



Organization of
American States



INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE AGAINST TERRORISM (CICTE)

ELEVENTH REGULAR SESSION
March 17, 2011
Washington, D.C.

OEA/Ser.L.X.2.11
CICTE/INF.3/11
17 March 2011
Original: English

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE CARICOM IMPLEMENTATION AGENCY FOR CRIME AND SECURITY (IMPACS)

(Delivered by Ms. Lynne Anne Williams,
at the Inaugural Ceremony, held on March 17, 2011)

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TO REAFFIRM THE HEMISPHERIC COMMITMENT TO PREVENT COMBAT
AND ELIMINATE TERRORISM AND TO STRENGTHEN
MEMBER STATES' CAPACITY AND REGIONAL COOPERATION

All protocols observed

I am honoured to have been invited in my capacity as Executive Director of the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) to address this Eleventh Regular Session of CICTE. As the important milestone of a Tenth (10th) anniversary of the revitalization of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism is being observed, it is opportune to assess our progress and to candidly acknowledge what remains to be advanced in the interest of all our publics and stakeholders. As advocated by management theorist, Peter Drucker, one should... "Follow effective action with quiet reflection. From the quiet reflection will come even more effective action."

Mr. Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Observers and Guests, until recently, there were mainly 2 eras of which one spoke: B.C. (Before Christ) and A.D. (Anno Domini – In the Year of Our Lord). How things have changed...In today's world, particularly in the international security sector, even with the current prominence of the current global financial crisis occupying our attention, one still speaks primarily of Pre-9/11 and Post-9/11.

To say that security in the world has changed post 9/11 would be a colossal under-statement. Due to the actions of a few, the calm and serenity, experienced by many in this Hemisphere and worldwide, were shattered and will continue to remain elusive into the foreseeable future.

No longer can we simply exist as states unto ourselves; instead we are bound to be each other's keeper while continuously looking over our shoulders and securing our lives, even into virtual realms. An unknown sage once said "A bend in the road is not the end of the road... unless you fail to make the turn".....While the events of 9/11 were considerably more than a "bump" in our history, the turn we were forced to take entailed embracing a collective commitment to a safer and more secure hemisphere through shared threat assessment, development of effective hemispheric and sub-regional security strategies, and fearlessly pursuing appropriate joint action.

Among the items pertinent to CICTE included under the 2001 Resolution RC. 24/RES. 1/01- "Terrorist Threat to the Americas", was a "call upon all member states to strengthen cooperation, at the regional and international levels, to pursue, capture, prosecute, punish and, as appropriate, to expedite the extradition of the perpetrators, organizers, and sponsors of these terrorist acts, strengthen mutual legal assistance, and exchange information in a timely manner." Almost concurrently, yet not coincidentally, the Caribbean Community was endorsing recommendations for joint sub-regional action in the areas of information and intelligence sharing, enhanced border and transportation

security, capacity building for law enforcement and security agencies, and public sector and legislative reform.

Like our neighbours in the Americas, the foremost security challenges being faced by CARICOM Member States were and continue to be escalating levels of criminal activity, and its debilitating effects. A range of factors account for the crime and insecurity landscape, primary of which is the illegal drug trade, as well as illegal trafficking of firearms and humans, gang warfare, the deportation of criminals from Third States to our small island developing states (SIDS), unemployment, inequity and inequality, corruption and the inability of the criminal justice systems to effectively bring perpetrators to justice. While terrorism is not specifically mentioned as being an everyday occurrence it certainly is an area of concern, as many of the factors mentioned above have the potential to fuel and further terrorism and terrorist acts in our Region.

Recent records have confirmed that several known terrorists or radical elements have roots or associates within our Hemisphere. Consequently, it is for these reasons amongst others that we all share this common threat and feel the need to be proactive through the commitment to “prevent, combat, and eliminate terrorism” through the very establishment of the Organization of American States’ Inter-American Committee against Terrorism.

Almost as an act of providence, a Regional Task Force on Crime and Security was established by CARICOM’s Conference of Heads of Government in July 2001, 3 months prior to that fateful September morning, with a mandate to address the increasing levels of violence, new forms of crime and other emerging security threats in the Region. The Task Force brought together regional security specialists at both policy and operational levels to address these issues, and subsequently made 114 recommendations to counter and reduce crime and criminality within the Community.

One recommendation was the development of a Management Framework for Crime and Security which includes various elements such as a Council of Ministers responsible for National Security and Law Enforcement, whose Chair would report to the Lead Head with responsibility for Crime and Security in the CARICOM Quasi Cabinet, and who in turn would make progress reports, as well as submit matters for policy decision or direction, to the Conference of Heads of Government. Other elements comprise a Security Policy Advisory Committee of Permanent Secretaries, standing committees of Operational Heads (Commissioners of Police, Chiefs of Immigration, Comptrollers of Customs and Excise), Military Chiefs and Heads of Intelligence; and an Implementation Agency for Crime and Security to implement policy decisions mandated by the Conference and the Council of Ministers.

The over-arching effect of these arrangements has enhanced the profile of security and equated its significance with other areas such as trade, foreign and community relations and functional cooperation within the Caribbean Community.

The objective was to ensure there were formal arrangements to manage and implement a regional and joint crime and security agenda. The thematic priorities of the CARICOM Crime and Security Agenda have effectively dovetailed within the last 4 years, with CICTE Programs and objectives, through 4 thematic main priorities - Regional Information and Intelligence Sharing; Enhanced Border Security Capacity; Improved and enhanced Law Enforcement Capacity; and Continued Cooperation with regional and international partners.

Our programmes and initiatives are effectively aligned with those of CICTE's including Border Controls and Maritime Security, Legislative Assistance and Combating Terrorism Financing, Critical Infrastructure Protection (including Cyber Security and Tourism Security) and most importantly, on International Cooperation and Partnerships. Committed to these thematic priorities, CARICOM IMPACS has worked assiduously with CARICOM Member States towards increasing their capacity in the areas of fraudulent document detection, passenger profiling, customer service and harmonization of immigration procedures to name a few. Other activities in this area include:

- Agreement, in early July 2008 at the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of Conference of CARICOM Heads of Government, to sign the Maritime and Airspace Security Cooperation Agreement and the CARICOM Arrest Warrant Treaty. Both the Agreement and the Treaty were signed by Member States who were prepared to proceed and whose internal consultations have been completed;
- A regional border security strategy, which includes the CARICOM Advance Passenger Information System (APIS), came into effect from February 1, 2007 in respect of the 10 CWC Participating Member States. This system continues to function efficiently and effectively in the Region. Regional and international aircraft and vessels are required to submit Advance Passenger Information prior to arrival in and upon departure from any of the 10 Member States. For the period 2007 – January 2011, over 63,000,000 passengers (on more than 740,000 vessels) have travelled to or through the APIS States. Screened against local, regional and international watchlists, of these, approximately 6,373 were “persons of interest” with 83% linked to use of fraudulent travel documents (either stolen, lost by others, or fraudulently produced or obtained).
- We are on the eve of the launch of a trusted traveler regime to facilitate “hassle free” and secure travel through the implementation of a CARICOM Travel card, CARIPASS. At a cost, interested persons can apply for the card. Eligibility for the card requires applicants to submit bio metric information similar to that required for machine readable travel documents.

Consequently, in a bid to synchronize our initiatives with CICTE's focus on Document Security and Fraud Prevention, in July 2008, IMPACS and the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD) signed an MOU, which provides a framework for the development and implementation of a comprehensive human resource development programme for Immigration and Customs Officials. This MOU has facilitated collective regional training for almost 300 border security officials between 2009 – 2010, across 11 Member States.

Recalling the CICTE's emphasis on Aviation and Maritime Security, Member States will recall the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS Code) which the International Maritime Organization (IMO) developed through amendments to the Treaty on Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) in December 2002. Apart from complying with the requirements of the ISPS code by 2004, and servicing increasing requirements from federal and civil aviation authorities since 2001, CARICOM has marched forward to complement its passenger profiling, (introduced regionally in 2007) and national baggage screening, with integrated cargo profiling and information sharing. The impending establishment of an Advance Cargo Information System (ACIS) will enable customs authorities to better examine advance documents presented for import/export, and heighten the detection of those consignments requiring special attention, particularly in respect of ferreting out concealed drugs, explosives or small arms and light weapons.

In the area of law enforcement capacity, the Region's operational heads meet regularly to collaborate and coordinate with regional and international crime prevention and control agencies to assess, determine trends, methodologies and strategies for crime prevention and enhance security for the Community. They advise on appropriate regional anti-crime responses on the basis of research and analysis; develop evidence-based, intelligence-led responses to operate jointly, as well as improve capacity to respond effectively to common threats.

The Region continues to work towards effective compliance with requirements established in the OAS Comprehensive Inter-American Strategy to Combat Threats to Cyber Security, and in facilitating the creation and maintenance of a hemispheric network of Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRT). The cyber breach experienced during the hosting of the CWC 2007 highlighted the Region's vulnerability and inadequacy of legislative and technical infrastructure to deal with cyber security issues. In response, IMPACS, in collaboration with the CARICOM Secretariat, drafted a cyber-security strategy to synchronize the legislative and technological capacity of the Region to address matters pertaining to cyber and computer security. The development of the cyber security strategy was preceded by regional and international stakeholder consultations, as well as training and educational awareness initiatives. In this regard:

- The first capacity building workshop on Basic Cyber Security Training was conducted by CICTE, in Trinidad and Tobago, in December 2008;
- IMPACS personnel represented the CARICOM Security Framework at the CICTE "Advanced Incident Handling" – Cyber Security-related Training in 2010; and
- In 2010 Member States attended the First ICAO/LACAC Regional Seminar on Machine Readable Travel Documents (MRTDS), Biometrics and Security Standards for the Americas.

Subsequent to the December 2008, Basic Cyber Security Training conducted in Trinidad and Tobago by CICTE, there were several discussions between CICTE and IMPACS on the way forward. From initial discussions with CICTE it was proposed that the two entities host a regional workshop on basic cyber security awareness to expose regional IT Law Enforcement personnel to the existing dangers as well as best practices in combating cyber-crime. Discussions are continuing in this regard.

In addition, IMPACS, working with CICTE and host states, has supported the coordination of CICTE'S Program on Strengthening Strategies on Emerging Terrorist Threats which was implemented primarily through a series of "table top" (simulation) exercises for senior decision-makers of Member States to highlight specific issues of contingency planning and threat mitigation. At the regional level, this quest for synergy, has been expanded to formal cooperation with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) through an MOU for Cooperation which will see disaster mitigation and security working in tandem to develop states' contingency planning for diverse scenarios. This has become even more significant given the emerging climate change challenges facing the Region

Noting that the economies of several of our Member States are dependent on tourism, mindful of the effect of terrorist attacks between 2002 and 2005, on a number of tourist

establishments, OAS Members will recall the Inter-American Tourism and Recreational Facilities Security (ITRS) Programme implemented as an initiative developed collaboratively by the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (during its 2005 tenure as Chair CICTE) and the CICTE Secretariat. This programme sought to establish tourist and recreational facilities safety and security standards and practices by strengthening the regional institutional capacity of the tourism and recreational services sector for global competitiveness; by disrupting the capacity for terrorist attacks; and by building visitor confidence in the security and safety of the tourism and recreational services sector in the region.

Realizing the importance of Security to Tourism, IMPACS has been encouraged to work closely with the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO) to advance these objectives in Member States. It is imperative, therefore, that efforts are accelerated to assist Member States in appointing the requisite security mechanisms to protect the very same tourism which generates financial inflows and contributes to the annual GDP. It is widely acknowledged that a single nefarious major incident, terrorist or otherwise, in any of the countries, can affect tourism prospects Region-wide.

International Cooperation and Partnerships

Recognizing the need and importance of continued international cooperation and partnerships, CARICOM continues to engage international, multilateral, regional, and sub-regional organizations, as well as security and technical agencies of individual countries to demonstrate a united approach against common threats including the development of counterterrorism policy and programs in the Hemisphere. During its preparation for the hosting of CWC 2007, assistance and advice was received from an International Security Advisory Group (ISAG) comprising expertise from various partnering OAS Members in a host of areas. These collaborations continued through the hosting of the Fifth Summit of the Americas (VSOA), the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) both in 2009 and the ICC World Twenty20 2010.

As we also acknowledge that information doubles in value the moment that it is shared, the innovative approach to regional intelligence fusion and joint threat assessment has been considerably advanced and is being sustained at CARICOM's Regional Intelligence Fusion Centre where member states inputs support the production of a common intelligence picture. Working with the European Union's Drug Demand Reduction Programme, CARICOM has also been able to assist Member States through an upgrade to CARICOM's Intelligence Sharing Network (CISNET); and through the conduct of training for National Points of Contact in joint drug intelligence assessment, intelligence analysis and production, and Precursor Training.

Significant collaborative work is being advanced with UN entities such as the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI). Every effort is being made to eliminate any instances of intra-agency duplication of effort or wastage of resources, hence the cautious and somewhat deliberate approach towards implementation of subject initiatives.

IMPACS has also partnered with Canadian-based non-governmental organization Project Ploughshares, the Institute of International Relations of the University of the West Indies and various regional civil society organizations in an initiative designed to strengthen the capacity of regional officials; by providing training, technical assistance, research and a much needed infrastructural upgrade on issues aimed at reducing the use of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in the commission of violent crimes across CARICOM.

Hemispheric cooperation can be seen through the partnership among CARICOM, the Dominican Republic and the United States, in the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) to address common security threats. The CBSI initiative will further enhance measures put in place at the regional level. Without a doubt, a weakness in any one of the priority areas has the potential to fuel terrorist activity especially if operational security checks and balances are not in place. In addition gang activity has been on the rise across the Region and this too requires attention as it spawns membership for both terrorist and criminal activities. It is recognized, that youth gangs are not a new problem in the Hemisphere, and it would be beneficial to work together to identify best practices in managing this area.

CARICOM continues to assist its Member States to enhance or strengthen a functional criminal justice regime against terrorism and terrorism financing, in compliance with the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism (IACAT) and the universal legal instruments against terrorism and terrorism financing.

IMPACS and the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF) formalized its working relationship with the signing of a MOU earlier this year. In the pursuit of the objectives stated in the Memorandum, IMPACS and CFATF will cooperate in general matters to counter drug trafficking, anti-money laundering and financing of terrorism, within a sequenced and prioritized framework. Other activities include a CARICOM Justice Protection Programme; Standing Committee of Heads of Intelligence and Financial Intelligence Units – which seeks to monitor both financial and general intelligence as it relates to Terrorism; a Polygraph Capacity Development designed to reduce corruption and increase integrity within law enforcement and security agencies; finalization of a Regional Crime and Security Strategy to promote an integrated and harmonized crime fighting strategy; Improved Intelligence Capacity Building and Coordination to enhance infiltration and destabilization of Organized Crime Rings; and enhanced regional forensic capacity to support the needs of Member States.

Ever mindful of the direct and indirect links between terrorism and criminal networks the Region records, maintains, and is seeking to improve its statistics on criminal activity. 2010 records indicate that LEAs were in a position to cumulatively seize some 2,054 Illegal Firearms, in excess of 555 Metric Tons of Marijuana and a meager 4.5 Metric Tons of Cocaine. These figures represent mere fractions of the illegal commodities estimated by our criminologists and security practitioners to be transiting the region, and an even smaller proportion of what is trafficked at the hemispheric level. Further, an average of 52,000 API are being screened daily, an average of 21 are identified as “persons of concern” in any one week, and already for 2011 of some 176 hits in January and February, at least 6 have led to arrests and convictions.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we note that security and anti-terrorism issues will continue to assume greater importance as our population and visitors continue to cross borders for business or pleasure. Through the implementation and effective use of the various security systems sustained through increased functional cooperation amongst CARICOM Member States and other relevant sub-regional or hemispheric entities, approaches have been developed which will facilitate the legitimate movement of people, goods and services, while at the same time flushing out and disrupting the flow of criminal elements, organizations and terrorist groups.

Mr. Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen, as we are aware, the threats posed by terrorism are very real and indeed far-reaching; every effort must be made to sustain our proactivity in the fight against that which threatens our existence and peaceful way of life. The events of 9/11 at one stage resulted in a somewhat knee-jerk reaction founded on mistrust of many more than the obviously radical and violent. Several communities were presented with grounds for protest. CICTE, I recall, as a former NPC, was careful in wording its instruments and conventions with these concerns in mind. Recent events worldwide have confirmed the power of the people as an agent of political and economic change. Within our hemisphere, we must continue to acknowledge the imperative to balance our responses to existing threats with strategies in which are embedded mechanisms and protocols structured to protect the human and civil rights of our citizens and visitors.

We now look forward to the next decade of hemispheric cooperation. What will our states look like? The diplomacy of consensus within a multi-lateral forum is a lengthy, bureaucratic and routinely challenging process which, in a security arena, can prove counter-productive on occasion... Will we cede sovereign concerns in exchange for the service of collective responsibility and effective joint action? How invasive will our aviation and maritime security checks become? Will we embrace the technologies available to us to counter evolving threats in a proactive manner? Will we improve our information sharing and scenario planning to better identify the tipping points as they show themselves? Will we improve the trust among nations to facilitate effective sharing of intelligence in pursuit of the greater good of the hemisphere and our sub-regions? How can we better leverage existing technologies to secure our critical infrastructure? How do we standardize our immigration and security policies, to balance volume management with security protocols, notwithstanding our language, legal and cultural differences? These are some of the questions for which it is anticipated this Session's deliberations will spawn responses.

CICTE has contributed significantly to building anti-terrorism and counter-terrorism awareness and capacity among its members, in several strategic areas. Much has been achieved of which not enough is known and of which the impact is yet to be assessed. Much remains to be done. IMPACS proposes to maintain its collaboration and cooperation with the OAS/CICTE for law enforcement capacity building in the Region to mitigate the terrorist threat in the Region; the drafting of model anti-terrorism legislation including Anti Cyber Crime and Anti Cyber Terrorism Legislation; and the facilitation of increased information and intelligence sharing in the Hemisphere. The CARICOM Security Framework through IMPACS, its regional treaty institution, is committed to supporting and contributing to the hemispheric security effort, in all its manifestations. Here to support, we are also honoured to serve.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you.