<sup>1</sup> Based on Trinidad and Tobago Stock Exchange Share prices for RFHL, Angostura Holdings Limited (AHL), One Caribbean Media (OCM) and West Indies Tobacco Company Limited (WITCO) as at April 8, 2025. TGU's valuation was based on the latest internal valuation calculation as recognized in their December 2024 Financial Statements.

<sup>2</sup> Currently undertakes the role of Trustee for Series B to Series C bonds

First Citizens Bank Limited and the appointed Attorneys were Fitzwilliam Stone Furness-Smith & Morgan<sup>3</sup>.

*For more information on NIF's ratings, please visit [www.caricris.com](http://www.caricris.com) or contact:*

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<sup>3</sup> Acted as Attorneys for the initial TT \$4 billion bond issue