



MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

JUNIOR MINISTER OF PUBLIC SAFETY

SENATOR JEFFREY C. BARON JP

**Fourth Annual Caribbean-United States Security Cooperation
Dialogue**

11TH DECEMBER 2013

Madame President, I am pleased to advise the Senate of my recent opportunity to represent the Government of Bermuda in Washington DC.

Madame President, following an invitation facilitated by the US Consul General, I was able to fulfill a commitment in Washington DC on behalf of the Minister of Public Safety for the **Fourth Annual Caribbean-United States Security Cooperation Dialogue, organized under the Caribbean Security Basin Initiative which convened on Friday, 6th December.**

Madame President, as the US State Department indicates, *“The Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) is the latest pillar of a U.S. security strategy focused on citizen safety throughout the hemisphere. CBSI brings all members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Dominican Republic together to jointly collaborate on regional security with the United States as*

a partner. The United States is making a significant contribution to CBSI, committing \$203 million in funding for the first three years of the initiative.

The United States and Caribbean countries have identified three core objectives to deal with the threats facing the Caribbean:

- ***Substantially Reduce Illicit Trafficking:*** *through programs ranging from counternarcotics to reducing the flow of illegal arms/light weapons.*
- ***Increase Public Safety and Security:*** *through programs ranging from reducing crime and violence to improving border security.*
- ***Promote Social Justice:*** *through programs designed to promote justice sector reform, combat government corruption, and assist vulnerable populations at risk of recruitment into criminal organizations.”*

Madame President, Deputy Secretary of State William Burns **delivered opening remarks** on Caribbean-United States security cooperation. The event also featured remarks by Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, Roberta S. Jacobson; Chairman of the Ministerial Council for National Security and Law Enforcement and Minister of National Security for The Bahamas, Dr. Bernard J. Nottage; Deputy Minister of the Presidency for the Dominican Republic, Luis Henry Molina; and Assistant Secretary General, Foreign and Community Relations, Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, Ambassador Colin Granderson.

Madame President, Friday's sessions were informative and demonstrated the commonality of issues faced by many of our Regional partners. Representatives from several countries focused their dialogue on the theme for the meeting **“Towards a more effective Partnership”**.

On behalf of Bermuda, Madame President, I was able to share our recent successes in the area of community engagement and the deliberate actions taken by this Government to build upon the work started by the previous Administration in the area of anti-gang action. In particular, Madame President, I indicated to the participants how we have worked to engage members of the clergy, the charity sector and the general public through our 3rd tier roundtable series as well as regular interaction with each of these groups.

Madame President, in an effort to demonstrate how the theory might become practice, I also shared this Government's “cash back for communities” legislation which will have a direct, positive impact on those areas most affected by gang violence. These initiatives were well received by Regional colleagues and demonstrated that Bermuda is on the right track in the fight against guns, gangs, drugs and violence.

Madame President, I am grateful to the US Department of State for the opportunity to participate in this important discussion and to Bermuda's US Consul General Mr. Bob Settje for facilitating the invitation.

Thank you Madame President.