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Offered counseling: Aaron Roberts and Ricky Roberts, sons of Port employee Roland Roberts, speak to reporters following a meeting they had with Port Authority officials yesterday after their father was killed while on duty at the port.

—Photo: GYASI GONZALES

Pipe Crushes Stevedore, 60

Sons: Port officials agree to pay for funeral

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A 60-year-old stevedore at the Port of Port of Spain, who had almost 40 years on the job, was killed yesterday morning while offloading a Panamanian-registered cargo vessel called Yuan Shun Hai. The Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago said the accident occurred at 9.08 a.m. when Roland Roberts was crushed by a 48-inch pipe which fell on him, killing him instantly. After the incident, the area was cleared and police were called.

After the cargo hold of the ship was examined, Roberts' body was taken to the Port of Spain mortuary. An autopsy is expected to be performed tomorrow.

The Sunday Express met with Roberts' sons yesterday after both men had a meet-ing with Port management. They said the Port had agreed to pay for their father's funeral. Aaron Roberts told the Sunday Express: "This morning while I was at home, I got a call and they told me that my father had been in an accident in a vessel on the port." He said when he got to the port he was shown his father's body, which was between two large pipes in the cargo hold of the ship.

He said the Port Authority also offered counseling to family members and promised to conduct a thorough investigation into the incident.

"They are moving professionally with this, and we also got a lot of sympathy from my father's colleagues," said Roberts. He added his father left him with the advice to stay focused on whatever he was doing and always encourage others to do what is right. His other son, Ricky Roberts, said, "My father was always the kind of man who told us to be safe on the job."

Colleagues of Roberts who were at the port yesterday described him as a "hard-working and nice guy".

Officers of the Central Police Station are continuing investigations into the incident.