



MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

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For Immediate Release

MEDIA RELEASE

MINISTER HINDS WELCOMES THE LAUNCH OF THE GRACE PROJECT

Port of Spain: Today, Wednesday May 11, 2022, Minister of National Security the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds M.P. joined the Commissioner of Police, Mr. McDonald Jacob and other members of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service Executive, at the launch of the Gang Reduction and Community Empowerment (GRACE) Project.

The GRACE Project is an eighteen (18) month training programme administered by the Pan American Development Foundation, through the US Department of State, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Bureau (INL). The Project will provide technical assistance to the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service with the aim of assisting it with reducing gang activity. This will be done by strengthening the Police Service's community based policing initiatives and its anti-gang investigative capabilities.

The Project has been fully tailored by PADF to suit the context of geographic areas across Trinidad and Tobago, where gang activity are most prevalent.

Delivering the feature address at the launch of the project held at Solomon McLeod Lecture Theatre, 5th Floor, Police Administration Building, Port of Spain, Minister Hinds extended his gratitude to the US Embassy, Port of Spain and the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF) who were instrumental in working with the Police Service to implement the project and for driving the initiative forward.

Minister Hinds stated that over the last year, the Ministry has placed special focus on maintaining and strengthening bilateral relations between the government of Trinidad and Tobago and its regional and international partners.

Minister Hinds said, "Over the last year I have been engaged in several discussions with U.S. officials on mutual areas of national security interest. The bilateral relationship between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the United States of America remains strong and has been reinforced during a bilateral meeting, held in July, 2021 with US Embassy officials, where discussions were held on a full range of bilateral security cooperation, which included the strengthening of law enforcement capacity, defence capability and military interoperability."

Minister Hinds continued by saying that he welcomed the launch of the GRACE Project, which is yet another product of the strong working relationship between the Ministry of National Security Divisions and arms of the US National Security Agency.

He said, "The TTPS continues to work closely with regional and international partners to strengthen approaches to deal with gangs operating within the country's borders. I have confidence that the assistance that the PADF will administer through the GRACE Project, will indeed go a long way in meeting its intended aim- that of, assisting the Police Service with reducing gang activity in this country, strengthening the Service's community based policing initiatives and reinforcing its anti-gang investigative capabilities."

The Minister gave the assurance of the *Ministry of National Security and by extension the government's steadfast support for all the hard work that the officers of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service do on a daily basis.*

He stated, "I wish to record our appreciation to the Police Service for what you do for the good citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. The government remains acutely aware of the sacrifices that police officers make on a day to day basis, their long working hours and how officers put their lives on the line every day as they carry out their duty."

Also present at the event were Charge de Affaire's, US Embassy, Port of Spain, Mr. Shante Moore; Lead, Pan American Development Foundation, Mr. Roberto Obando and Commissioner of Police, Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, Mr. McDonald Jacob and Deputy Commissioners of Police, Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, Mr. Wendell Williams and Ms. Earla Christopher.

Photo and Caption:



1. Minister of National Security, the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds M.P. delivered the feature address at the launch of the Gang Reduction and Community Empowerment (GRACE) Project, which took place at the Police Administration Building, Port of Spain on Wednesday May 11, 2022.



2. **(Left to Right):** Lead, Pan American Development Foundation (PADF), Mr. Roberto Obando; Acting Deputy Chief of Mission, US Embassy, Port of Spain, Ms. Megan Kelly; Minister of National Security, the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds M.P; Charge de Affaire's, US Embassy, Port of Spain, Mr. Shante Moore and Commissioner of Police, Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, Mr. McDonald Jacob, at the launch of the Gang Reduction and Community Empowerment (GRACE) Project, which took place at the Police Administration Building, Port of Spain on Wednesday May 11, 2022.

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