



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

POST-CABINET STATEMENT JANUARY 14, 2008

Citizens and residents of St. Kitts and Nevis, good evening. This is the post-Cabinet briefing for Cabinet meeting held Monday January 14, 2008.

Electoral Reform

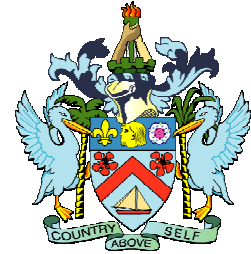
Today, Cabinet reviewed the progress made in the electoral reform process and was specifically updated on the progress with the confirmation of registered voters. Cabinet was also updated on a preliminary plan to decentralize the confirmation of voters from Basseterre and Charlestown to other parts of the St. Kitts and Nevis. This plan is geared towards ensuring that every previously registered voter, regardless of age or state of health, has an equal opportunity to confirm his or her registration to continue to be able to vote in our democratic elections.

The amendments to the Elections Registration Regulations were discussed and Cabinet urged the Hon. Prime Minister and Minister responsible for Elections matters to hold a press conference on Tuesday January 15 to update the public on these and related matters. With the agreement of the Prime Minister, the press conference is to be held at the Parliamentary lounge and Government Headquarters on January 15 at 3 o'clock.

National Security Council

Cabinet met with the Defence Council for the sixth time since the recent reactivation of the Council. The Ag Commissioner of Police, Austin Williams and the Commander of the Defence Force, Patrick Wallace, presented comprehensive overviews of the previous week's activities. They indicated that their joint operations have led to commendable success and, in particular, resulted in the following:

- A major reduction in breaking offences
- Numerous arrests for drug possession



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- Numerous arrests for possession of offensive weapons such as knives and ice picks
- Increased traffic ticketing
- Increased number of firearms removed from the streets
- Improved response and follow up to complaints by citizens and residents
- Formation of the Police Boys Club in Newtown and Cayon

The security chiefs highlighted the importance of paying attention to minor as well as major offenses indicating that the commission of minor offenses creates an atmosphere of disorder and lays the groundwork for major criminal activity.

The core aspects of the strategy as pinpointed by the Commissioner of Police are:

- Steady random searches
- Joint Police-Defence Force patrols
- Nightly plain clothes patrol
- Increased police visibility
- Enforcement of minor offenses
- Zero tolerance for camouflage clothing
- Active use of the K-9 unit to intercept the movement of drugs
- Direct targeting of illegal firearms
- Among other things.

The Police also unveiled portions of their future strategic approach to crime fighting. The approach consisted of tough crime fighting and enforcement strategies as well as softer strategies such as community outreach, in-service training, and utilization of modern technology.

The Police informed that there is a small group of foreign nationals in the country engaging in some rarer strains of criminal activity including counterfeiting of travel documents and monetary instruments. Three of these individuals are in police custody at the moment and the public is asked to be particularly vigilant.



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Agriculture

The Hon Minister of Agriculture brought for the consideration of Cabinet a number of matters pertaining to the distribution of land for agricultural purposes and for general assistance to our farmers. Cabinet gave its full approval and supported the Minister in his quest to resolve all outstanding applications to improve the agricultural sector, thereby empowering our local farmers and improving our food security. Cabinet wishes to assure our farmers and aspiring farmers of its continuing commitment to improving the agricultural sector and developing the necessary synergies within the economy to make this a reality.

END

This brings to an end the post-cabinet briefing for Monday January 14, 2008. I thank you.