



FEATURE ADDRESS

By

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PERMANENT SECRETARY

MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY

ON THE OCCASION OF

Breaking Boundaries: Exploring Crime and Security in the 21st Century

Conference co-hosted by the Ministry of National Security and the Institute for Criminology and Public Safety at The University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT).

Date: Monday, 19th October 2015

Venue: Hilton Trinidad

Time: 9:00 am.

SALUTATIONS:

- Mr. Stephen Williams, Commissioner of Police, TTPS;
- Col. Rodney Smart, Commanding Officer, TTR;
- Captain Hayden Pritchard, Commanding Officer, TTCG
- Other Heads of Division, MNS;
- Prof. Dyer Narinesingh, President of UTT;
- Mr. Keith Renaud, Director of Office of Law Enforcement Policy;
- Dr, Meredith Pattern, Conference Co-Chair;
- Senior Officers and Other Ranks of the TTDF;
- Senior Officers of the TTPS;
- Staff of UTT
- Specially invited Guests
- Members of the media

Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen.

The Honourable Minister of National Security sends his apologies for not being here with you this morning, because of another commitment.

The Permanent Secretary, Mr. Carl Francis also sends his apologies for not being here with you this morning. He too had another commitment.

Thank you very much for affording me the opportunity to address you at this conference, co-hosted by the Ministry of National Security and the Institute for Criminology and Public Safety of the University of Trinidad and Tobago.

The theme of this conference is entitled: ***“Exploring Crime and Security in the 21st Century.”***

Over the past decade, there have been significant changes in the way Trinidad and Tobago approaches the issues of crime and national security.

As many of you will know, in the security arena, anticipating the future is a challenging process. The very nature of forecasting involves a certain risk of error, with a good example of this being weather forecasting.

The structure and practice of curbing crime and upgrading our National Security and Public Safety apparatus, to deal with our security challenges, are shaped by the complex convergence of social, economic, cultural, political, and legal forces.

This must be put into a national, regional and international context.

For example, at the strategic level, the accuracy of forecasts, predictions and policies made in 2000 in the National Security sphere had to be radically modified, because of the September event in 2011 in the United States. In 2015, the impact of that event still affects most countries around the world, including Trinidad and Tobago.

This reality underscores and strengthens the argument that National Security needs to partner with more tertiary institutions like the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT), as a means of tapping into the tremendous strength that can be absorbed from the accurate Research and Development approaches exhibited as it relates to Crime and Security. The identification of trends and ascertaining of Risks and threats are paramount to the holistic approach to Crime Reduction and the enhancing of Safety and Security in our current times.

The 21st century has brought new challenges for the Police in Trinidad and Tobago and the region. Terrorism, globalization, large-scale population movements, transnational organized crime and entrenched social problems pose crime control threats that are increasingly seen as beyond the scope and capabilities of traditional policing.

At the Operational level, traditional approaches to law enforcement have waned in their effectiveness.

For example, Policing in the western world is changing from paramilitary organizational structures to shortened chains of command. The role of the police officer has expanded from law enforcer to a more community-oriented officer, who may act as a catalyst to bring together the right people to solve a law enforcement issue.

New agencies have been established, private policing has bloomed, and governments have sought to make individuals, businesses and community organizations increasingly responsible for their own safety.

The Ministry of National Security recognizes and understands the need to adapt to our ever-changing environment and its challenges. In this regard, we have embarked upon the modernization of our police agencies.

In this changing cultural and social climate, contemporary policing is marked by the diversification and uncertainty of crime control problems. Prior models of policing could focus on relatively known and stable categories of offences and offenders, and on traditional, reactive responses to them.

The new problems evolving rapidly, depend on a broad range of political, social, technological and economic factors, and require new skills, innovative and flexible responses.

We have seen in the recent past the rise of technologies to help shape police responses, the rapid expansion of technologies have fundamentally changed the face of policing. In the 21st century, the era of uncertainty is most characterized by its heavy investment in a range of new, innovative technologies, most notably information (crime mapping, data mining, storage and retrieval systems). And surveillance technologies such as: (CCTV, listening devices, and satellite) technologies.

These technologies are used in a range of information-dependent tactics such as, problem-oriented policing and intelligence-led policing. Technology is in fact a primary tool, both for information gathering and for analysis.

Cyber policing is a key component in the continued fight against the 21st century criminal. The Ministry of National Security has embarked on Innovative and modern approaches to enhance its Cyber-Security initiatives, with the aim of improving and developing our capabilities in Cyber Crime monitoring and the utilization of Cyber Space to conduct surveillance, gather information and promote Safety and Security.

The changes in the way we do business have been the result of events on a global scale. But it is also underpinned by a growing realization that increasing levels of cooperation between this country and our allies in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Venezuela and Colombia, have had a significant impact on our national interests.

In recognizing this changing paradigm, the Ministry of National Security, is now working towards introducing a reform agenda at the strategic level, to address some of the current and emerging challenges we may face in the 21st Century.

We are a mere fifteen (15) years into the 21st century and adapting to the demands of this new era is one of the principal objectives of the Ministry of National Security as it relates to Defence and Security of our Republic.

As a consequence of this reality, we have been forced to redefine our concepts of defence and law enforcement, so as to treat with this new era of sustained threats to the internal security of our people and our nation.

In this regard, the Ministry of National Security has been developing strategies and concepts of operation at the Strategic level, which are appropriate for this new era, while rethinking and reviewing past approaches to the organization, training and equipping of law enforcement operatives, as well as other human resource necessities.

In providing an assessment of potential threats, the Minister of National Security's statement during the debate on the Appropriation Bill 2015-2016, included a number of areas that we must put a clear focus on.

The Ministry believes in doing things by beginning with the end-state in mind. This is being done so that a clear picture of the "ending" is known by all, so that we can clearly understand where we are going.

In other words, we must take a clear and relevant policy strategy perspective. This is needed if we are to position this twin island Republic, where it can deal with its LONG STANDING Security Challenges in a more effective and efficient way.

The unacceptable levels of crime-related gun violence and anti-social behaviour continue to pose a fundamental threat to the economic and social wellbeing of our people, and therefore, it is one of the highest priorities of the Ministry.

The Ministry's policy is grounded on the philosophy of a whole-of-Government approach. This approach will ensure that the policy, strategy and objectives are nested in the national interest across all Ministries.

This will set out a strategic framework and action plan designed to ensure that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago can prepare for and respond to a range of security threats including illegal trafficking, murder, trafficking of arms and ammunition, terrorist attacks, outbreaks of infectious diseases, natural disasters, cyber-attacks and domestic extremism.

This whole-of-Government approach policy ensures that every single Ministry has a role to play in the fight against crime.

This policy focuses on five core areas, namely:

- **furthering the domestic and international interest of Trinidad and Tobago;**
- **protecting Trinidad and Tobago and the safety and security of nationals at home and abroad;**
- **promoting and facilitating good order, transparent and accountable governance;**
- **ensuring Trinidad and Tobago is not a base for threats, and;**
- **promoting international justice and security by denying access to the territory of our twin-island Republic, to persons who are deemed security risk.**

We also believe that this will contribute meaningfully to our international security.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the increasing complexity and interconnected nature of today's globalised environment means that more than ever before, the Ministry is becoming involved in a range of multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional operations. Strategic Partnerships will be fundamental to our success in protecting our national interests.

Within this whole-of-government approach, it is important that we continue to define our role and ensure that our partners understand how we add value to the law enforcement matrix in this country.

Certainly, our Ministry has a wealth of specialist skills and expertise that can be utilized in joint operations with other State entities, involving crime types such as terrorism, fraud, money laundering, drug and human trafficking, and other syndicated criminal activities that fall within the remit of national security and public safety.

The key to success also lies in identifying effective measures to significantly disrupt illegal activity and dismantle criminal syndicates through hard and workable intelligence.

At the moment, the Ministry is getting its information about the origins of drugs seized on the streets, as well as data about drugs captured at the borders (which are going to be made more secure). The multi-agency nature of this work will help to provide a comprehensive intelligence picture of illicit drug use in Trinidad and Tobago and the wider Caribbean, which will give us greater opportunities to combat drug smuggling networks and to map distribution routes across the nation.

Effectively, this process provides a chemical drug signature that can be tracked and analyzed just like DNA. By working with our overseas counterparts, it will also help to combat international drug trafficking operations.

Further a Scientific Investigation Strategy would have as its backbone an increased collaboration and operational/investigative integration among frontline police officers, crime scene investigators, detectives, the Forensic Services Division and Intelligence Agencies.

This new model will transform the way information, evidence, knowledge and science are used. In furtherance, there will be the establishment of the Office of a DNA custodian and pursuant of ISO certification of the Forensic Science Centre.

As technology marches on and new challenges confront us all, we remain committed to finding new ways to address existing and emerging crime types.

The national security environment is dynamic and it is clear that organised crime will continue to challenge us if we do not take a more strategic approach to crime fighting and national security.

Organised criminals will continue to change their methods and structures to avoid detection. Our citizens' lives depend on us getting this right as a National Security Community.

Now, more than ever before, the national security community needs to collaborate, share information, improve our methods of working together and remain vigilant against all forms of threats.

In a preventative regime, there is also an increasing need for social policy to address broader social cohesion issues, including community engagement and the use of new technologies.

The Ministry is confident that this is the way forward. We must be able to better respond to the emerging criminal elements, as well as improve the way in which we provide support and advice to our partner agencies both here and overseas.

In all of this, we must appreciate the role and functions of the Judiciary and the criminal justice system in this process. We must also recognize that they are our partners in this process

In addition, we must address the Prison System. Our officers' must be properly accommodated and equipped. And as we work towards improving rehabilitation with a view of reducing reoffending- the condition of our Prisons must be improved.

This conference is timely and it will indeed benefit all stakeholders. Given the aforementioned, it is clear that addressing crime in the 21st century requires a holistic approach and the engagement of all stakeholders.

We do not have a simple task, and we must view the challenges facing the national security environment with clear eyes.

Through cooperation with our partners and a more strategic outlook and planning process, involving key performance indicators, we can position ourselves well for the years ahead.

I challenge us all to be so engaged.

I thank you.