



**GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

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## **MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**

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For Immediate Release

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

#### **MINISTRY OF DEFENCE COMMENDS PRIME MINISTER'S STANCE ON REGIONAL SOVEREIGNTY**

The Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago wishes to cite with approval and to congratulate the Honorable Prime Minister, Kamla Persad- Bissessar on her historic and groundbreaking contribution on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> regular meeting of the CARICOM Heads of Government held in St. Kitts.

The speech of the Honorable Prime Minister would quite rightly send shockwaves throughout every nook and cranny of the region, would resonate with the right-thinking peoples of the Caribbean, and would signal to those rendered lame by neutrality that Trinidad and Tobago is prepared to defend its sovereignty even if standing alone.

The Honorable Prime Minister was right in her decision to criticize the leaders of CARICOM for their failure to support both Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana at a time when the sovereignty of both countries was being undermined by threats of military action by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

It is noteworthy and a cause of grave concern that not a single CARICOM member state, nor CARICOM itself lent solidarity to the people's of Trinidad and Tobago nor Guyana although both countries are members of CARICOM, but chose instead by their words, actions and inaction, to stand in solidarity with the Government of Venezuela.

The Ministry of Defence takes further note of the deafening silence of individual CARICOM member states and CARICOM itself, following the Terror attack carried out by Venezuelan nationals in Guyana. The failure of CARICOM to condemn that dastardly act continues to speak volumes.

The Ministry of Defence wishes to confront the dishonest Zone of Peace narrative routinely parroted by CARICOM member states as an obscene and obvious fallacy, particularly since a simple Google search would corroborate the findings of CARICOM IMPACS, that the English speaking Caribbean has the highest murder rate in the world ranking between 40-100 per 100,000 inhabitants.

A simple Google search on the same subject would also reveal that the key drivers of the aforementioned murder rate, include gang activity and organized crime resulting from narco-trafficking.

Until recently, Trinidad and Tobago's murder rate stood at 45.7 per 100,000 inhabitants. It is noteworthy that Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana are Venezuela's closest CARICOM neighbors.

In that vein, the Honorable Prime Minister is correct in her stance to pursue initiatives which serve to protect our citizens and our sovereignty, from those Narco Terror entities which have brought nearly three decades of violence and decay to our country, as to do otherwise would result in the Government of Trinidad and Tobago being rivaled by Narco Terrorists as is being witnessed in Mexico in recent days.

The Ministry of Defence stands committed to work with the Government of the United States of America as we pursue such initiatives, which are necessary to protect our shared interests and values, and as we work in partnership to ensure that democracy and the rule of law prevails in our hemisphere.

**Wayne D Sturge, M.P.**  
**Minister of Defence**  
**Minister in the Ministry of Homeland Security**

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