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Your Ref:

Our Ref:

21 January 2008

Dr. Izben Williams
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of St. Kitts and Nevis to the
Organisation of American States
Chair of the Committee on Hemispheric Security
17th Street and Constitution Ave. N.W.
Washington D.C., 20006

United States of America

Excellency

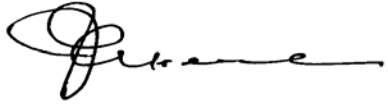
In response to your letter of 6 December 2007 to the Secretary-General, I wish to forward to the Secretariat on Hemispheric Security, Organisation of American States (OAS), a Report on recent security initiatives undertaken by CARICOM.

This Report takes into consideration the decisions of Heads of Government with respect to Crime and Security within CARICOM and the implementation of the approved management structure for Regional Crime and Security within CARICOM. The Report also highlights the security mechanisms which have been put in place within the last two years at the regional level especially during the period of Cricket World Cup 2007 which was hosted by the Region and refers to the legacy of the Regional Security Strategy implemented during this period.

Excellency, the Region wishes to reiterate its commitment to the development of a secure CARICOM Region which is reflected in the Heads of Government decision to incorporate security as the fourth pillar of the Community and to so reflect this in the revision of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas.

/...

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. ...', written over a thin red horizontal line.

/s/ SECRETARY-GENERAL

cc. Sen. Martin Joseph, Minister of National Security , Trinidad and Tobago
Chair, Council of Ministers responsible of National Security and Law Enforcement

Ms. Beatriz Pineres, Secretariat of the Committee on Hemispheric Security

CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM) SECURITY INITIATIVES

In July 2005, the Conference of the Heads of Government at its 26th Session approved a Management Framework for Regional Crime and Security. This Framework included the establishment of a Council of Ministers responsible for National Security and Law Enforcement and the establishment of a regional agency responsible for the rapid implementation of decisions of Heads of Government and the Council of Ministers relating to crime and security, the Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS). The Agency was formally established by virtue of an Inter-Governmental Agreement signed by Heads of Government in July 2006 in St. Kitts and Nevis.

This Management Framework for Crime and Security as set out in **Attachment I** was implemented and tested during Cricket World Cup 2007 in which a Regional Security Plan was developed and many security measures were put into place at a regional level to support this Plan. The measures included, *inter alia*:

- (i) The operationalisation of a CARICOM Common Visa and the issuance of a secure visa to citizens of an agreed list of third countries. The CARICOM Common Visa was only valid during the period of Cricket World Cup and currently, there is a CARICOM Visa Task Force which includes representation from National Security, Tourism and Foreign Affairs to assess the feasibility of re-instating the CARICOM Common Visa;
- (ii) the operationalisation of the Advanced Passenger Information System (APIS) which is managed by the Joint Regional Communications Centre (JRCC). Ten of the fifteen Member States are currently utilizing the APIS. Other CARICOM Member States and Associate Member States have expressed their willingness to join this initiative. This could mean the expansion of the system in the near future;

- (iii) The operationalisation of the Regional Intelligence Fusion Centre (RIFC). Member States signed a Memorandum of Understanding for Intelligence Sharing in July 2006 in St. Kitts and Nevis. As such, regional Intelligence Sharing is managed by the Fusion Centre. As part of the initiative on regional intelligence sharing, the CARICOM Intelligence Sharing Network (CISNET) was developed and rolled out in all CARICOM Member States to ensure real-time sharing of information and intelligence, online collaboration and joint threat assessment throughout the Region. During the Eighteenth Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Heads of Government, it was agreed that the JRCC and the RIFC would remain permanent entities in the Region;
- (iv) The Treaty on Security Assistance Among CARICOM Member States was also signed by Member States in July 2006 in St. Kitts and Nevis. This Treaty lays out the framework for Member States to assist each other should there be a crisis (hurricanes etc.) and/or major events. The Treaty of Security Assistance facilitates:
 - a. efficient and timely response to and management of natural and man-made disasters in order to reduce and eliminate the harmful consequences thereof;
 - b. expeditious, efficient mobilisation and deployment of regional resources in order to manage and defuse national and regional crises and to combat serious crimes;
 - c. combating and elimination of threats to national and regional security, however arising; and
 - d. preservation of the territorial integrity of the Contracting States.

Heads of Government, recognising the importance of security to the Region's economy and its people, agreed that security should be enshrined as the Fourth Pillar of the Community. As such, Heads of Government requested that security's status be elevated and that it be reflected in the revisions of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. Security as the Fourth Pillar of the Community will be one of the issues being addressed at the Fifth Meeting of the Council of Ministers responsible for National Security and Law Enforcement which will be held in February 2008.

The Region is also in the process of implementing a number of security initiatives including, *inter alia*:

- (i) the development of an Advanced Customs Information System which would be an integral and critical component of border security forming part of the first line of defence against trafficking in contraband, in particular narcotics and small arms, using the capability to pre-screen and profile the cargo and sender/receiver using proven techniques. Barbados, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago already have the capability to receive electronic manifests and the remaining Member States are being offered this facility through systems being developed utilising the systems in place in Saint Lucia, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago with the assistance and functional co-operation;
- (ii) The Heads of Government agreed to consider the development of a CARICOM Travel Card and the re-establishment of the CARICOM Common Visa. Currently, IMPACS is undertaking a feasibility study of the CARICOM Travel Card which would afford eligible and pre-screened CARICOM citizens and residents expedited travel through the Region's ports of entry without compromising border security; and
- (iii) the development of an Anti Cyber Crime Plan which would address the development of Anti Cyber Crime legislation and the establishment of a Regional Computer Incidence Response Mechanism and a Regional Digital Forensics Laboratory.

The Region has always maintained a positive working relationship with INTERPOL. This relationship was solidified during CWC 2007 when Interpol provided technical assistance to both the JRCC and the RIFC. The Region noted the invaluable benefits of this partnership. This partnership has continued post Cricket World Cup 2007 and the Region is seeking to formalize and further its co-operation with Interpol.

Finally, the issue of deportees and their effects on the Region continue to be of concern to CARICOM Member States. The Region recently undertook a study on the effects of deportees, especially criminal deportees in Antigua and Barbuda, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. These studies have been completed and were presented to the Sub-Committee on the Western Hemisphere part of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs by Dr. Annemarie Barnes, Consultant. These studies will be the basis of policy decisions which will be taken in February 2008 by the Council of Ministers responsible for National Security and Law Enforcement.

The Declaration on Security in the Americas sought to address traditional threats as well as new and emerging threats. Within the security arena, HIV/AIDS has been recognised as an emerging threat in the Region. The Region has committed resources to addressing issues such as the spread of HIV/AIDS through Pan Caribbean Partnership Against HIV And AIDS (PANCAP).

The Council of Ministers responsible for National Security and Law Enforcement will address regional policy dealing with Human Trafficking in the Region. However, Member States have begun to address this issue through the enactment of legislation and establishment of appropriate social services.

The Region continues to demonstrate its commitment to maintaining law and order within the CARICOM Region and to create a safe and secure environment for its citizens, residents and visitors. The Region will continue to address traditional threats as well as the new and emerging threats in the Region.