FEATURE ADDRESS

By

MINISTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY

MAJOR GENERAL (Ret'd)
THE HONOURABLE EDMUND DILLON

ON THE OCCASION OF

THE LAUNCH OF THE NEW AUTOMATED BORDER CONTROL SYSTEM AT PIARCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

DATE: Monday 16th July, 2018

TIME: 5:00 p.m.

VENUE: VIP Lounge, Piarco International Airport

Good evening,

It gives me great pleasure to address you today on this momentous occasion as we usher in an era of modern technology in service delivery with the introduction of the Automated Border Control System (ABC) kiosks here at the Piarco International Airport.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago recognises that it is critical to reassess operations, processes and service delivery. This undertaking has been reinforced in the country's Vision 2030 National Development Strategy, which prioritises the **delivery of Good Governance and Service Excellence**.

This Government is of the firm belief that our public institutions must simplify and modernize processes, structures and tools in order to enhance service delivery and create public value. It is in this context

that we launch the automated border control kiosk systems this evening.

The Automated Border Control (ABC) System is intended to improve the efficiency of the Immigration Division's processing of incoming – and, in the near future outgoing passengers - at both the Piarco International Airport and the ANR Robinson International Airport, with the anticipated outcomes of reinforced border security, reduced passenger queues and enhanced customer experience.

Consistent with our international and regional security commitments, we will pursue best practice benchmarks through the use of modern technology in our national security environment. As such, the implementation of the Automated Border Control system will:

- Scan and validate passenger passports by referencing hidden security features.
- Perform facial recognition on passengers and match the images against scanned passport for identity verification.
- Capture passenger fingerprints/biometric features for enrolment and comparison on an Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS).
- Perform checks on passengers against authorized local and international watch-lists for example, INTERPOL.
- Print receipt containing bio data of the passenger indicating whether a passenger has been successfully processed or if a passenger requires further processing.
- Assist in reducing passenger processing time and queuing at the Immigration arrival hall, attributed to the manual processing of passengers and the

manual reconciliation of passenger documentation.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Ministry of National Security's Immigration Division has already implemented the Advance Passenger Information System (APIS) in pre-screening travellers, as facilitated by the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS). This Automated Border Control system will be integrated with the APIS to assimilate information of arriving passengers. From a national security perspective, this connected system will strengthen our border with the larger and related goal of mitigating the risks of transnational organised crime through increased trans-border intelligence and information sharing.

The integration of this technology into our local Border Management System will allow immigration officers to positively identify every person arriving in

Trinidad and Tobago, that is, citizens, residents and visitors. Additionally, this integrated system of advance passenger information will identify the airline on which a person travelled as well as the route embarked upon to arrive in Trinidad and Tobago.

Ladies and Gentlemen, also noteworthy of mention, and complementary to the upgrade of the Border Management System through the Automated Border Control System, the Immigration Division has embarked on other measures aimed at enhancing border security and service delivery at the airports and seaports of the country. Measures recently undertaken include:

- ✓ Upgraded equipment in the Document Examination Laboratory.
- ✓ Continuous training of employees to build capacity and keep abreast of world trends and globalisation aimed at strengthening the effectiveness of criminal investigations using

modern technology and scientific techniques. A recent example being the participation of immigration officers and customs officers in a Passenger Interdiction Workshop facilitated by CARICOM IMPACS.

- ✓ Strengthening synergies with other law enforcement agencies.
- ✓ Operationalization of a new call centre for the booking of Passport Appointments in October 2017 and which will soon include the capability to make appointments online.
- ✓ The refurbishment of Immigration (sea port) offices at Crews' Inn in Chaguaramas.
- ✓ The Division will soon complete a state-of-the-art Data Center at its headquarters that is accredited and meets international standards.

Today, **Twelve (12) Automated Border Control kiosks** have been installed at the Piarco International Airport Immigration Hall and will be utilized by

returning citizens in the initial implementation test phase commencing today. It is anticipated that the testing phase will be completed at the end of July. While the system will be accessible to returning citizens only during the testing phase, the automated service is expected to be extended to residents, CARICOM nationals and visitors in the future.

As we continue with the modernization of our Border Security System, members of the public can also expect in the near future, the:

- Installation of three Automated Border Control kiosks at the ANR Robinson International Airport in Tobago; and
- Installation of Electronic-Gates (E-gates) for outgoing passengers. This new system will enable identity verification of passengers prior to their departure from Trinidad and Tobago. The E-Gates will be implemented at both the Piarco

International Airport and ANR Robinson International Airport.

At this juncture, let me express my gratitude to **the Minister of Works and Transport Senator the Honourable Rohan Sinanan** for supporting this collaborative initiative between the **Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago** and the Ministry of National Security's Immigration Division. I extend sincere thanks to the Management and staff of the Airports Authority for your hard work in ensuring that today's Automated Border Control System testing and implementation came to fruition. This implementation is yet another demonstration of our **Whole-of-Government Approach** to border security and service delivery. Please join me in a round of applause for this collaborative effort. A job well done to the joint team!

Ladies and Gentlemen, today's historic implementation of the Automated Border Control

System seeks to balance border security and customer facilitation as the system not only preserves but enhances control mechanisms while enabling the faster processing of arriving passengers.

In closing, I call on the general public at large to work with your Government as we seek to make Trinidad and Tobago a safer place for all.

I thank you.