



Congressional Testimony
of
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“New Directions or Old Path? Caribbean Basin Security Initiative”

Introduction

Allow me, first, to thank Chairman Rep. Eliot L. Engel, ranking member Rep. Connie Mack, and Subcommittee members for the invitation to offer testimony today on the subject “New Directions or Old Path? New Caribbean Basin Security Initiative.” The Subcommittee is to be commended for holding this hearing on a region that often is under the radar screen because it is a comparatively low-investment zone of relative tranquility compared to other parts of the Western Hemisphere, not to speak of the rest of the world.

In many respects, this Hearing is a reality check on Caribbean security and United States security engagement with the region generally and the engagement by President Barack Obama’s administration that is predicated on his Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI). In thinking of reality checks I am reminded of a prophetic remark made during the 1930s by British Statesman Anthony Eden: “There’s nothing more dangerous than a foreign policy based on unreality.” Eden was positing the importance of conducting situational assessments before designing or redesigning foreign policy. Needless-to-say, the value of this advice extends beyond the foreign policy arena, to health, or education, or security policy. Moreover, the value goes beyond policy design to program delivery that flows from it.

My contribution to this Subcommittee’s reality check will take the form of a brief analysis wrapped around three questions, two of which address some of the core “What” and “How” concerns of the Subcommittee, and one of which allows the Subcommittee to be reminded of some critical “Why” matters. Indeed, we should entertain the reminders before proceeding to “What” and “How” considerations.

Thus, the three questions are:

1. Why should the United States worry about what happens in the Caribbean?
2. What are the clear and present dangers on the Caribbean security landscape, which threaten the security not only of the Caribbean but also the United States?
3. What is the engagement backdrop against which CBSI arrives and what are some factors that increase its prospects for enhancing regional security?

Question 1: The Matter of National Interests

There is an enduring feature to the wisdom of a foreign policy dictum adumbrated by Founding Father George Washington in 1778: “It is a maxim, founded on the universal experience of mankind, that no nation is to be trusted further than it is bound by its interests, and no prudent statesmen or politician will venture to depart from it.” He was referring to the centrality of national interest as the over-arching variable in the conduct of foreign policy by the United States. National interest still is the defining desideratum in the nation’s foreign and defense policy. So, with the Caribbean as it is with other areas of the world.

In relation to the Caribbean, the contemporary national interests of the United States revolve around one D and three Gs: Democracy, Geopolitics, Geonarcotics, and Geoeconomics. Several reasons oblige me to confine my remarks to the first three aspects. For a discussion of Geoeconomics, see Andrés Serbín, “The Geopolitical Context of the Caribbean Basin in the 1990s: Geoeconomic Reconfigurations and Political Transitions,” in Joseph Tulchin and Andrés Serbín, eds., *Cuba and the Caribbean*, Scholarly Resources, 1997; Ivelaw L. Griffith, “US Strategic Interests in Caribbean Security,” *Joint Force Quarterly*, Autumn 2000, 64-69; and Norman Girvan, “Agenda Setting and Regionalism in the Greater Caribbean: Responses to 9/11,” in Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, ed., *Caribbean Security in the Age of Terror* (Ian Randle Publishers, 2004).

In his seminal book *The Paradox of American Power*, Dean Emeritus of Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government and former Assistant Secretary of Defense Joseph S. Nye, Jr. reminds us that “the promotion of democracy is also a national interest and a source of soft power” and that “the United States has both an ideological and a pragmatic interest in the promotion of democracy.” At the policy leadership level President Barack Obama defends and promotes democracy as a national interest. Quite importantly, he articulates democratic pursuits that go beyond electoral democracy, noting, for instance, in April 2009 in Strasbourg, France that “...obviously we should be promoting democracy everywhere we can. But democracy, a well-functioning society that promotes liberty and equality and fraternity, a well-functioning society does not just depend on going to the ballot box. It also means that you’re not going to be shaken down

by police because the police aren't getting properly paid. It also means that if you want to start a business, you don't have to pay a bribe.”

With some notable exceptions, such as Cuba and Haiti, the contemporary history of the Caribbean reveals the region to be a bastion of democracy both in terms of elections and in terms of press freedom, human rights protections, and other key democracy variables. Especially in the English-speaking Caribbean the endurance of democracy is partly due to the possession of strong “democratic assets,” compared to societies in other parts of the world with similar socio-economic profiles: their civil societies are relatively strong, traditions of free press are firmly established, labor unions, professional associations, and civic societies exist, and political parties are functional, although there are many funding and operational challenges. Political structures—essentially following the Parliamentary model of government—make law, execute policy, and render judicial decisions. Yet, United States democracy interests in the region relate not merely to the region's generally strong democracy profile, but also to the democracy dysfunctionalities to be found in the region, whether structural because of the design and operation of a political system, such as in Cuba, or functional because of corruption or administrative inefficiency, such as in Haiti and Guyana . The concern extends, as well, to the actual and potential deleterious impact on democratic governance of such things as corruption, poverty, drugs, and crime.

In relation to geopolitics, the strategic importance of the Caribbean is found in its resources, sea lanes, and security networks. The Caribbean Basin is the source of fuel and nonfuel minerals used in both the defense and civilian sectors. Of particular significance are petroleum and natural gas produced in Barbados, Colombia, Guatemala, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela. Moreover, although several territories in the area do not have energy resources, they offer invaluable refining and transshipment functions (Aruba, Bahamas, Curaçao, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, St. Lucia, and U.S. Virgin Islands). Other mineral resources from the Caribbean include bauxite, gold, nickel, copper, cobalt, emeralds, and diamonds.

The Caribbean Basin has two of the world's major choke points, the Panama Canal and the Caribbean Sea. The former links the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and saves 8,000 miles and up to 30 days of steaming time. The canal has military and civilian value.

And while it is less important to the United States than it was three decades ago, other countries remain very dependent on it, and many, like Chile, Ecuador, and Japan, are strategically important to Washington. Once ships enter the Atlantic from the canal they must transit Caribbean passages en route to ports of call in the United States, Europe, and Africa. The Florida Strait, Mona Passage, Windward Passage, and Yucatan Channel are the principal lanes.

During much of the twentieth century, until the late 1990s, the United States maintained a considerable military presence throughout the Caribbean, mainly in Puerto Rico at the Atlantic threshold, in Panama at the southern rim, and in Cuba at Guantánamo on the northern perimeter. In 1990, for instance, there were 4,743 military and civilian personnel in Puerto Rico, 20,709 in Panama, and 3,401 in Cuba. Much has changed since 1990, requiring strategic redesign and force redeployment. Today Puerto Rico is home to fewer forces and U.S. Southern Command relocated from Panama to Miami in September 1997, leaving behind only small components. Between the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the September 11, 2001 (9-11) terrorist attack Guantánamo was considered as having little strategic value, serving essentially as a political outpost in the Hemisphere's last remaining communist bastion. But the importance of Guantánamo was dramatically altered with 9-11 and the housing of detainees accused of terrorism there, making it easy to forget that Guantánamo is essentially a military facility. The base has been operated by the United States since 1903, without an ending date for the American military presence there, at least as long as Washington continues to pay the lease.

As well, other Caribbean territories are also essential to the United States in terms of basing operations. These include the Bahamas, with the Atlantic Underwater Testing and Evaluation Center (AUTEK) in Andros Island. AUTEK is used to test new types of weaponry and is reputedly the Navy's premier east coast in-water test facility. It is affiliated with the NATO FORACS (Naval Forces Sensor and Weapon Accuracy Check Site) program and the eight participating NATO member nations: Canada, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Albeit small, there is an air operation at Coolidge in Antigua and Barbuda that dates to World War II, and Aruba and Curacao are among the Forward Operating Locations maintained

as part of the counter-narcotics effort. In the Greater Caribbean there also are base operations in Honduras, El Salvador,

In so far as Geonarcotics is concerned, the Caribbean lies at “the Vortex of the Americas;” it is a bridge or front between North and South America. This strategic importance was dramatized in geopolitical terms during the Cold War. However, the region’s strategic value lies not only in its geopolitical significance as viewed by state actors engaged in conflict and cooperation. Over recent decades the region also has been viewed as strategic by non-state drug actors, also with conflict and cooperation in mind, not in terms of geopolitics, but of geonarcotics.

I originated the concept Geonarcotics in the early 1990s. (See "From Cold War Geopolitics to Post-Cold War Geonarcotics," *International Journal* [Canada] Vol. 49, Winter 1993-94, 1-36, and the empirical study that applied the concept, *Drugs and Security in the Caribbean: Sovereignty Under Siege*, Penn State University Press, 1997). The concept suggests the dynamics of three factors besides drugs: geography, power, and politics. It posits, first, that the narcotics phenomenon is multidimensional, with four main problem areas (drug production, consumption-abuse, trafficking, and money-laundering); second, that these problem areas give rise to actual and potential threats to the security of states around the world; and third, that the drug operations and the activities they spawn precipitate both conflict and cooperation among various state and non-state actors in the international system.

Geography is a factor because of the global dispersion of drug operations, and because certain physical, social, and political geography features of many countries facilitate drug operations. Power involves the ability of individuals and groups to secure compliant action. In the drug world, this power is both state and non-state in origin, and in some cases non-state sources command relatively more power than states. Politics revolves around resource allocation in terms of the ability of power brokers to determine who gets what, how, and when. Since power in this milieu is not only state power, resource allocation is correspondingly not exclusively a function of state power-holders. Moreover, politics becomes perverted, and more perverted where it already was so.

The Geonarcotics milieu involves several state and non-state actors, which differ in how they affect and are affected by the various problems, and in their responses. Drug

operations generate two basic kinds of interactions: cooperation and conflict. These are bilateral and multilateral, and do not all involve force. Some involve non-military pressures, such as economic and political pressures by the United States against countries that it considers not proactive enough in fighting drugs. Some actors engage simultaneously in both cooperation and conflict. The relationships between the United States and Colombia and United States and Mexico over the last few decades, and between the United States and Jamaica and Barbados during the late 1990s, reveal this.

The Geonarcotics approach does not view the "war on drugs" purely as a military matter. Hence, the application of military measures alone is considered impractical. Moreover, international countermeasures are necessary, especially since all states—even rich and powerful ones—face resource constraints. However, collaboration among states may result in conflict over sovereignty and varying perceptions of the nature and severity of threats and, therefore, conflicts over appropriate responses. The Geonarcotics relationship between the Caribbean and the rest of the world, especially North America, perhaps, is best known in relation to drug trafficking. However, the relationship entails more than the movement of drugs from and through the region; involved also are: drug production, drug consumption and abuse, money laundering, organized crime, corruption, arms trafficking, and sovereignty conflicts, among other things.

It is useful to bear these core United States interests in mind as we discuss the nature of the Caribbean security challenges in the following section, as this will allow an appreciation of the necessity for engagement, which is the subject of the final section.

Question 2: The Regional Security Landscape

The region's security landscape is one with traditional and nontraditional security aspects. In the traditional area, border and territorial disputes constitute the main concern. There are nearly three dozen of these disputes within the Caribbean Basin. Both land and maritime controversies are involved. Although the term "border disputes" generally is used to refer to the controversies over land and sea, the disputes in which Caribbean states are involved are not all border disputes, which are controversies between and among states over the alignment of land or maritime boundaries. Some controversies, such as those between Venezuela and Guyana, and between Suriname and Guyana, are

really territorial disputes: controversies arising from claims to land or maritime territory. The most serious disputes in the region involve Venezuela and Guyana, Suriname and Guyana, and Belize and Guatemala. Some countries are involved in several disputes. For example, Guyana is facing a claim by Venezuela for the western five-eighths of its 214,970 km² territory, and one by Suriname for 15,000 km² to the east.

For the last several years in the Caribbean—and for good reason—statesmen and scholars have placed a higher premium on nontraditional security issues than on traditional ones because the latter present more clear and present dangers. The key headaches relate to drugs, crime and violence, and the illicit smuggling of weapons.

What generally is called “the drug problem” really is a multidimensional phenomenon. But the phenomenon does not constitute a security matter simply because of its multidimensionality. It presents threats to security essentially for four reasons. First, the operations have multiple consequences and implications--such as marked increases in crime, systemic or institutionalized corruption, and arms trafficking, among other things. Second, the operations and their consequences have increased in scope and gravity over the last few decades. Third, they affect agents and agencies of national security and good governance, in military, political, and economic ways. Fourth, the sovereignty of some countries is subject to infringement by the drug barons.

Most Caribbean leaders once refused to acknowledge that their countries were facing a drug threat; they preferred to consider it either a South American or North American problem. But over the years the scope and severity of the threat increased and became patently obvious to observers within and outside the region they no longer were able to deny the existence of problems. Helping to make the matter a front-burner policy issue was the sobering assertion made by the West Indian Commission in 1992: “Nothing poses greater threats to civil society in Caricom countries than the drug problem; and nothing exemplifies the powerlessness of regional Governments more.” Thus, it was logical that at the December 1996 special Caricom drug summit, leaders would admit: “Narco-trafficking and its associated evils of money laundering, gun smuggling, corruption of public officials, criminality and drug abuse constitute the major security threat to the Caribbean today.” This sentiment again was espoused by regional leaders at the Caricom crime and security summit held in Trinidad and Tobago in April 2008.

Because of the overt and publicly discernable nature of drug smuggling, that aspect of the phenomenon gets more public press and government attention—in the United States, the Caribbean, and in Europe—than the other aspects. The most systematic and consistent reporting on drug operations is provided by the *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report* (INCSR), which is produced annually by the U.S. Department of State for reporting to Congress in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act. There is no need here to cover the assessment provided there, but it is useful to offer a few vignettes from the INCSR for 2009.

In relation to the Bahamas

- In 2008, the Bahamas Defense Force Drug Enforcement Unit (DEU) cooperated closely with U.S. and foreign law enforcement agencies on drug investigations. Including OPBAT seizures, Bahamian authorities seized 1,878 kilograms of cocaine and some 2 metric tons of marijuana. The DEU arrested 1,030 persons on drug-related offenses and seized \$3.9 million in cash.
- The US welcomes the Bahamian government's strong commitment to joint counternarcotics efforts and to extradite drug traffickers to the U.S. Unfortunately, momentum in 2008 was hampered by an understaffed and underfunded Drug Secretariat and devastation by Hurricane Ike, especially in Great Inagua. Restarting and fully funding the National Drug Secretariat will greatly assist efforts to implement its 2004 National Anti-Drug Plan. The Bahamas can further enhance its drug control efforts by integrating Creole speakers into the DEU and by working with Haitian National Police officers to be stationed in Great Inagua to develop information on Haitian drug traffickers transiting the Bahamas.

As regards Belize

- Seizures through December 2008 include: 16.2 kilograms of cocaine; 0.7 kg of crack cocaine; 275.5 kg of marijuana; 50,050 marijuana plants; 100,892 marijuana seeds; and minor quantities of other drugs. Narco-funds totaling \$112,510 were seized and law enforcement made 1,539 arrests in drug cases. It is difficult to obtain convictions on drug crimes because the Public Prosecutions office lacks staff, funds, and training.
- Belize needs to pass and implement pending legislation requesting wider authority regarding intelligence collection and electronic intercepts and a Chemical Precursors

Control Act with punitive sanctions. The government needs to adequately fund and train prosecutors in the Public Prosecutors office as well as police prosecutors in narcotics prosecutions. The US will assist Belize to improve its maritime interdiction capabilities through training, the construction of a Coast Guard forward operating base in the offshore islands, construction of a new Coast Guard headquarters building, and donation of equipment and boats through Enduring Friendship.

In relation to Cuba

- In all, between January and September 2008, Cuba seized 1.7 metric tons of narcotics (1,675.7 kilograms of marijuana and 46.8 kilograms of cocaine), and trace amounts of crack, hashish, and other forms of psychotropic substances. In comparison, in 2007, 2.6 metric tons were seized as a result of its various interdiction efforts. In April, Cuban authorities assisted Jamaican anti-drug personnel with the disruption of a marijuana trafficking network by providing real-time information, resulting in the detention of the traffickers, and the confiscation of a trafficking aircraft that contained a load of marijuana.
- From January through September 2008, 250 packets of narcotics washed-up along the Cuban coast, resulting in the collection of 1,682 kilograms (1,651 kilograms of marijuana and 31 kilograms of cocaine). Cuba's "Operation Hatchet," in its eighth year, is intended to disrupt maritime and air trafficking routes, recover washed-up narcotics, and deny drug smugglers shelter within the territory and waters of Cuba through vessel, aircraft, and radar surveillance by the Ministry of Interior's Border Guard and Ministry of Revolutionary Armed Forces. Operation Hatchet relies on shore-based patrols, visual and radar observation posts and the civilian fishing auxiliary force to report suspected contacts and contraband. Between January and September 2008, Cuban law enforcement authorities reported "real time" sighting of 35 go-fast vessels and 3 suspect aircraft transiting their airspace or territorial waters.

As to the Dominican Republic

- In 2008, Dominican law enforcement authorities seized approximately 2,415 kilograms (kg) of cocaine hydrochloride (HCl), 96 kg of heroin, 15,949 units of Ecstasy, and 219 kg of marijuana. The National Directorate of Drug Control (DNCD)

made 14,674 drug-related arrests in 2008, a 15 percent increase over 2007. Through joint operations targeting drug trafficking organizations transporting narcotic proceeds through the various ports of entry in the DR, the DNCD and Dominican Customs (DGA) seized over \$2 million in U.S. currency. When feasible, Customs and Border Control (CBP) Blackhawk helicopters based in Puerto Rico were dispatched to the Dominican Republic to pick-up a Dominican Tactical Response Team and then transported to interdict in-bound drug carrying aircraft as the drops were being made. As a result of these joint operations the DNCD seized over 1,463 kg of cocaine and several aircraft. This dependence on CBP assets from Puerto Rico is driven by the outdated Dominican helicopters and equipment which prevents robust interdiction efforts over open water. On November 13, 2008, DNCD seized over 1,400 kg of liquid cocaine that was contained inside shampoo bottles at the Port of Haina, Santo Domingo.

- The US will provide significant support in the coming year under the Merida Initiative—a partnership between the governments of the United States, Mexico, Central America, Haiti and the Dominican Republic to confront the violent national and transnational gangs and organized criminal and narcotics trafficking organizations that plague the entire region. The Merida Initiative will fund a variety of programs that will strengthen the institutional capabilities of participating governments by supporting efforts to investigate, sanction and prevent corruption within law enforcement agencies; facilitate the transfer of critical law enforcement investigative information within and between regional governments; and funding equipment purchases and training, among other things.

For Guyana

- In 2008, Guyanese law enforcement agencies seized 48 kilograms (kg) of cocaine, compared to 167 kg in 2007. This decrease was largely due to the lack of any seizures of more than a few kilograms, as well as to the effects of the recent personnel shifts within CANU. However, eradication of domestically grown marijuana increased sharply, with 34,000 kg identified and destroyed, compared to 15,280 kg in 2007. Criminal charges were filed against 473 individuals for activities related to the illicit trafficking or distribution. Guyana's counternarcotics activities have long been

encumbered by a British colonial-era legal system that does not reflect the needs of modern-day law enforcement. But in December, the government took a significant step forward by passing laws that permit plea bargaining, wiretapping, and the recording and storage of cell phone ownership data. In addition, at the end of 2008 the government was in the process of procuring new surveillance cameras for the country's international airport, after signing an inter-agency agreement that facilitates the sharing of airport surveillance footage among all relevant law enforcement bodies.

- News media routinely report on instances of corruption reaching to high levels of government that are not investigated and thus go unpunished. US government analysts believe drug trafficking organizations in Guyana continue to elude law enforcement agencies through bribes and coercion. Guyana is party to the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption, but has yet to fully implement its provisions, such as seizure of property obtained through corruption. Guyana's uncontrolled borders and coastline allow unfettered drug transit. Light aircraft land at numerous isolated airstrips or make airdrops where operatives on the ground retrieve the drugs. Smugglers use small boats and freighters to enter Guyana's many remote but navigable rivers. Smugglers also take direct routes, such as driving or boating across the borders with Brazil, Suriname, and Venezuela. The Guyana Defense Force Coast Guard has no seaworthy vessels, as its lone patrol boat is currently in dry dock awaiting repairs. Law enforcement agencies are hamstrung by insufficient personnel budgets, and there are no routine patrols of the numerous land entry points on the 1,800 miles of border with Venezuela, Brazil, and Suriname.

In relation to Haiti

- Although President Rene Préval continued to urge strong action against drug trafficking and did not back away from his support for bilateral operations to arrest DEA-wanted fugitives for removal to the United States, the Government of Haiti overall made only modest advances in the fight against drug trafficking in 2008. But the HNP Financial Crimes Unit, BAFE, made great strides. In September 2008, the BAFE obtained forfeiture orders and seized two houses, one of which belonged to Jean Nesly Lucien, a former Director General of the HNP, and the other owned by Jean-Mary Celestin—both convicted in the U.S. on drug related charges. By year's

end, \$21 million in property and assets had been seized by the GOH. The BAFE is aggressively implementing a plan to use convictions in U.S. courts as the legal basis for asset forfeiture in Haiti. This would help overcome a significant deficiency of Haiti's current asset forfeiture regime which requires conviction of the trafficker in Haiti prior to forfeiture of assets.

- Haiti must continue the reform and expansion of the HNP and step up the reform of its judicial system as prerequisites for effective counternarcotics operations throughout the country. As well, the restoration of the rule of law, including reform of the judicial system, must receive greater support and be prioritized to prevent erosion of the gains of the HNP and to provide the security and stability Haiti needs to meet the economic, social and political development needs of the Haitian people. The US will provide significant support in the coming year under the Merida Initiative, which will fund a variety of programs that will strengthen the institutional capabilities of participating governments.

As regards Jamaica

- In 2008 Jamaica failed to pass and effectively implement key anti-crime, anti-corruption, anti-money laundering legislation. This included not establishing a new anti-corruption special prosecutor, not modifying the bail act, and not vigorously implementing the more expeditious seizure and forfeiture process that was enacted in 2007. Jamaica also did not enact the initiative to permit extended data-sharing between U.S. and Jamaican law enforcement on money laundering cases through the Financial Investigative Division (FID) Act. Additionally, Jamaica's national forensics laboratory has a backlog of cases due to understaffing and lack of resources. Jamaica is not in full compliance with the Egmont Group requirements. In 2008, the Ministry of National Security expanded its policy directorate in an effort to increase efficiency. In 2008, the government also expanded the vetting of senior police officers. This effort, along with other reforms mandated by the Police Strategic Review, should begin to turn around a police force that is plagued by corruption and inefficiencies. The US Container Security and MegaPorts (CSI) initiative began in late 2006. In 2008, construction began on a permanent facility for U.S. officers and their Jamaican

counterparts. Pervasive corruption at Kingston's container and bulk terminals continue to undermine the CSI team's activities.

- Despite death threats against several government ministers, in 2008, Jamaica extradited drug trafficker Norris Nembhard and five indicted co-conspirators to the U.S. for prosecution. The very successful Operation Kingfish, a multinational task force (Jamaica, the U.S., United Kingdom and Canada) to target high profile organized crime gangs, celebrated its fourth anniversary in 2008. The new Police Commissioner combined his National Intelligence Bureau with Kingfish and Special Branch in an effort to gain efficiency, and in 2009, Kingfish should return to its core mandate and prioritize the targeting of high- level criminals who command and control gangs in Jamaica.
- In 2008, Jamaica appointed a known reformer as the new Commissioner of Customs. Since his arrival a "no tolerance" policy against corruption has resulted in the removal or reassignment of a significant number of staff members and an increase in Custom's revenue by 25 percent. The new Commissioner intends to reinvigorate the Jamaican Custom's Contraband Enforcement Team (CET) which suffered for years under the previous Customs' leadership. Given that container traffic through the seaports is believed the primary method of transshipment of cocaine and cannabis it is critical to have a strong CET. In 2008, CET seized 168 kilograms (kg) of cocaine and 5,642 kg of cannabis at Jamaican air and seaports.

In June 2000, at a high-level policy meeting on criminal justice in Trinidad and Tobago, the country's Attorney General made the following declaration on behalf of the Caribbean: "There is a direct nexus between illegal drugs and crimes of violence, sex crimes, domestic violence, maltreatment of children by parents and other evils. ... Our citizens suffer from drug addiction, drug-related violence, and drug-related corruption of law enforcement and public officials. The drug lords have become a law unto themselves. ... Aside from the very visible decimation of our societies caused by drug addiction and drug-related violence, there is another insidious evil: money laundering. ... It changes democratic institutions, erodes the rule of law, and destroys civic order with impunity."

The statement by Attorney General Maharaj is still accurate almost a decade later. It points clearly to the nexus between drugs and crime. Indeed, crime is a component of the drug phenomenon. Crime could be viewed in several ways typologically. There are two basic categories of drug crimes: "enforcement" crimes, and "business" crimes. The former involves crimes among traffickers and between traffickers and civilians and police, triggered by traffickers' efforts to avoid arrest and prosecution. The latter category encompasses crimes committed as part of business disputes, and acquisitive crimes, such as robbery and extortion. Some analysts posit three types of crime: "consensual" ones, such as drug possession or trafficking; "expressive" ones, such as violence or assault; and "instrumental" or property crimes, examples being theft, burglary, and robbery.

Irrespective of the crime typology used, there is a wide range of drug-related criminal activity in the region. There is a local-global nexus in the region's drug-related crime, reflected in the fact that the crime is not all ad hoc, local crime; some of it is transnational and organized, extending beyond the region, to North America, Europe, and elsewhere. Violent crime dramatizes the quotidian experiences of individual and corporate citizens in the Caribbean, reaching almost pandemic proportions in parts of the region.

Indeed, the 2007 World Bank-United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime study reported that murder rates in the Caribbean—at 30 per 100,000 population annually—are higher than for any other region of the world and have risen in recent years for many Caribbean countries. That study provided credible evidence of the wide-ranging economic, social, institutional, and other negative impact crime is having on the societies and nations in the region. In fact, in addressing the 47th Annual general Meeting of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association in June 2008, Jamaica's Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett declared dramatically: "Crime, in my mind, is the single most debilitating factors, the one area that is worrying to me beyond anything else, and I must tell you that the fuel crisis is not as worrying to as crime. The turmoil in the aviation industry is not as worrying to me as crime."

Several things are noteworthy. First, murder, fraud, theft, and assault are precisely the crimes likely to be associated with drugs. Second, in a few countries, notably Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Trinidad and Tobago,

there is clear evidence of a linkage. Finally, the countries with the high and progressive crime reports in the theft, homicide, and serious assault categories are the same ones that have featured prominently over the last two decades as centers of drug activity. These countries include the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Haiti, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Guyana. But there have been virtual crime sprees in some places, markedly in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago, with dramatic episodes of criminal temerity. These include attacks on police stations, kidnappings, and murder of law enforcement officials.

In relation to Guyana, one analyst in *Guyana Review* once noted the following: “Even to those untrained in the detection of patterns of criminal behavior, it now appears obvious that Guyana has transcended the bounds of ordinary banditry and is engulfed in a crime wave that suggests methodological planning, sinister motives, and the lethal means to stun the nation into a state of fear-induced vulnerability.” The sentencing in Brooklyn of Roger Khan in October 2009 to 40 years in prison for drug smuggling, illegal arms possession, and witness tampering and the conviction and sentencing in December 2009 of his attorney Robert Simels to 14 years for attempting to kill witnesses, the implication of police and army officers in a range of illegal activities, and torture by police are among troubling recent evidence of increased public insecurity, political mismanagement, and malfeasance by public security agents, which move Guyana dangerously close to the edge of the failed state precipice.

But it should be noted that the crime and violence—in Guyana and elsewhere—are not all drugs-driven; some derive from poverty, political discontent, and general social anomie. Further, the inability of governments to solve crimes and secure prosecutions, to provide functional equipment and training to law enforcement agencies, and to fill vacancies in all areas of the criminal justice system, among other things, both undermine the confidence of citizens in the state and emboldens the criminals. Some of the criminality is perpetrated by organized criminal gangs, of varying degrees of organization and strength, although not as structured and lethal as criminal gangs in Central America. Added to this is the availability of weapons, some due to illicit trafficking and some due to corrupt practices in police and defense forces and theft from public and private security establishments. One recent example of the latter was in

Trinidad and Tobago occurred on October 25, 2009 when armed gunmen robbed a private security company in Woodbrook of 15 fully-loaded weapons: 13 nine millimeter pistols, one .357 handgun, and one shotgun.

The place where the confluence of factors is most dramatized is Jamaica, which now has the dubious distinction of having the world's highest per capita murder rate.

Jamaica Constabulary Force data for the last 10 years show the severity of the matter:

2000	887
2001	1139
2002	1045
2003	975
2004	1471
2005	1674
2006	1340
2007	1583
2008	1618
2009	1549 (up to December 6, 2009)

Thus, Jamaica has had over 13,000 murders so far in a decade and, according to Jamaican Constabulary Force sources, 83 percent of the murders have been gun-related. Clearly, drugs and crime—as well as arms trafficking—are among the clear and present dangers facing the Caribbean. Understandably, too, these problems are not simply problems for the Caribbean. The problems of drugs, crime, and arms trafficking are transnational challenges; they are what former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan called “problems without passports.” Moreover, the geopolitical, geoeconomic, and other connections between the Caribbean and the United States make them shared problems.

Indeed, although he was referring to the entire Southern Command area of responsibility and not just the Caribbean, Admiral James Stavridis, until recently Commander of the US Southern Command, captured this security interdependence and the attendant engagement imperatives eloquently in delivering his 2007 Posture Statement before the House Armed Services Committee on March 21, 2007: “We at Southcom devote a considerable amount of energy to the study of the significant

challenges confronting the region—challenges such as crime, gangs, and illegal drug trafficking as primary examples. These challenges loom large for many nations in the region; they are transnational, adaptive, and insidious threats to those seeking peace and stability. By their nature these challenges cannot be countered by one nation alone. Therefore, they require cooperative solutions involving a unified, full spectrum governmental and international approach in order to best address them.”

Question 3: Engagement and Prospects for the CBSI

It is important to preface discussion on United States security engagement in the region with a comment on the subject of engagement generally.

The region’s security environment requires security cooperation with multidimensional, multi-agency, and multilevel features. The regional level is but one of several zones of engagement, which I call Multilateral Security Engagement Zones and define as geographic spaces for policy and operational collaboration and cooperation by state and non-state actors in relation to defense and security matters. In effect, the Zones exist at the sub-regional, regional, hemispheric, and international systemic levels. Although they are relatively discrete spaces, they are not exclusive spaces; they overlap. U.S. governmental agencies and U.S.-led networks play key roles in some regional and hemispheric engagements. So, too, do a few British, Dutch, and Canadian agencies.

It is in the context of this engagement imperative that the United States has worked bilaterally and multilaterally in the region over time. Expectedly, there is a mixed record of implementation and success of the various engagements. Although it is neither feasible nor desirable to evaluate all recent or existing engagements or even enumerate them, it is apposite to note that the new engagement framework—CBSI—is proposed against the backdrop of some valuable existing arrangements.

One such is OPBAT—Operation Bahamas and Turks and Caicos—which dates to 1982 and has become a very successful counter-narcotics operation. In the counter-narcotics realm there are several bilateral agreements, known formally as Cooperative Maritime Counternarcotics Agreements but referred to as “Shiprider” agreements, and there are several training and other programs managed by various Federal agencies.

In relation to broader security cooperation Tradewinds has become an important endeavor. It is an annual exercise conducted in the region with the aim of improving responses to regional security threats. The 2009 exercise was held in the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic and focused on maritime interdiction and search and rescue operations with an emphasis on command and control. It involved more than 400 exercise participants from the United States, Britain, and 15 Caribbean Basin nations. Another collaborative exercise is New Horizons. This year, for instance, some 650 United States military personnel visited Guyana for humanitarian and civic assistance exercises over a 75 day period; they built a new clinic, constructed one school and renovated another, while carrying out other civic projects.

The increased illegal arms smuggling has led to more countermeasures in that area, including agreements to provide eTrace. In 2009 alone agreements were signed between the United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and relevant agencies in Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, Guyana, and eight Eastern Caribbean nations. eTrace is a paperless firearm trace submission system that is accessible through a secure connection to the World Wide Web. This Internet application provides the necessary utilities for submitting, retrieving, storing and querying firearms trace-related information allowing for the systematic tracing of firearms recovered from crime scenes. Analysis of firearms trace data can assist in the identification of firearms trafficking patterns and geographic profiling for criminal hot spots and possible sources of illicit firearms.

This flurry of agreements builds on a broader accord signed in December 2007 between the United States and the Caricom countries regarding joint efforts to combat illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. Ironically, the United States is one of the first two signatories—the other nation being Mexico—to the 1997 Inter American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and other Related Material, but it is yet to ratify the Convention. Noteworthy, though, is the fact that at the 2009 Summit of the Americas, President Obama committed to having ratification soon.

Also, of recent vogue is the Merida Initiative, which was announced in October 2007 and signed into law in June 2008. Initially a United States-Mexico-Central America

arrangement, it was expanded to include the Dominican Republic and Haiti given justifiable concerns that enhanced counter-narcotics operations in North and Central America will cause a shift of drug operations to the Caribbean. The Merida Initiative is envisioned as a three-year program. Congress approved \$465 million in the first year, which included \$400 million for Mexico and \$65 million for Central America, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti. For the second year, Congress approved \$300 million for Mexico and \$110 million for Central America, the Dominican Republic and Haiti. A FY09 supplemental appropriation is providing an additional \$420 million for Mexico; and \$450 million for Mexico, and \$100 million for Central America has been requested for FY10.

In March 2009 Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Shannon told the Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs of the House Committee on Appropriations the following: “The FY08 Supplemental, as approved, included \$2.5 million each for Haiti and the Dominican Republic. This was recognition by the Congress of the threat that drug trafficking through the Caribbean poses to the two countries of Hispaniola. We have begun a process of engagement with the other countries of the Caribbean which we hope will lead to a security dialogue and security cooperation program. We plan to hold initial technical discussions with Caribbean security representatives in May after the Summit of the Americas.”

One recent security engagement framework was the Third Border Initiative (TBI). It was announced by President George W. Bush during the Third Summit of the Americas in Quebec City in April 2001, as a framework for structuring engagement across the broad spectrum of matters that affect the prosperity and well being of Caribbean nations and citizens. TBI, building on the May 1997 Bridgetown Partnership for Prosperity and Security, was touted as recognizing the special significance of the Caribbean to the United States. TBI was to focus US and Caribbean engagement through targeted programs. The initiative consisted of a package of programs to enhance diplomatic, economic, health, education, and law enforcement cooperation. Most significantly, it included increased funding to combat HIV/AIDS in the region.

In the aftermath of the September 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, TBI expanded to focus on issues affecting U.S. homeland security in the areas of

administration of justice and security. Economic Support Funds (ESF) under the TBI have been used to help Caribbean airports modernize their safety and security regulations and oversight, which was viewed an important measure to improve the security of visiting Americans. TBI funds also were used to support border security such as the strengthening of immigration controls; to help Caribbean economies move toward greater competitiveness; and to support an improvement of environmental management. TBI funding amounted to \$3 million in FY2003, almost \$5 million in FY2004, and an estimated \$8.9 million in FY2005. The FY2006 request for the TBI was \$6 million and the request for FY 2007 was \$3 million. Overall, the combination of minuscule funding and broad mandates contributed to the TBI being one of the security engagement frameworks in which few people can take pride.

The new framework—CBSI—was first announced by President Barack Obama at the April 2009 Summit of the Americas in Trinidad. It proposes to “go beyond traditional patterns of bilateral relations and make important steps towards a more regionally-focused framework of cooperation, collaboration and partnership to effectively confront the challenges and maximize the available capabilities, capacity and resources within the partnership.” As the Obama Administration and this 111th Congress pursue this new framework, it is reasonable to expect that you would want to avoid some of the pitfalls of the TBI approach. In this respect I offer the following recommendations:

1. Avoid a low investment-low results approach, whether by default or design. In this respect it is worth mentioning that the \$45 million associated with CBSI is a paltry sum. And, if resource constraints do not permit increased funding, prudence would suggest having discrete as apposed to broad mandates and expectations. Moreover, in times of resource scarcity such as we now face, officials are tempted to pursue new efforts by cutting into existing operations, sometimes counterproductively so. One hopes that current engagements such as OPBAT, Tradewinds, and New Horizons do not become victims of new endeavors in the course of decision-making about resource acquisition and allocation.
2. Especially because of resource constraints, even with an investment of more than \$45 million, and in light of the interdependence and transnational aspects involved, pursue active inclusion of other nations with Caribbean interests. This

approach seems already in the cards given the following statement by Barbados embassy Chargé d'Affaires D. Brent Hardt at the August 13, 2009 meeting of the US-Caribbean Security Initiative Working Group in Barbados: “As we go forward, we would also like to give consideration to broadening this partnership to be inclusive of other traditional partners for both the U.S. and the Caribbean. Given the geography and interconnectedness of the Caribbean, we believe that the inclusion of other international partners will prove invaluable. We have advised our Canadian, French, British, and Dutch colleagues in Washington of this emerging initiative and its goals.”

3. Make special efforts to minimize administrative overhead involved in delivering programs under CSBI so that most of the investment gets to the region, thereby increasing the prospect of discernable results which could alter the region’s security profile, benefiting both the region and the United States. As part of this effort new bureaucratic entities should not be created, and use should be made, as much as possible, of existing legal instruments to facilitate implementation rather than holding additional conferences or meeting to sign new agreements.

Mr. Chairman, let me, again, record my appreciation for the opportunity to contribute to this reality check as you ponder the “What” and “How” of the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative. I would like to leave you with some powerful advice from someone who once was on the frontlines of protecting American interests in the Caribbean. I refer to retired Vice Admiral James M. Loy of the U.S. Coast Guard and his words uttered at a Strategy Symposium hosted by Southcom and National Defense University in April 1996: “there are two strategies that prove effective—sustained efforts over time and flexible surprise tactics. Although our enemies are smart, well equipped, and elusive, they will opt for the path of least resistance. We must find ways to capitalize on that.” Both the United States and the Caribbean would be beneficiaries of this advice were it to be followed in the course of pursuing this new security engagement framework proposed by the Obama Administration.