



# MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

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For Immediate Release

## MEDIA RELEASE

### MINISTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY PARTICIPATES IN HIGH-LEVEL SEMINAR ON NARCOTIC SMUGGLING IN THE CARIBBEAN REGION

**Port of Spain:** On June 27, 2022, the Minister of National Security the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds M.P. participated in a High-Level Seminar on *Narcotic Smuggling in the Caribbean Region*, which took place in Miami, United States of America. The Seminar was hosted by the Permanent Observer Mission of France to the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Caribbean Regional Office of the Directorate-General of Customs and Indirect Taxes of France.

The Minister was invited to be the key-note speaker at the Seminar, by Her Excellency Anne de la Blache, Ambassador, the Permanent Observer Mission of France to the OAS.

The Seminar facilitated discussions between high-level representatives of select countries in the Americas and the OAS, on the most recent strategies, policies and legislative measures, to address current issues of drug trafficking in the region, particularly through maritime corridors. The Seminar also provided a space for the exchange of information and best practices in counter narcotics trafficking.

With border security, and the countering of illicit trafficking in narcotics, being a key focus of the Ministry of National Security and the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT), to reduce crime and improve public safety and security, Minister Hinds took the opportunity to share insights on Trinidad and Tobago's specific context, that may improve efforts to counter the illicit trafficking in narcotics in other countries in the region.

The Minister thanked Her Excellency de la Blache, the Permanent Observer of France to the OAS, for the invitation to speak at the Seminar and hailed it as a sign that extra-regional partners view the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) as active partners in the design and delivery of counter-trafficking policies and initiatives in the region.

Minister Hinds also highlighted that the Seminar allowed for the advancement of efforts to address illicit maritime smuggling more broadly, which will not only impact narcotics smuggling, but also the illicit trade in firearms, and the trafficking in persons, which contribute significantly to violent crime in the region.

In this regard, the Minister stated that, in addition to our priority of addressing narcotics smuggling and illegal trafficking at the national level, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has been at the forefront of our regional maritime security cooperation efforts, together with all other governments in the CARICOM, particularly since the establishment of Security as the Fourth Pillar of the CARICOM in July 2005.

Also participating in this High-Level Seminar were Ambassador of Trinidad and Tobago to the United States of America and Mexico, Permanent Representative to the OAS, and Chair of the OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security, H.E. Anthony Phillips-Spencer, and a representative of the Transnational Organized Crime Unit.

**PHOTO AND CAPTION:**



**Left to right:** Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), Ambassador Adam Namm; Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE), Ms. Alison Treppel; Minister of National Security, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds M.P.; Permanent Observer of France to the Organization of American States (OAS), Ambassador Anne de la Blache; Ambassador of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the United States of America and Mexico, Permanent Representative to the OAS, and Chair of the OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security, H.E. Anthony Phillips-Spencer; and Regional Customs Counsellor of France, Mr. Jean-Roald L’Hermitte.

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