

ADDRESS BY SENATOR THE HONOURABLE MARTIN R. JOSEPH MINISTER
OF NATIONAL SECURITY AT THE OPENING OF THE OPERATIONS
PLANNING WORKSHOP IN PREPARATION FOR HOSTING OF THE FIFTH
SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS (VSOA)

Hyatt Regency, PORT OF SPAIN

Wednesday 12th November 2008

Vice Chair of the Strategic Command Group of the Fifth Summit of the Americas,
Commodore Garnet Best;

Heads of Divisions and Agencies of the Ministry of National Security;

Assistant Commissioner of Police, Mr. Steve Waldron

Director of Security, Fifth Summit of the Americas (VSOA)
Lieutenant Colonel Kenrick Maharaj;

Coordinator of Security, Fifth Summit of the Americas (VSOA)
Major Dexter Francis;

Other Heads of Security of the Ministry of National Security

The Operations Planning and Coordinating Staff of the Fifth Summit of the Americas;

Workshop Presenters and Participants

Other Specially Invited Guests

Ladies and Gentleman

Thank you Ladies and Gentlemen for the opportunity to address you at the start of this workshop today.

This workshop, as you may know, is aimed at assembling all Heads of Divisions of the Ministry of National Security as well as the principal Operations Planners from the respective Divisions who are involved in the preparations for the conduct of operations of the Fifth Summit of the Americas (VSOA).

At the upcoming April 17-19, 2009 Summit, the 34 democratically elected Heads of State and Governments of the Western Hemisphere will meet in Port of Spain, to discuss all the major issues facing the region.

They will also seek to advance collective solutions so that all citizens of the region could enjoy a higher quality of life. Added to this, in November 2009, there will also

be a meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government, in Port of Spain, and Her Majesty, the Queen of England is expected to attend.

It is a significant honour for Trinidad and Tobago to host these two most important gathering of world leaders. It is the first time that these events, which are classified in other jurisdictions as Category "A" Events, will be held in a Caribbean State and it is a clear indication of the leading role that Trinidad and Tobago is now playing in Hemispheric affairs.

The theme of the Fifth Summit of the Americas, is "Securing Our Citizen's Future by Promoting Human Prosperity, Energy Security and Environmental Sustainability". It was developed in consultation with member states, development experts, civil society and regional development institutions and its three pillars of focus are human prosperity, energy security and environmental sustainability.

Ladies and Gentlemen it is against this background that the Ministry of National Security in conjunction with the Operations Planning and Coordinating Staff is hosting this two-day workshop in Operations Planning.

The process of planning for and executing a Summit of this scope and magnitude, involving Heads of State and Government Officials, Members of Delegations and official Media personnel is by no means a small undertaking.

Given the enormity and scope of this Summit, which comprises 34 World Leaders and close to 5000 delegates, the security architecture must be shaped in such a way as to deal effectively with threat levels associated with participating countries and their respective leaders. It is critical that we understand that the operational security framework that we plan, mobilize and execute is pivotal to a successful Summit.

This means that from the outset our operations planning must address all threats, including terrorism, high crime, cyber security, and possible attacks that may emanate from the air, sea or land.

Additionally, the principal components of the summit process namely political and technical outcomes, logistics and security must come together in a way that yields success. Therefore, each component must be planned down to the most precise detail if overall success is to be guaranteed.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Security Planning for the Fifth Summit of the Americas commenced in March 2008, when Divisions of the Ministry of National Security met through their representatives and started the planning process.

This process thus far has culminated in the presentation of a draft National Security Plan for the Fifth Summit and other arrangements that are intended to ensure not only successful planning but also successful implementation of security for this upcoming major event.

At this workshop, which was coordinated through a joint effort of the Ministry of National Security and the Security Operations Planning and Coordinating Staff of the Summit Secretariat, it is intended that stronger inter-agency relationships will be

fostered and the sharing and coordinated analysis and application of technical information as it relates to security, operations and logistics planning for the Fifth Summit in 2009 will occur.

I wish to therefore endorse the objectives as laid out in the correspondence of invitation by the Operations Planning and Coordinating Staff.

These are:

1. Coordinating the development of the operational plans of national agencies;
2. Establishing the mechanism, processes and procedures for accessing regional and international support;
3. Ensuring the achievement of situational awareness among operational planners as well as presenting the current National/Regional Threat Assessment;
4. Coordinating Cruise Ship Security;
5. Understanding the threat of international Terrorism; and,
6. Understanding the lessons learned from previous Summits and major events.

Ladies and Gentleman it is the responsibility of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and more specifically the Ministry of National Security to ensure that the Fifth Summit of the Americas proceeds to conclusion, in an environment that is safe and secure, and where mitigation strategies for all perceived and real threats and risks are considered and implemented.

This is no small undertaking and I charge all of you gathered here this morning with the task of taking us on a journey to a successful end state, which I would like to define as a safe and pleasant arrival, an enjoyable stay and productive summit and finally a safe and even more pleasant departure from Trinidad and Tobago for all our guests.

The Fifth Summit of the Americas is being hosted at a decisive moment in modern international history created by the simultaneous occurrence of critical political, economic and financial events at the global, regional and national levels. This Summit has therefore located the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago at the epicentre of a fundamental global shift. The responsibility for ensuring the security of the environment in which the leaders of the Americas will seek to chart a successful course for a hopeful future rests undeniably with the Ministry of National Security.

This is not the type of responsibility to be approached from the perspective of business as usual. This is what is referred to as a defining responsibility that will establish the legacy of this Ministry in the context of the Fifth Summit of the Americas.

The Fifth Summit offers a new opportunity for Heads of States and Government to build a stronger, more resilient and progressive Americas in which all citizens have the opportunity to benefit from economic development and growth, peace and security.

The responsibility ahead of us is great, but our capacity to respond must be even greater.

I wish you every success in your deliberations over the next two-day of this Operations Planning Workshop.

I trust that we shall approach our responsibilities in a manner that in the end will define success and above all ensure that we achieve the Mission of the Ministry of National Security to establish and maintain a safe and secure environment for the successful hosting of the Fifth Summit of the Americas 2009.

I thank you.