



**Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago**  
**Ministry of National Security**  
**CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT**

June 14, 2024

For Immediate Release

## **USAID COMMISSIONED STUDY TO ASSIST NATIONAL SECURITY EFFORTS AGAINST CRIMINAL GANGS**

**Port-of-Spain** [June 14, 2024]: A new study by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) on crime and criminality in Trinidad and Tobago will play a crucial role in formulating strategies to combat criminal gangs in the country.

During a meeting held on Monday, June 10, 2024, the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds, M.P., Minister of National Security, was presented with the USAID Criminal Dynamics Study for Trinidad and Tobago, along with its key findings. This comprehensive study offers critical insights and recommendations necessary for developing effective strategies to combat gang-related activities.

The meeting, which took place at the Ministry of National Security Office at Tower C, International Waterfront Complex, Wrightson Road, Port of Spain, saw Minister Hinds in discussions with Her Excellency Candace Bond, United States Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago, and representatives from USAID. The event provided an opportunity for Trinidad and Tobago and the United States to strengthen their collaboration on shared crime and security concerns.

Ambassador Bond expressed optimism that the study would illuminate the root causes of gang activities in Trinidad and Tobago, aiding in the implementation of interventions designed to counter, disrupt, and dismantle gangs. She emphasized the importance of the United States' ongoing partnership with Trinidad and Tobago, particularly through initiatives like the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, recognizing the Caribbean as the U.S.'s "Third Border."



Temple Court I, 31-33  
Abercromby Street, Port of  
Spain, Trinidad & Tobago, W.I.



[nationalsecurity.gov.tt](http://nationalsecurity.gov.tt)



[corpcomm@mns.gov.tt](mailto:corpcomm@mns.gov.tt)



868 623-2441 Ext 12509

Other initiatives to combat crime and gang-related activities include:

- The U.S. Department of Commerce's pause on licenses for exporting weapons to non-state, civilian dealers, expected to reduce firearm exports to the region by 35%, impacting high-risk countries including Trinidad and Tobago;
- U.S. support for the Crime Gun Intelligence Unit (CGIU), fostering collaboration with CARICOM IMPACS, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS); and
- Training for CGIU officers provided by agencies such as ATF, HSI, BIS, CBP, Interpol, the World Customs Organization (WCO), and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

During the meeting, Mr. Mervyn Farroe, USAID's Regional Representative for the Eastern and Southern Caribbean, reiterated USAID's commitment to collaborating with the Ministry of National Security to address crime and violence, particularly through research supporting policy development.

Minister Hinds welcomed the study, expressing gratitude to USAID and Ambassador Bond for their support in Trinidad and Tobago's fight against crime. He underscored the importance of violence intervention programs to bolster community resilience against crime and gangs.

Also participating in this meeting were Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of National Security Ms. Natasha Barrow; Governance and Rule of Law Program Management Specialist, USAID, Ms. Sharon Ramsaran; Caribbean Research Lead for the Criminal Dynamics Study, USAID, Dr. Randy Seepersad; Director of the Counter Trafficking Unit, Mr. Allan Meiguel; Deputy Director of the Counter Trafficking Unit, Ms. Dane-Marie Marshall; Assistant Commissioner of Police, Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, Ms. Vena Butler; Senior Superintendent of Police, Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, Mr. Christopher Paponette; International Affairs Coordinator, International Affairs Unit, Ms. Renee Adimoolah; and International Affairs Officer, International Affairs Unit, Mr. Anthony Phillips-Spencer (II).

**- END -**



Temple Court I, 31-33  
Abercromby Street, Port of  
Spain, Trinidad & Tobago, W.I.



[nationalsecurity.gov.tt](http://nationalsecurity.gov.tt)



[corpcomm@mns.gov.tt](mailto:corpcomm@mns.gov.tt)



868 623-2441 Ext 12509

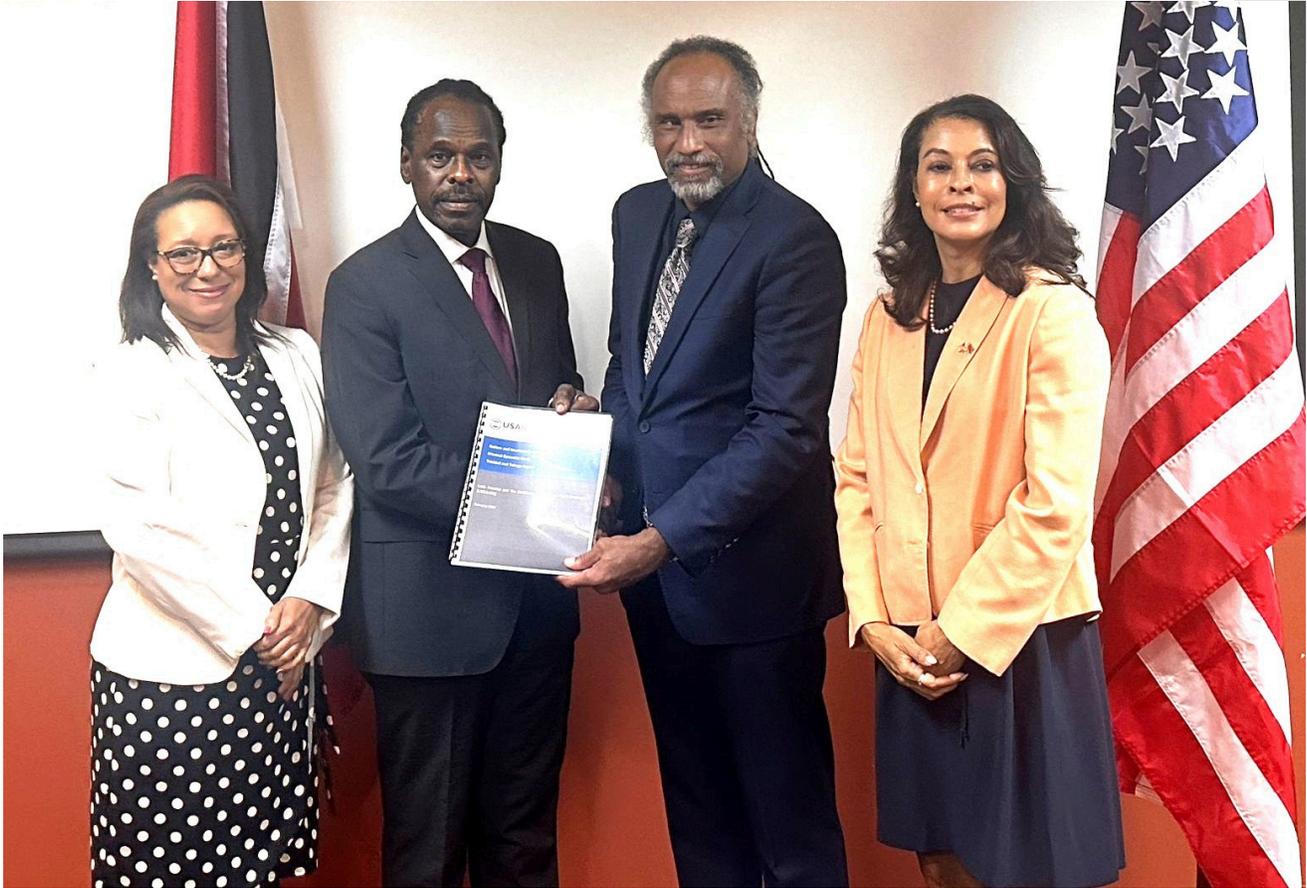


Photo: Her Excellency Candace Bond, United States Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago and Regional Representative for the Eastern and Southern Caribbean, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Mr. Mervyn Farroe presents the Minister of National Security the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds M.P. and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of National Security, Ms. Natasha Barrow with a copy of USAID's Reports on Gang Violence, during a meeting at the Ministry of National Security's Office at Tower C, International Waterfront Complex, Wrightson Road, Port of Spain, on Monday 10 June, 2024.



 Temple Court I, 31-33  
Abercromby Street, Port of  
Spain, Trinidad & Tobago, W.I.  
 [nationalsecurity.gov.tt](http://nationalsecurity.gov.tt)

 [corpcomm@mns.gov.tt](mailto:corpcomm@mns.gov.tt)

 868 623-2441 Ext 12509