

INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE AGAINST TERRORISM (CICTE)

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REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR ALBERT RAMDIN
ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

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Your Excellency, Ambassador Aristides Royo, Permanent Representative of Panama to the OAS and Chair of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism;
Senator, The Honorable Martin Joseph, Minister of National Security of Trinidad and Tobago and Past President Of CICTE;
Distinguished Representatives of Member States of the OAS;
Mr. Antony Anderson, Regional Operations Commander of COPACS;
Distinguished Guest Speakers from the Caribbean region;
Your Excellency Ambassador Alexandre Addor-Neto, Assistant Secretary for Multidimensional Security of the OAS;
Dr. Carol Fuller, Secretary of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Organization of American States is honored to host this unprecedented Meeting of Experts to address the important issue of security for tourism and recreational facilities in the Hemisphere. On behalf of the Secretary General, Dr. José Miguel Insulza, might I extend to each of you a very warm welcome to the Headquarters of this “House of the Americas.”

I am pleased to join you today as you begin your work to evaluate the outcome of the groundbreaking Pilot Project on the Security of Tourism and Recreational Facilities, which was implemented in the nine Caribbean Member States which hosted the Cricket World Cup competition in 2007. Indeed, reports on its success precede today’s meeting, so that we are already especially proud of this product of the CICTE Secretariat, one of the dependencies of the OAS General Secretariat and the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security.

In the context of the multifaceted nature of security in this Hemisphere, embodied in the “Declaration of Bridgetown: The Multidimensional Nature of Security” of 2002 and the “Declaration of Security in the Americas” of 2003, terrorism is considered one of the threats to the security of states. It is a threat which, if realized, has the potential to devastate all sectors, especially the economic and social sectors, and it must be fought from this broader perspective. Terrorist acts are criminal and violent acts.

Member States and the international community are keenly aware of the serious problem that crime and violence are increasingly becoming for the development, stability and integrity of nations. At the Conference on “Crime, Violence and Security in the Caribbean”, held last October here in Washington, D.C., I had the honor to deliver the keynote address. The statement I delivered on that occasion remains relevant today. I noted at that time that, along with security challenges, the Caribbean countries have to deal with the emergence of terror networks and the potential linkages between criminal gangs and terrorists and that these countries have, particularly since the tragic

events of September 11, 2001, invested heavily in counter-terrorism measures. Such investments have meant a dramatic shift in capital resources and obligations away from critical social and economic infrastructure projects. These realities are, sadly, equally applicable to all the countries of the Americas. It is this backdrop which validates the relevance of the objectives of the Pilot Project and makes the strengthening of security capabilities of all Member States an imperative.

In its ongoing effort to support the Member States in their endeavor to address these challenges and to fulfill their security-related obligations and undertakings under the OAS Charter, the CICTE Statute, the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism and the universal legal counter-terrorism instruments, the General Secretariat develops, coordinates and implements technical assistance and capacity-building programs. These programs are based on the careful analysis of Member States' realities and needs; an assessment of cooperation opportunities with a range of partners including Member States, national, sub-regional, regional, and international organizations; and the harnessing of financial resources.

Should you, the Experts from the Member States, today agree on the need to enhance the security of the tourism sector throughout the Hemisphere, then I reassure you that the General Secretariat, particularly through the CICTE Secretariat, is at your countries' complete disposal in this endeavor.

On behalf of the Secretary General and on my own behalf, I wish you success in your deliberations and during the upcoming counter-terrorism meetings during the rest of this week.

I thank you.