



Government of St. Kitts & Nevis
Cabinet Secretariat, Government Headquarters
Church Street, Basseterre
St. Kitts & Nevis

Post-Cabinet Statement July 23, 2007

Citizens and residents of St. Kitts and Nevis, good evening and thanks for your kind attention as I bring to you the post-Cabinet briefing for Cabinet meeting held at the Cabinet meeting room, Government Headquarters, on Monday July 23rd, 2007.

National Security Matters

In an attempt to continue in a proactive and aggressive way to confront the issue crime and national security in the federation of St. Kitts and Nevis, a team of six members from the High Command of the Royal St. Christopher and Nevis Police Force and the St. Kitts-Nevis Defence Force, led by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of National Security, brought a very detailed update on national security issues to the Cabinet and unveiled a multi-dimensional plan of action for further and more rapid response to crime and related issues. Specific in-depth presentations were delivered by Ag. Deputy Commissioner Stafford Liburd, of the Royal St. Christopher and Nevis Police Force and Major Leroy Percival of the St. Kitts-Nevis Defence Force.

It was reported to the Cabinet of Ministers that a side-by-side comparison for the first six months of 2006 and of 2007 revealed that for the first six months of the current year, 2007, there has been an overall 28.7% reduction in the major areas of criminal activity (Wounding, Shooting, Robbery and House-breaking) for St. Kitts, compared to the equivalent period in 2006. The number of incidents of criminal activity dropped by 278 incidents from 970 incidents in 2006 to 692 incidents in 2007. It was highlighted however that the number of shootings had increased by a few incidents.

Also significant in the report from the High Command of the Police Force and the Defence Force was the appreciable increase in the resolution of criminal cases so far for the current year.

The High command cited low productivity, low crime detection capability, issues related to the deployment of manpower, a backlog of court cases pointing to the need to increase



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effectiveness in the judicial system and forensics, have presented enormous challenges to the security forces, but that these challenges are being slowly overcome. In elucidating the challenges with forensic work, the security commanders outlined that the FBI lab in the United States had indicated, that with its own resources being stretched because of the Iraq war, it is no longer able to respond as timely to external demands on its resources. The crime lab in Jamaica has also cited that increased activity in its own jurisdiction had presented similar challenges and was not in a position to give more urgent support to requests from other countries. The High command nonetheless gave the assurance that it was exploring alternative avenues to get its forensic work done in timely manner so that the judicial system can dispatch of criminal cases on an equally timely basis.

In outlining the 25 point strategic action plan, the national security chiefs cited improved management of staff and staff related-issues (including reviewing vacation, second job, work shift, and sick leave policies for officers), improvement in the organizational structure of the police force (including revisiting the usefulness of the Corporal rank in the Police Force), improved management of all police stations, the provision of the necessary crime-fighting equipment, and continuous local and overseas training and skills upgrading for officers, are crucial to the success of the new strategy. In relation to overseas training, attachments have been arranged with the Miami-Dade Police Department in Florida. Training will now focus on cyber crimes, forensics and customer service response.

It was also noted that plans to improve the visibility of the police in all communities in the Federation by strengthening its community policing programme, recruiting more suitable personnel for training and induction into the security forces, the motivation of force officers through providing opportunities for qualification for promotion and the instituting of appropriate award schemes, and the use of modern technology, are important and are already in full gear.

The chiefs of the Police Force and the Defence Force pledged to continue and improve coordination on joint intelligence operations involving the special branch unit, the drug squad and the Defence Force. They gave an overview of the recent successes of the Strike



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Force in reducing crime, confiscating weapons and illegal drugs, intercepting burglary and dismantling gangs.

After the extensive and comprehensive presentation, Cabinet applauded the efforts of the security forces and the Ministry of National Security in the fight against crime and in the protection of life and property in the federation. Cabinet warned however that there was still a strong perception in the community that the security forces were not doing enough to prevent and solve crimes and that the full implementation of the strategic plan of action as outlined should be pursued carefully, yet aggressively and precipitously.

The security chiefs agreed with the observation but suggested that the media share some of the responsibility for the referenced perception and wanted government to articulate the need for greater support from the media (both print and electronic) in presenting a more balanced and more factual picture to all our citizens and residents.

Cabinet gives the assurance that it will give all the necessary support to the security forces and the ministry of National Security to ensure that citizen, residents and visitors can continue to live, work, do business, and conduct their lives in an atmosphere of peace, tranquility and prosperity.

Memorial Service of Mr. Udell

The Cabinet meeting was suspended until 10:00 AM on Wednesday July 25th so that Cabinet members could attend the funeral service of Mr. Udell Adams of Newtown, formerly of the Fire Services Division of the Police Force, who was being buried at the St. John's Anglican Church.

The End

This is the post cabinet briefing for cabinet meeting held today Monday 23rd July, 2007. I thank you for listening.