



# MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

May 29, 2023

For Immediate Release

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY RECEIVES MARITIME SECURITY SEARCH AND SEIZURE TRAINING EQUIPMENT FROM CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME**

**Port of Spain:** On Wednesday May 24, 2023, Minister of National Security, the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds M.P. received on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, a donation of Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) Kit and Equipment, as well as Consumables for Capital Assets of the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force (TTDF), from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) working in collaboration with the Government of Canada.

Presenting the equipment at a Handover Ceremony held at the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard Headquarters, Staubles Bay in Chaguaramas were High Commissioner of Canada to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, His Excellency Arif Keshani and Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Program Officer of the UNODC, Ms. Josefina Otero.

The donated items comprising operational gear, tactical equipment and spare parts consumables for capital assets, will support training exercises for members of the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard (TTCG) geared towards bolstering maritime search and seizure operations. Items include tactical vests, helmets, handheld metal detectors, radio communication devices, protective hearing apparatus, as well as consumables for the maintenance of TTCG vessels.

Speaking at the event, Minister Hinds thanked the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Government of Canada, through the Anti-Crime and Capacity Building Programme from Global Affairs Canada, for facilitating the donation. He underscored Government's commitment to ongoing security initiatives with both Canada and the UNODC, and welcomed expanded areas of collaboration, especially in the area of capacity enhancement for law enforcement officials.

The Minister noted that *"in the area of capacity development of our law enforcement officers, including Defence Force personnel, the Ministry of National Security is pursuing new and innovative areas for international defence and security cooperation, which will improve the career experience of our military personnel and*

*enhance their professional development opportunities. This international cooperation agenda is being pursued with all of our international partners, including Canada and the UNODC".* This, the Minister said, would redound to up-skilling and professionalization opportunities, as well as joint learning and joint operations platforms.

High Commissioner Keshani and the UNODC's Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Program Officer, Ms. Otero, also delivered remarks at the event. They both acknowledged the longstanding bilateral relationship with Trinidad and Tobago; the successes of ongoing national security initiatives; and committed to continued support for public safety projects.

The donated items will be used to facilitate hands-on and practical learning experience for maritime law enforcement officers, who will have access to modern equipment, with a view to enhancing their skills and capacity. All this is intended to contribute to the strengthening of maritime security and law enforcement locally and in the region.

Also present at the Handover Ceremony were Chief of Defence Staff, Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force, Air Vice Marshal Darryl Daniel; Acting Vice Chief of Defence Staff, Wing Commander Kemba Hannays; Acting Commanding Officer Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard, Commander Akhenaton Isaac, who also delivered remarks; and Deputy Director of the International Affairs Unit, Ministry of National Security, Major (Ret'd) Richard Lynch.

## **PHOTOS AND CAPTIONS:**



1. Minister of National Security, the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds M.P. (**centre**); High Commissioner of Canada to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, His Excellency Arif Keshani (**third from left**); Chief of Defence Staff, Air Vice Marshal Darryl Daniel (second from right); Acting Commanding Officer Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard, Commander Akhenaton Isaac (**first from right**); United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Program Officer, Ms. Josefina Otero (**second from left**); and Deputy Director of the International Affairs Unit, Ministry of National Security, Major (Ret'd) Richard Lynch (**first from left**), view operational gear, tactical equipment and spare parts consumables donated by the UNODC and the Government of Canada.



2. A member of the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard (TTCG) (**third from left**) displays tactical gear donated by the UNODC and the Government of Canada. **From left to right:** United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Program Officer, Ms. Josefina Otero; High Commissioner of Canada to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, His Excellency Arif Keshani; member of the TTCG in tactical gear; and Minister of National Security, the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds M.P.

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