



Back to Office Report: Technical Exchange to The Dominican Republic

Belize Mission



Introduction:

As a direct result of a Technical Cooperation Agreement between the countries of Belize and The Dominican Republic, a Technical Exchange was conducted March 29th to April 2nd, 2016. This Back to Office Report summarizes the meeting, events and accomplishments during the visit of the Belize delegation.

The Belize Technical Exchange delegation was comprised of: Mrs. Nicole Haylock-Rodriguez (Deputy Coordinator of the National Security Council Secretariat, Ministry of National Security), Mr. Elvis Requeña (Programme Coordinator – Community Action for Public Safety Program, IDB), Mr. Jorge Villanueva (Officer Commanding – Joint Intelligence Coordinating Centre, Belize Police Department) and Ms. Cuffa Ramirez (Project Liaison Officer – InfoSegura Project).

Objectives of the Technical Exchange:

- Observe the systematic and technical functions of observatories in the Dominican Republic
- Pursue individual and collective development through the exchange of knowledge, skills, resources and technical expertise.
- Increase analytical capacity to facilitate the development of Citizen Security oriented strategies for the National Crime Observatory, the Ministry of National Security and the IPSMIS.

It is important to note that the objectives for this exchange, are harmonized with the United Nations guidelines for Technical Cooperation among Developing Nations and the InfoSegura Project mandate.

Summary of Activities:

1. Wednesday, March 30th, 2016 - Visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: The delegation made a courtesy call at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was received by representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of National Security and Ministry of the Interior and Police. The Belize delegation was accompanied by representatives of the United Nations Development Programme and the InfoSegura Project in the Dominican Republic.

The meeting was chaired by the Vice Minister of National Security, Mr. Cesar Dargam Espillat who welcomed the delegation and made allusion to the fact that the visit of the delegation was historic as it was the first Technical Exchange under a Technical Cooperation Agreement. The Belize delegation were urged by the Vice Minister, "Don't take this as a one stage activity". The Government of the Dominican



Figure 1: Mrs. Nicole Haylock-Rodriguez (Deputy Coordinator NSCS) and Mr. Cesar Dargam Espillat (Vice Minister in the Ministry of Interior and Police)

Republic is building a catalog on Technical Cooperation and the participants of the exchange were reminded to pay keen attention to other possible areas of cooperation between the two countries.

2. Visit to the Ministry of the Interior and Police.

The Vice Minister of the Ministry of the Interior and Police, Dr. Washington Gonzalez Nina, welcomed the delegation and presented the key points of the National Plan for Citizen Security. In addition, he introduced the framework of the Citizen Security Observatory that was established by legislation in 2012. He was accompanied by the Coordinator of Citizen Security Observatory, Mr. Alberto Morillo Castillo who also participated in this activity.

In the afternoon, the delegation visited with the staff of the observatory where there was an interactive exchange of information accompanied by questions from the Belize delegation along the lines of operations and publications. This part of the visit was rich in information and examples of best practices that the delegation



Figure 2. Visit by the Belize Delegation to the Ministry of the Interior and Police.

found will be very useful in the establishment of the Belize Crime Observatory. The tour of the observatory was realized by Mr. Mario Gallego Cosme, UNDP Consultant within the Ministry and Mr. Alberto Morillo Castillo, both of whom gave the delegation their recommendations related to the analysis of data and the determination of what type of data should be made public or kept confidential.

3. March 31st, 2016. Visit to the 911 Emergency Response System.

The delegation was received by Mr. Luis E. Ferrand (Operations Director) and Mr. Juan Pablo Burgos (Director of Emergency Response Department) who gave a thorough presentation on the 9-1-1- Emergency Response System. The delegation found this visit to be very informative in terms of modern ideas on how to manage such a system. The delegation toured this department in its entirety and was fortunate to see the system in full operation – the different types of cameras that are used in Santo Domingo, the operators responding to calls and specialized assistance that is provided to the public by a psychologist and a medical doctor. In the establishment of this system, technical staff from the Dominican Republic visited other countries and looked at their best practices. They made special mention of Ecuador.

At some point in the near future, this may also be an area of Technical Cooperation.

4. Visit to the Attorney General's Ministry.

The delegation was given a tour by Mr. Justo Vasquez, the head of the Statistical Unit for the Attorney General's Ministry. The delegation was introduced to the Deputy Attorney General as the Attorney General was out of the country on official business.



Figure 3. The Belize Delegation and the Deputy Attorney General of the Dominican Republic.

5. Visit to the National Forensic Institute.

The Belize delegation visited the National Forensic Institute in the afternoon on March 31st, 2016. They toured all the departments of the institute with the exception of the Pathology Unit. This may also be an area for further Technical Cooperation.

6. April 1st, 2016. Visit to the Ballistics Laboratory (LABB).



A visit to the Ballistics Laboratory revealed the strides that have been taken in the Dominican Republic to regulate personal firearms. The delegation toured this facility in its entirety looking at the entire process that is done to register firearms including taking samples from each firearm. The analysis of these samples can also help the National Police to identify the perpetrators of violent crimes by providing possible matches – if they are registered in the system.

The delegation found this visit to be very interesting.

7. Visit to the City Council Observatory.

Mrs. Moraima Díaz Arnau is the Coordinator of the Citizen Observatory within the City Council in Santo Domingo – the Dominican Republic's capital city. The Belize delegation was impressed with the functions carried out by this small observatory which is manned by a staff of five women.

This observatory is not only responsible for providing information on Citizen Security – they report on other indicators as well such as lighting and citizen reaction to implemented policies. They also conduct frequent victimization surveys using sample sizes that are representative of the population.

Of importance to the delegation is the close relation which this observatory maintains with civil society, specifically their Neighbourhood Watch Committees. Their small staff is comprised of an array of professions – all social sciences – which provides a rich analysis of the indicators and variables that they investigate. The coordinator urged them to stay in touch with her so as to receive guidance for the establishment of the Belize Crime Observatory.

8. Debriefing at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The historic Technical Exchange visit between Belize and The Dominican Republic concluded with a debriefing at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. All the members of the Belize delegation extended their gratitude on behalf of the entities that they represent



for the hospitality afforded to them by the country. They expressed their satisfaction for the wealth of information that they were taking back to Belize – extremely useful for the establishment of their own crime observatory. All the visits on the agenda were in some way related to the collection, analysis or publication of data on crime and violence. They look forward to maintaining the ties between the Belize Crime Observatory and the personnel at the different units which they visited.

The Government and UNDP/InfoSegura representatives at the debriefing reiterated that this is only one of many areas in which the Dominican Republic can provide technical support. They thanked the Belize Delegation for choosing their country. They invited the delegation to stay in communication with them to possibly organize another technical exchange in the future.

Recommendations

The Technical Exchange between Belize and The Dominican Republic was a success. It was organized excellently. The delegation met with officials at the highest level which was beneficial in terms of the wealth of information that they acquired during this exchange. However, because the Belize Crime Observatory will seek to incorporate civil society, the delegation would have also appreciated dialogue with the civil society organizations that provide data to the observatories.

Next Steps

1. The Ministry of National Security to conduct debriefing and information sharing with the relevant Heads of the Departments regarding the Technical Exchange to The Dominican Republic.
2. Identification of specific areas for cooperation in the Ministry of National Security, through assessment and site visits to the National Forensic Science Services and Office of the Commissioner of Police.



3. Formulation of a Technical Exchange Concept Note for Forensics Service and Police personnel to do an exchange. (9-1-1 and Surveillance System)
4. Integration of recommendations obtain through the Technical Exchange into the development process of the Belize Crime Observatory.
5. Meeting with the Mayor of the City of Belmopan to possible establish cooperation between the cities of Belmopan and Santo Domingo.

Recommendations to be used in the Development of the Belize Crime Observatory.

1. Reactivation of the Sub-Technical Unit of the Belize Crime Observatory. This unit will help to support the operational function as well as outputs of the crime observatory.
2. Drafting of Legislation to establish the Belize Crime Observatory by an Act of the National Assembly, to provide for the submission of data to the crime observatory and to provide for matters connected therewith and incidentals thereto.
3. Integration of recommended components for the website design including outputs such as reports and publications.
4. Establish a Memorandum of Understanding between the Belize Crime Observatory and the City of Belmopan to provide data, research and policy recommendations as it pertains to citizen security in its broadest terms such as: infrastructure, transport, health, urban planning and recreation.