

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

Post-Cabinet Statement December 10, 2007

Citizens and residents of St. Kitts and Nevis, good evening. This is the post-Cabinet briefing for Cabinet meeting held Monday December 10, 2007. I apologise for not having brought to you the post-cabinet briefing for the past two weeks.

National Security

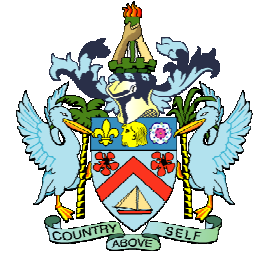
Today, cabinet met with the Defence Council and members of the top echelon of the Security Forces to discuss in detail matters pertaining to criminal activity and national security in the Federation. As the Prime Minister has previously indicated, the Defence Council is comprised of the Prime Minister, Minister of National Security, the Attorney General and the Commander of the Defence Force. The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of National Security is the secretary to the Defence Council.

The High Command of the Police Force and the Defence Force summarized the level of criminal activity in the country over the past week and outlined a number of specific strategies that are in operation to deal with the level of criminal activity in the country. In particular, the security forces alluded to the incidence of gang-related criminal activity and presented a detailed picture of the four major gangs in the country. Cabinet was assured that major players in these gangs have been identified and profiled, and that more specific targeting will now be possible.

The High Command of the Police Force provided a detailed assessment of the kinds of illegal firearms that have recently been seized. The security forces are also confident that they have within their view persons suspected to be involved in the importation and trade of illegal firearms.

During these discussions, the Hon Attorney General revealed that he had received Commissioner Blades' report on the inquiry into the alleged sickout of police officers earlier this year. He said he would convene a separate meeting with the High Command of the Police Force to discuss the findings and recommendations in the report, and would also share information with the public on the report at a later date.

The 2008 Budget



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Cabinet discussed and formally approved for introduction into the national Assembly the Appropriation Bill 2007 to make budgetary allocations for the new fiscal year 2008. The bill will have its first reading on Tuesday December 11, which will be followed by the presentation of the budget address by the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. It is anticipated that the Prime Minister will introduce measures related to the high cost of fuel for the generation of electricity.

The debate on the budget will commence on Wednesday 12th December beginning with the response of the Hon. Leader of the Opposition, Mark Brantley, to the budget address. The debates are likely to conclude on Thursday December 13, whereupon the Appropriation Bill is expected to have its second and third readings, and pass.

Price Control

The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Affairs, was invited to update the Cabinet on the progress with the implementation and monitoring of the recently instituted Price Control measures. Cabinet was assured that the monitoring mechanism is functioning well and was presented with the wholesale and retail prices of all the controlled commodities at major supermarkets and outlets.

The Permanent Secretary explained that more time would be needed to make a substantial assessment of the impact of the price control mechanism but indicated that there were positive signs in the market.

END

This brings to an end the post-cabinet briefing for Monday December 10, 2007. I thank you.