

Essay Series

On the Throes of Transition

Countering the Stereotype of
A Tropical Paradise

by Serena Joseph Harris ATA

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On the Throes of Transition
Terrorism - Analysis, Assessment, Action
Part III

Countering the Stereotype of a Tropical Paradise

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About the Author

Serena Joseph-Harris is a former Caribbean diplomat and specialist in strategic intelligence. She played a seminal role at critical stages of the drafting process of international conventions relating to drug control, money laundering, terrorist financing and the trafficking of small arms and light weapons. She has presided over policy and expert group meetings at hemispheric and bi-regional levels - the Organization of American States Inter American Drug Abuse Control Commission and the European Union Latin American Caribbean Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism against Drugs.

Serena is a prolific writer and sought after lecturer and presenter who has graced the podiums of some of the Western Hemisphere's most prestigious security forums including the Royal United Services Institute of Whitehall London; the Institute for National Strategic Studies Washington D.C. and the Royal Military College in Kingston, Ontario. Her audiences include teaching faculty, diplomatic professionals, research fellows, defence planners, strategists, security practitioners and intelligence analysts.

Executive Summary

This chapter of the ongoing bi-regional discourse themed “On the Throes of Transition - Terrorism: Analysis, Assessment Action” continues to track important watersheds in the history of the Caribbean Community that amplify the connectivity between transnational actors involved in organized crime and the terrorist as a distinct genre of subnational player by assessing the following:

- The modus operandi employed by terrorists to infiltrate specific jurisdictions in the Caribbean Community;

- How terrorists are increasingly opting for criminal techniques such as drugs and arms trafficking, money laundering and paid high-level executions to raise funds, promulgate their ideology and advance their political agenda;
- How criminal organizations have been replicating terrorist tactics; and
- How collaboration between these syndicated interests that, until recently were seemingly distinct, is becoming increasingly mutually supportive.

Culling from impeccable primary and secondary sources, this inquiry tracks the inceptive stages of organized crime in the narcotics and firearms trade in specific jurisdictions that served as epicenters of radical ferment in the 1980s; how it steadily metamorphosed and became hooked up with militant elements in the 1990s; the compulsion amongst religious fanatics to deal with drugs and hard weaponry; their collusive relationships with political figures; and by no means least, how amidst a build-up of social, political and economic exacerbations in the wider region a seemingly innocuous flock of adherents was able to pull off the first and only Islamic insurrection in the Western Hemisphere... in plain sight.

Twenty-five years hence the turbulence has not abated. In fact, the landscape has now morphed into a debauched pool of mutually supportive interests comprising a second generation of more lethally minded and politically witted radicals with international affiliations and sympathizers, drug traffickers, firearms dealers, organized crime cartels, a slew of murderous gangs, ambiguous corporate syndicates hand-in-glove with tainted bureaucrats and politically exposed figures, all cut from the same cloth. This current generation of subnational actors is swathed in white-collar criminality which is rooted in systemic corruption. Gulled populations in the region are seeking answers, and rightly so.

Presentation Format and Key Points

The inquiry comprises three segments.

The first begins with the Prologue pulled from company archives that discredits epigrammatic images of the Caribbean as a paradise of insouciance, collective conservatism and antipathy towards changing and transforming itself. Contrary to this imagery, history repeatedly confers a radical social and political culture underpinned by decisive ideological stances that have filtered into Caribbean life for very many years, oftentimes leaving their permanent impressions on the political landscape. It is therefore not surprising that Islamic extremism has sprung up in the region.

The second segment takes the form of a desk review that deciphers surface tracks from an array of multidata sources to demonstrate how the crime-terror nexus took shape and evolved over a twenty-five year period (1990-2015). This phase of the project entailed (a) matching events with ‘correlates of terrorism’ and ‘risk factors’ identical to those employed in the 2014 Global Terrorism Index; and (b) juxtaposing these yardsticks against contemporary tactics and patterns. The study looks at how tensions rooted in politics, religion and ethnicity ballooned; how systemic corruption was allowed to fester over time; the mutually reinforcing nature of drugs and firearms trafficking, gang proliferation compounded by the impact of exclusionary overseas immigration policies; and by no means least, the social and economic pathologies related to structural adjustment processes prescribed by the IMF for certain countries.

Remorseless profiteering has now trumped all other motivations and serves as the dominant operational rationale for players. Moreover, the political clout wielded by this new generation of bloodsuckers remains a matter of ongoing debate. To boot, as at the time of writing there was yet no formalized regional strategy among Caribbean nations to combat terrorism despite an ongoing din of

rhetoric. This lack of coherence in approach and unevenness in conceptions of national priority among individual countries creates a smooth sail for extremist elements, underscoring the attractiveness of the region to operatives of entities with international reach such as ISIS and Hezbollah... whose footprints are being purposefully etched in this part of the world.

The third segment concludes on two scores: first, it identifies a program being pursued by the defense sector of the United States in collaboration with academia, which aims at gaining a better understanding of the cultural realities that drive social movements and the political dispositions of governments in this part of the hemisphere. Second and most importantly, it spurs Caribbean leadership to persist on home soil in the promotion of programs that mitigate the very social and economic conditions that give rise to disillusionment and marginalization among vulnerable populations such as young persons and out-of-school youth. Such conditions present opportunities for non-conformists to promulgate the misguided narrative, through a range of media at their disposal, that hate and ultraviolence are the only solutions. State-led responses must include asymmetric engagements and soft power in order to adequately match the nature of an opponent that is hydraheaded, elusive and undeterred by traditional restraints.

Postlude

A fitting postlude to this discourse was the pledge made by US President Barack Obama to Caribbean Community leaders on Thursday 09 April during his historic visit to Jamaica precursory to his attendance at the Summit of the Americas in Panama. In this regard, a total of US \$70 million would be set aside by the U.S. government for the upliftment and development of Caribbean youth in a clear vindication of this forum's alarm bells. The president's announcement came fortuitously within four working days' of the official release of Part III of *On the Throes of Transition*

Prologue

The popular image of the Caribbean entertained by many revolves around the idea of an equatorial get-away lined up with rows of towering palm trees standing resolutely as nature's sentinels amid a sparkling azure glaze. The reality couldn't be further from the truth.

Beginning from the dawn of the 19th century to the 'black power era' the region served as a hot bed for revolutionaries who influenced the trajectory of international revolutionary movements spanning two hemispheres leading to the establishment of civil rights, republics and independent states.

While much attention has been given to Cuba, the real centers of radicalism were Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica to a lesser extent (due to color stratification) spearheaded by Henry Sylvester Williams, George Padmore, C L. R. James, Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture), Marcus Garvey and last not least Hubert Harrison of St. Croix - regarded as the voice of Harlem radicalism. It's a pity that the region has been reduced to song, dance, 'twerking,' and a laid-back type of insouciance. That wasn't always the case.

How many people recall that the revised idea of an International Criminal Court came from the mind of a prominent Tobogonian ANR Robinson, former President of Trinidad and Tobago? Or the philosophy of Kwame Nkrumah was none other than the teachings of George Padmore, one of the pioneers of formalized Pan-Africanism? The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism (2014) - yet the central thesis argued was put forward exactly seven decades ago by Dr. Eric Williams who was the country's Premier and subsequent Prime Minister. Back in the days when Williams published his dissertation he was unjustly criticized for stating the historical truth: that the enslavement of Africans was first and foremost a business calculation, spawning the industrial revolution only to reach a point of exhaustion during the era of so-called free trade. Thus, the

abolition of slavery was intimately tied to the unprofitability and irrelevancy of forced labor rooted in an agrarian economy. His thesis in my estimation was more fully articulated later in his magnum opus From Columbus to Castro: The History of the Caribbean (1492-1969).

November 03, 2014

Joel Anthony Harris

Joel Anthony Harris is the co-founder and secretary of Sirius International. He shares a keen interest in the visual arts, history, cultural studies and anthropology.

Section I

Radicalism vis-a-vis Conformity

Terrorism is designed to create power where there is none or to consolidate power where there is very little. Through the publicity generated by their violence, terrorists seek to obtain the leverage, influence and power they otherwise lack to effect political change on either a local or an international scale.

Bruce Hoffman

“Inside Terrorism”

Introduction

Scholarly literature on the issue of internal instability in the Third World has tended to place focus on the underlying factors or permissive conditions that make some places and some situations more predisposed to violence than others. Notwithstanding this, there are in fact many peaceful yet predominantly Muslim societies in the world in which religious extremism and its detrimental impact are not necessarily an integral way of life.¹ This suggests that social and geopolitical factors other than religious differences are at work engendering violent and extremist tendencies. But even more notable is the fact that from the thousands of socio-economic, governance and attitudinal variables scoured by the Institute for Economics and Peace in conceptualizing the key risk factors for terrorist activity, three groups of indicators are found to display a multivariate significant relationship with the Index:

- ✓ Political Stability
- ✓ Intergroup Cohesion
- ✓ Legitimacy of the state

Part II of this discussion revealed the extent to which Caribbean societies are disproportionately aligned to orthodox and Catholic Christianity and the fact that the Community's diversity levels are among the lowest in the entire world, rivaling only with that of Latin America. It is against this setting that the notion of 'collective conservatism' has oftentimes been broached in attempts to explain the overall disinclination of the region's societies to alter the status quo fundamentally; the virtual non-existence of ongoing civil strife, and the absence of war and entrenched instability - elements of which are paradigmatic in many other parts of the world, with the obvious exception of course being Haiti. On the other hand, these societies have harbored a venerable radical political culture, which continues to make an indelible impression on the way of life in many territories.

Ground Zero Radical Tradition vis-à-vis Collective Conservatism

Conceivably, how could a ground zero radical tradition as described in the Prologue be ranged against an antithetical culture of restraint and conformity? Caribbean societies are essentially artificial societies in the sense that their social fabric was created anew and contoured by European colonizers. That the Community is one of stark contrasts betraying a rich cross-section of political systems, constitutional traditions, cultural aspects such as ethnic variations and class structure, a grossly uneven allocation of natural resources, wealth distribution disparities all framed by an unbalanced history of occupation, colonization, conquest, liberation and capped by a almost obsessive sense of nationalism - is irrefutable. To compound the situation, geographically and historically the region's location -

wedged between the continental Spanish-American mainland and the periphery of the world's main international capitalist systems - exposes it to both the benefits and ravages of foreign influence, penetration and control.

Perry Mars dissects these dichotomies in his book Ideology and Change: The Transformation of the Caribbean Left.² The study predated the geopolitical shocks of 9/11 but followed the lesser recalled downing of Cubana de Aviacion Flight 455 in Barbadian air space in October 1976.³ Nonetheless, it provides a well-founded theoretical context, to the extent that that it analyzes the political apathy and conformist spirit that pervaded regional institutions, and demonstrates the extent to which this ethic - which in Mars' view was characteristic of the ruling elite - effectively put in check the radical surge that colored the 1970s and 1980s.

Mars identified and examined three models of leftist political parties in operation at that time - reformist, radical and revolutionary - and concluded that it was to the credit of ideological and institutional conformity that these political movements were ultimately stifled and overwhelmed.

This forum submits that the collective conformity of the Caribbean can be explained by a combination of any of three factors:

- Being far-flung from the epicenters of the then unfolding Cold War theatre, notwithstanding America's policy of containment and avoidance of any full-scale, main-force, conflict and intervention in secondary theaters unless, of course, it became absolutely necessary;
- The susceptibility of the societies to metropolitan influence based on their historically-rooted relations with Europe; and
- The role of the middle-classes who consistently proved to be the de facto gate-keepers, 'influencers' and mitigators of major change.

Contrastingly, radical thinkers who dared to challenge the established order roundly adopted a global outlook. They were well aware of world debates through the prolific diffusion of ideas, were by no means short on overseas contacts and very much included within the international movements of their time. Not surprisingly in 1979, Grenada went well beyond brinkmanship - Jorge Heine surmises in The Revolution Aborted: The Lessons of Grenada,⁴ that the forestalled transition was the most advanced effort to bring socialism to the English-speaking Caribbean, and that regionally it stands only after the Haitian Revolution of 1804 and the Cuban Revolution of 1959. Heine makes the point that the path to socialism implies a broad alliance of class forces, including not only the working class but the peasantry, the petit bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie - this alliance will be essentially anti-imperialist and directed at removing as much as possible of imperialist influence and control over the economy, raising the standard of living of the mass of population and increased participation of the people in political and economic decision-making. The question ultimately becomes at what cost and to whose benefit?

The role of the educated elite as the driving force in the initiation of major political changes in the Caribbean goes as far back as the decolonization era that gave birth to mass political parties which survive to this day. Concomitantly, this cadre assumed an influential role in shaping the trade union movement as an organ of the working class. Mars explains that it was more on account of economic necessity that working classes were restrained from toppling the status quo, while the middle class served as a consummate buffer, despite the prevalence of an overshadowing capitalist mainstream that threatened their shared interests.

Later in this discussion the reader would make sense of how these percussive antithetical forces have been brought to bear on twenty-first century leadership and decision-making in the Caribbean Community in the face of evolving threats and challenges and the more recent thrust of adapting the collective political disposition to

one that is more strategically responsive to an increasingly a complex world stage.

The Terrorist Attack of 9/11 Nudged the Region into a Strategic Footing

That the terrorist attack on the United States on 11 September 2001 galvanized the Community's members into the adoption of a more assertive, cooperative and strategic posture on matters of global and regional import is incontrovertible. Until then, internal and external influences and experiences - geographically, historically, culturally, economically, politically and militarily speaking - oftentimes with powerful ideological overtones did little to sway the Community's understanding of its geopolitical role, its relationship with the rest of the world and how it should conduct itself in the wider international community. Enmeshed in this stalemated milieu (which was roundly attested to in the Landwell Mills Report commissioned and released by the CARICOM leadership), was the inability of governments to attain consensus on any major issue. This was consistently manifest in landmark occurrences, some of which are highlighted below:

- *The booting out of Eric Gairy, Grenada's Prime Minister, on 13th March 1979 and the simultaneous suspension of the country's constitution, signaling the first unconstitutional transfer of power to have ever occurred in the Commonwealth Caribbean.* The Leftist New Jewel Movement led by revolutionary leader Maurice Bishop orchestrated a coup during Gairy's absence from the island. A mere four years later, amidst an internal power struggle between hardliners and

moderates aligned to Bishop, the latter would be fatally toppled, presaging the revolutionary regime's inevitable collapse.⁵

- *The October 1983 invasion and occupation of Grenada, codenamed "Operation Urgent Fury," and shepherded by the U.S. government, following entreaties to Washington by the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States.* This was the first intervention of its kind in a Caribbean nation state since the earlier 1966 foray in the Dominican Republic. U.S. Army's Rapid Deployment Force, 1st, and 2nd Ranger Battalions and 82nd, Division Paratroopers; U.S. Marines; Army Delta; U.S. Navy Seals along with other combined forces constituted the 7,600 troops from the U.S, Jamaica and members of the Regional Security System (RSS) that defeated Grenadian resistance after a low altitude airborne assault by the 75 th rangers and an amphibious landing at Pearl's Airfield south of the island.⁶
- *The unending maelstrom surrounding power, leadership and succession in the Republic of Haiti, the most populous full member state of the Caribbean Community and no stranger to violent rebellion, having endured the most brutally efficient slave colony in the Western Hemisphere.* This fiasco, which is stage-managed by internal and external forces, was punctuated by four successive presidencies, which were in effect family dictatorships, notoriously maintained by autocratic rule, atrocity and brute force. The mayhem was arrested for a brief spell by a military transition regime with the collapse of the Duvalier dynasty. Years later, Aristide's tenure would be no less checkered - a pre-inauguration coup, whereupon provisional presidency was temporarily seized, followed by his forcible removal in 1991 and again in 2004, and thereafter he went into forced exile until 2011. Instability persists under

Michael Martelly, who is currently ruling on borrowed time under a short-term executive order.

- *The groundbreaking 27 July 1990 Islamic insurrection in Trinidad and Tobago orchestrated by militants, who placed the Republic's sitting Parliament under siege and held key members of the elected government at bay by force of arms, with the ineluctable goal of overturning the system.* The violent coup d'état, along with its egregious underpinnings, was the first of its kind to be mounted in the Western Hemisphere.⁷

- *A failed and almost surreal conspiracy to 'bomb' the John F. Kennedy Airport in 2007 potentially imperiling tens of thousands of American lives and inflicting substantial damage to the U.S. economy.* The plot originated within an Islamic cell comprising nationals of Guyana, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and the Dominican Republic, respectively, and its area of operation spanned two hemispheres (Illustration I). One member of the cell, who had previously worked at the JFK airport as a cargo handler, was identified as the mastermind. Prominent international terrorist groups, including Al-Qaeda leader Adnan El Shukrjumah and key principals from Iran's revolutionary leadership amongst them Mohsen Rabbini who was indicted by the U.S. government for his role in the 1994 bombing of a Jewish cultural center in Argentina, were to be enlisted.⁸

- *The recently concluded Dino Bouterse legal proceedings.* The accused, son the Suriname's president pleaded guilty to a series of offences that included conspiring to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization (Hezbollah) and planning to use his home soil as a base and 'launching pad' from where Hezbollah operatives could, at some future time,

mastermind and execute attacks against the United States and the Netherlands, Suriname's former colonial ruler. Son of the country's president and a former director of Suriname's anti-terrorism unit, Bouterse was extradited to the United States where he was subsequently convicted by a federal jury in a district court in Manhattan, New York in 2014, and sentenced on 10 March 2015. (Illustration II).⁹

- *The enlistment of scores fighters from Caribbean jurisdictions including Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, by the Islamic State of Syria and the Levant (ISIL), and continuing attempts of that organization to lure Caribbean nationals based in other parts of the world, including the United States.*¹⁰ The gravity of these actions is amplified against the setting of UN Resolution 2170 (2014), calling on Member States to take national measures to prevent fighters from traveling from home soil to join that group, and reiterating UN Resolution 1373 (2001) that mandated states to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorist acts and to refrain from providing support, whether active or passive, to entities or persons involved in such acts, in the recruitment of members and in the supply of arms.¹⁰



Dame Mary Eugenia Charles, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Dominica, updating U.S. President Ronald Reagan and top aides at the White House Oval Office in October 1983 on Grenada's political travails.

Regional Defense

Anglophone Caribbean efforts of cooperation and integration following the demise of the West Indian Federation displayed little concern for regional defense. The primary reasons for this are explained hitherto:

- Up to the time of World War II, all troops of the British West Indies fell under the Northern Caribbean Command with headquarters in Jamaica. With the formation of the West

Indies Federation in 1958, the headquarters was relocated to Trinidad consistent with the permanent location earmarked for the federation headquarters. The defense arm of the federation, the Federal West Indies Regiment, was formed in 1959.

- Following the demise of the West Indian Federation, Anglophone Caribbean states acting primarily on nationalist impulses, opted for ground forces which were not well-funded and heavily reliant on foreign assistance; although the insipient insertion of ground forces was established primarily with external defense in view, they were ultimately downgraded if not dropped, in favor of an emphasis on internal security.
- By the early sixties economic issues overshadowed all other concerns, and CARICOM [the successor to the Caribbean Free Trade Area (CARIFTA)] which emerged many years later, lacked the political cohesion that was necessary for an inclusive defense force in a manner that the West Indian Force was coordinated by a Federal Parliament.
- The temporary seizure of state power on Union Island in the Grenadines in December 1979 catapulted the signing of an MOU that would later lead to the formation of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States Defense and Security Committee in July 1981.
- The Regional Security System made up of OECS members and Barbados was set up in October 1982 amidst forays in Grenada, as hereto described.
- The idea of a region-wide army had proven unrealistically costly - a Report of 1984 to this effect was discussed by the RSS Council of Ministers. The plan envisaged a 1,800 member force and would have incurred an estimated start-up cost of \$100 million U.S. over a five-year period. Trinidad and Tobago was not a party in the proposed force presence.
- Following the 1990 insurrection in Trinidad and Tobago, region-wide calls for a more cooperative approach to collective security were revived. The issue permeated the discourse at

- the 11th Heads of Government Summit in Jamaica that year amidst the din of Port of Spain's political travails in the course of which Prime Minister A.N. R. Robinson and others was held captive at gunpoint in the Parliamentary Chamber by Islamic militants.
- In 1991 Prime Minister Erskine Sandiford of Barbados indicated that no less than three studies on regional security had been commissioned and completed by the CARICOM Secretariat; the RSS and the Barbados government. The appeal for a collective security architecture which had by then become a jeremiad of full-scale, region-wide dimension finally led to the conferral of juridical status on the MOU of the Regional Security System (RSS) in March 1996, under a treaty signed in St. Georges, Grenada.

Onwards of the 1990s, the U.S. ramped up military training assistance to RSS member states, and along with Britain and Canada, assisted in the development and outfitting of national coast guards. The Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) inaugurated in 2010 is the most recent in a succession of region-wide programs and bi-regional initiatives underwritten by international partners, all aimed at fortifying defense cooperation and capacity building to combat and mitigate the pernicious effects of transnational organized crime in the region. To date, Caribbean Community Member States continue to be heavily reliant on international generosity for training, maintenance and acquisitions in their respective defense and security sectors.¹¹

Section II

Unraveling the Crime -Terror Nexus

Increasingly terrorism, drug trafficking and other forms of organized crime are interconnected and despite their mutually supportive co-existence, the characteristics and parameters of cooperation among these syndicates are multifaceted and extremely complex. Overall, three main trends have emerged within the Americas in recent years:¹²

- Terrorists have been adopting criminal techniques, including drug trafficking, money laundering and corruption of public officials, to raise funds.
- Correspondingly, criminal organizations have been adopting terrorist techniques such as beheadings and kidnappings-for ransom.
- Terrorist and criminal organizations, which previously remained separate, are now collaborating.

The 2014 Global Terrorism Index identified three groups of factors considered to be the most significant correlates with terrorism. Countries deemed to be weak in any or a combination of these and which do not have high levels of terrorism are designated as “at risk.”¹³ Assessments of this kind are of direct relevance to Caribbean Community Member States, which though largely peaceful, have consistently proven to be easy prey to the actions and plans of radical subnational elements. When these three groups of factors are examined alongside major regional events associated with terrorism and linked up with authoritative datasets, surveys, and other sources, their correlates are sufficiently compelling for employment in making predictions about future activity in the region.

The three groups are as follows:

- *Social hostilities between ethnic, religious and linguistic groups; lack of inter-group cohesion and group grievances.* These are especially pertinent to the more heterogeneously constituted societies such as Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, which according to the Pew Surveys discussed in Part II, have the highest ratio of predominantly Muslim to native populations in the Americas: 7.2%, 15.9% and 5.8%, respectively.¹⁴

- *State repression examples being extrajudicial killings, political terror and gross human rights abuses.* Of interest is the suspension by the U.S. government of assistance to the Royal St. Lucia Police Force in the wake of credible allegations of gross human rights violations perpetrated by the department between 2009-2011. The development triggered a formal enquiry into a local exercise codenamed ‘Operation Restore Confidence,’ which was intended to provide intelligence to the crime suppression efforts of local authorities. A regional report facilitated by the Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) of CARICOM and spearheaded by an independent team comprising members of the Jamaican Constabulary Force, was prepared. Among the findings of the Report was that certain sworn officers from the Royal St. Lucia Police Force had surreptitiously adopted a ‘black list’ or ‘death list’ of persons considered to be criminals and that these officers had staged all the relevant ‘shooting death sites’ with the intent of (subsequently) legitimizing their actions.¹⁵ In a similar vein, the 2013 Human Rights Report on Trinidad and Tobago noted, among other things, that the country’s most serious human rights problems were “police killings during apprehension or while in custody and poor treatment of suspects, detainees and prisoners.”¹⁶

- *Other forms of violence* such as violent crime, organized conflict, deaths and violent demonstrations. This is best exemplified in the context of events such as demonstrations in Jamaica that revolved around the extradition to the United States in 2010 of a key drug trafficker, Christopher “Dudus” Coke, and which subsequently became the terms of reference of a local Commission of Enquiry in that country;¹⁷ as well as politically motivated demonstrations more widely reported on in Haiti¹⁸ and Guyana.¹⁹

Additionally, the Institute for Economics and Peace formulated a second list of indices that are directly related to ‘at risk factors’ correlated to terrorism and more specifically, to the ‘breeding of terrorist violence.’²⁰ This highly diagnostic approach was accomplished with the professional support rendered by the Responses to Terrorism (START) program designed by the University of Maryland utilizing its resident Global Terrorism Database datasets on terrorism. The specific criteria applied are enumerated below:

- Weak state capacity.
- Illegitimate and corrupt governments.
- Powerful external actors upholding corrupt regimes.
- Extremist ideologies.
- Historical violence and conflict.
- Inequality in power.
- Repression by foreign occupation or colonial powers.
- Discrimination based on ethnic or religious origin.
- Failure of the state to integrate dissident groups of emerging social classes.
- Social injustice.

Two events, spanning no less than three decades form part of this discussion for illustrative purposes, on the merit of their historical

antecedents of terrorist linkages, their regional and hemispheric impact, international implications and relevance to future policy:-

- The 1990 Islamic Insurrection against the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.²¹
- The 2013-2015 ‘Dino Bouterse’ Trial and Its ‘Hezbollah Connections.’²²

This forum linked verifiable accounts of events to the above groups of indices alongside relevant datasets, surveys, and verifiable sources and found that the correlates that emerged were sufficiently compelling to warrant closer scrutiny. A summary of the main findings, enhanced by theoretical pointers where helpful, is provided below:

I. The Caribbean Basin is an Attractive and Logical Vector for Illicit Markets.

From as far back to the 1980s the Caribbean Basin has served as a natural vector for lucrative smuggling. The phenomenon is disproportionately represented in two ostensible counter-currents - the northward flow of drugs and the concomitant south-bound routing of illicit firearms... and more lately, surface-to-air missiles. As already stated in Part II, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs noted in 2014 that drug flows in the region had increased between 2010 and 2014 and were expected to worsen in immediately ensuing years. But beyond this, the Deep Web now allows the anonymous communication and transfer of assets around the globe in seconds. Many platforms in the Dark Web now specialize in mail drug distribution, the most widely known is of course, the Silk Road.²³ Likewise, there are multiple on-line market places that sell products ranging from handguns to military grade plastic explosives. Lars Hulse, internationally reputed consultant in digital strategy, has warned about some of the ‘special features’ offered by these traders

besides anonymous communication. These include escrow, customer reviews and making purchases against bitcoin while the amount is held in escrow by the portal until the purchaser confirms receipt.²⁴

II. The Connectivity among Actors in Illicit Markets is relatively High and Extremists are Increasingly Tapping into these Markets.

There are relatively high levels of connectivity among seemingly disparate groups of actors operating in transnational illicit markets. This occurs through direct liaison between the respective actors and in the emulation of business operations and tactics. Furthermore, the connectivity is not restricted to illicit markets plying the same service or commodity but also extends along a trajectory of differentiated markets. So for example, it is now commonplace for high-powered firearms to be used as a medium of exchange for narcotics, so prolific has the trade in the former become.

Second, legitimate business enterprises are known to facilitate illicit trans-border activity and exploit the “layering process” of money laundering which aims at concealing the sources of illicitly derived proceeds through the establishment of front line businesses and commingling of funds. The Financial Intelligence Unit of Trinidad and Tobago, a member of the Egmont Group, is one among many authorized bodies to have reported on this widespread laundering typology through the medium of its statutorily mandated annual reports. The trend is further compounded by the ambiguous role being assumed by professionals referred to as ‘gatekeepers,’ such as accountants and attorneys, who are purportedly giving advice to clients on the creation of customized legal instruments with the intent of concealing the true source of questionably derived funds.

Third, the Dino Bouterse trial exposed cogent evidence of plans of the accused, a former director of Suriname’s anti-terrorist unit, to take a sizeable down-payment of US \$2 million from persons,

believing them to be Hezbollah operatives, with the goal of having fighters settle in Suriname, issuing them with false identities and arming them with surface-to-air missiles and other weapons for attacks against the United States and the Netherlands, Suriname's former colonial ruler. In the course of hearings the courts gained insights into the ease with which operatives representing foreign terrorist organizations, such as *Hezbollah-in-the-Americas*, could tap into the resources of trans-continental organized criminal networks in the hemisphere such as the Mexican drug cartels, and enjoy direct access to high-ranking officials of the stature of a presidential household member.

Added to this is a matter of similarly grave implications: the access to and possible misuse or unauthorized use of classified information by persons who (like Bouterse) are appointed to sensitive positions in state security apparatus primarily on the merit of their political attachments and the consequential and ill-advised de-scaling of pre-entry criteria, such as initial and ongoing integrity testing. (Appendix C).

III. Ethnicity is a Critical Variant in Religious and Ideological Persuasions in this Subregion.

Every country and region in the world has its own distinctive pattern of Islamic movements, racially defined contexts and political ideologies. Among: the points of interest that emerged in examining the crime-terror nexus in Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Suriname were the unique linkages between organized crime, terrorism and ethnicity against the setting of a long and established history of migratory flows from source countries in Africa, the Middle and Far East to Caribbean destinations. The question is initially: is ethnicity theoretically relevant to this discussion since a bias may be clearest in cases where organized crime and extremism are committed by people who are not members of a minority group at all? Certain authors like Gary W. Potter (1994) refute the

ethnicity thesis and argue that organized crime is simply an extension of the principles of legitimate business into illicit areas. Allan Block (1998) on the other hand put forward the view that it is the political system (in America) and the market, which in former days was mainly locally oriented but is now more internationalized, that determine the nature and dimension of criminal activity.

The factual issues are succinctly presented below.

First, the Muslim community of Trinidad and Tobago is today comprised primarily of third-generation descendants of South Asian immigrants, and to a much lesser extent and very recently, Afro Trinidadians with most of the latter being converts. The latter segment is represented almost exclusively in the membership of the Jamaat-al-Muslimeen (JAM), the Waajihatul Islaamiyya, the Jama'at al-Murabitin and the Jama'at al-Islami al-Karibi.

Illustration I

Range of Intra-Regional and Inter-Continental Linkages in 2007 Failed Plot by a Caribbean-based Multinational Islamic Cell to Blow up JFK International Airport



Source: Developed by Author

Barry Rubin’s insightful analysis of Muslims in the southern Caribbean jurisdictions in Guide to Islamist Movements Volume II,²⁵ states that adherents of the JAM in particular align themselves with the ‘world view’ espoused by Abu Bakr – cleric, organizational principal, and headman of the 1990 insurrection. Second, Rubin recognizes that this philosophy was strongly influenced by the ‘Black Power Movements’ spawned in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s, the effects of which fanned out to the Caribbean during that period. Bakr’s ‘worldview’ was also largely inspired by what became popularly known as “the Black Power Revolt” in Trinidad, an offshoot of the North American wave. Events in the capital city of Port of

Spain during that (Black Power) period were marked by voluble protests and public marches, the desecration of statues in the Roman Catholic Cathedral, sporadic destruction of private property, confrontations with the police and dramatically, and for a brief spell, the mutiny of a military junta that was promptly foiled from within the defense force itself.²⁶

A third point of note is that Rubin surmises that the discourse of groups such as the Jamaat al Muslimeen borrows heavily from the militant fringes of Pan African nationalist movements such as the Nation of Islam in the United States. This view is shared by Chris Zambelis, a Washington-based consultant who specializes in Middle Eastern politics and who has extensively researched the group and interviewed its members. And therein lies an amalgam of ideological, ethnic, and sectarian overtones, all interwoven into the fabric and psyche of the organization, all of which find expression in the political outlook of the collective.²⁷

A fourth and other material consideration touches on the group's ideological persuasions - members of this Afro-Muslim community claim to advocate for all Afro-Trinidadians and not only Islamic adherents who are Afro-Trinidadian. (Illustration II).²⁸

These details will assume a more profound significance when analysts delve into the task of developing empirical models of the dynamics of social movement mobilization and contagion in the Caribbean Community in an attempt to forecast their tipping points. This capability is vital in deciphering with a measure of precision the specific conditions under which social currents take root and evolve, only to be eclipsed at a later stage (though not always), by a competing agenda that manifests itself from within, in what was beforehand considered a compatibly shared pool of dissidence. The role of an umbrella pressure group in Trinidad named 'the Summit of People's Organization' (SOPO), whose formation and mission was strategically and tactically exploited by the

insurrectionists, is a classic illustration of this dynamic. SOPO was comprised of a wide cross-section of highly influential and conservative secular and religious anti-government constituents, and notably included the Jammāt-al-Muslimeen membership, and its popular support proved invaluable in the build-up to the 1990 insurrection. In point of fact, a high-ranking member of the mainstream clergy and known SOPO apologist was designated as the principal intermediary in the embezzled amnesty deal that was negotiated between the armed militants and the State.²⁹

A second useful pointer from an analytical perspective is the prevailing tensions among Asians of different religious and ideological persuasions in Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Suriname.³⁰ Rubin delved into this aspect of intra-ethnic interplay. Tensions were especially prevalent in Guyana and to a somewhat lesser extent in Trinidad and Tobago where schisms, based on ideology and suffused feelings of cultural superiority, are known to exist between the Muslims and Hindus. Illustrative of this, intermarriage between the two groups is considered taboo and strongly discouraged by their respective tribal elders. Given this status quo it is highly contestable how this feature would play out in a future scenario in which ideology, religion and ethnicity may be pitted one against the other, especially in the face of increasing numbers of mixed unions, both legal and undocumented.

Third, the linkages between organized crime, extremism and ethnicity in a multicultural society are best assimilated against the backdrop of the steady migratory and settlement patterns to the Caribbean emanating out of Africa initially and at a later stage Asia and the Middle East in combination with the election of specific minority groups to remain unassimilated. Concomitant with this is the extent to which cultural elements make it easier for certain minorities to turn to organized crime and make calculated decisions to develop strategic alliances with other groups in the society, defined and delineated by race and/or other criteria.

Each of these points is dissected hereunder:

- a) *A geographically influenced variant in organized crime is that people representing a certain ethnic group, clan or region that is globally dispersed invariably set up trade and international business transactions. One example of how this pattern has played out is the system of hawala and the challenges it has presented in Western societies that are not acculturated with the institution as an acceptable means of value transfer (Bovenkerk, 2001).³¹ Notwithstanding Western misconceptions, economic and social liberals have lauded the system as one of the great triumphs of civil society, evidence of the spontaneous desire to create and transmit wealth carried out in the private domain and sustained by the universal human compunction to maintain the integrity of a contract (Viles, 2008). Colonel Jennifer L. Histerman, graduate of the Air Force Fellows SDE Air University underscores the logic in making an important and pragmatic interjection. She notes, “Islamic banking traditions appeal to Islamic people...For instance remitters know that their money is not being invested in pork, being used for gambling and in other ways contrary to their faith. Also many areas where relatives of expatriates live are not accessible by other means such as Western Union, which charges steep fees whilst hawalas are run concomitant with other business and at no cost to the customer.”³²*
- b) *From a cultural standpoint, the social functions of an ethnic group’s primordial connections such as solidarity and trust form the basis of a network of closed relationships and this makes the group more difficult to penetrate from many standpoints, including that of law enforcement (Bovenkerk, 2001).*
- c.) *Groups that remain unassimilated by choice, or which for other reasons may be forced into the periphery, are likely to be compelled*

to explore long-term social and structural advantages with the underworld, or alternatively turn to the more conventional world of business or politics. One argument put forward is that this status quo eliminates the moral precepts that restrain other groups that have invested in the conventional world, from turning to organized crime (Bovenkerk, 2001).³³

These elementals strike at the nerve center of what would ultimately inform the decision of a terrorist operative in his choice of a strategically rewarding entry point into the region. Invariably international linkages that span many generations, relative sequestration from the authorities, collusive political connections that guarantee near immunity from prosecution...all discretely managed, are criteria that work to the advantage of closed migrant populations as well as entrenched, criminal cartels that share comparable attributes.

Although not a point of reference in this inquiry, the plot by a multinational terrorist cell comprising Caribbean nationals to blow up the John F. Kennedy International Airport in 2007 ('the JFK Plot') turned on its head in many respects whilst exposing the full range of intercontinental linkages exploited by the co-conspirators.

³⁴The case also illustrated how a common agenda that was ideologically driven could readily diffuse tensions stereotypical of variations in sectarianism, ethnicity and nationality. Based on the evidence, much of which was extracted from taped recordings, one of the masterminds - a Shiite cleric of south Asian ancestry - was reported to have sought out assistance from an Afro-Sunni 'imam' with a checkered history of treasonous activity and ultraviolence, for the purpose of eliciting funds and obtaining his 'blessings.' (Illustration II).

IV. Extremism Rapidly Evolved into 'Gangsterism' during the Nineties and the trend Fanned Out to the Wider Community in Subsequent Years Giving Rise to the Contemporary and Popularized 'gun culture.'

The Small Arms Survey 2010, a project of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva stated at that time, ‘on many measures, Trinidad and Tobago now rivals Jamaica as the most violent country in the Caribbean, with the number of annual murders rising sharply from 98 to 550 over the last 10 years’ (Heeralal, 2009; Townsend, 2009), and furthermore, that gangs and guns had become the ‘chief suspects in the search for causes.’³⁵ These ingredients were aggravated by a burgeoning narcotics trade, dire economic and social conditions precipitated by structural adjustment programs; exclusionary overseas immigration policies emanating from the metropole; and steadily rising across-the-board poverty level spanning the entire Caribbean and picked up by the World Bank group.³⁶ The phenomena coalesced in the 1990s, attaining a high-water mark by the mid-2000s, by which time the region had chalked up the dubious distinction as one of the most violent and crime-infested in the world, typecasted by the unprecedented spate of gun-related killings.³⁷

The supporting antecedents of note were:

- Trinidad and Tobago’s local courts released 114 insurgents involved in the 1990 coup d’etat attempt on a not guilty verdict supported by dubiously negotiated amnesty, the ruling on which would be subsequently overturned by the British Privy Council. Following this, the splitting of the original core of insurrectionists into decentralized factions in the early nineties in tandem with ready access to illegal firearms, ammunition and illicit drugs set the stage for an explosion of gang-related activity. This would find expression in the unprecedented break-out of gun-related murders, executions, robberies, kidnappings-for-ransom, extortion, racketeering under the guise of ‘debt collection services,’ the operation of car-theft rings, the dispersal and resilience of ‘drug blocs,’ ongoing turf wars, and the widespread sale, rental and distribution of illicit firearms. During that period money laundering, corruption and other forms of ‘white collar’ criminality surged to unprecedented levels.³⁸

- In March 2007, three members of the Jamaat-al-Muslimeen confessed to kidnapping and murdering a prominent Asian businesswoman from Central Trinidad. This matter is currently subjudice. Also that year, an ATF undercover agent tracked the same group, shipping heroin from Afghanistan into the U.S. via Trinidad.
- The influx into the Caribbean of a special group of returning nationals - criminal deportees - as a result of alterations in the immigration policies of the U.S. United Kingdom and Canada further mired the security landscape. Many returning nationals in this cohort were co-opted into the 'gang culture,' in instances becoming gang leaders. This development invigorated the trans-border character of criminality since returning nationals exploited their long-standing linkages with the metropole.³⁹

V. All in all, Linkages between Politically Exposed Persons, Compromised Public Officials, Drug Cartels, Extremists and Unscrupulous Private Syndicates Have Contributed to the Incurability of the Transnational Criminal Landscape.

The status quo is maintained through a network of interlocking and mutually supportive interests, underpinned by systemic corruption and sustained by intergenerational ties. Moreover, sagacious adaptations to changing theaters such as constitutional changes in government, have merely secured the linkages. To compound the situation, the relatively small population pool/size in these societies and the closely-knit ties among social groups provide a buffer, if anything, allowing extremism a compromised haven.⁴⁰

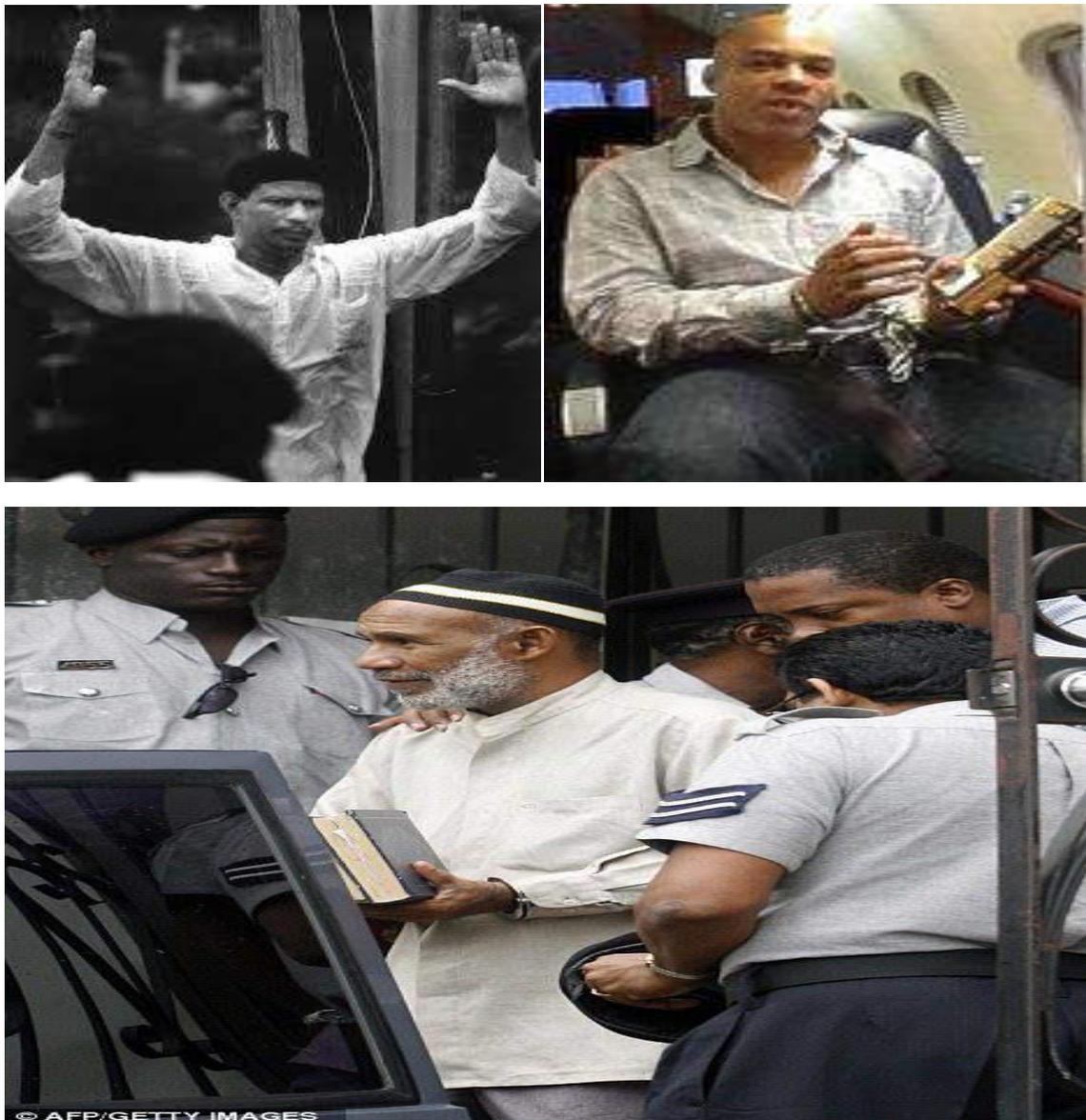
Some further elaboration is necessary:-

The 'top dogs' of the 1990 insurrection aligned themselves with key political administrations in the ensuing years and this outmaneuvering not only opened the door for extremists to acquire unearned access to high-ranking influencers, but also enabled its leadership (reputed for close ties with Colonel Gaddafi of Libya) to

cultivate advantageous vertical and lateral linkages in the local political circles.⁴¹

Illustration II

1. Top Left: Yasin Abu Bakr -Lead man of first Islamic insurrection in Western Hemisphere surrendering to state security forces in Port of Spain in 1990. 2 Top right:- Dino Bouterse, national of Suriname and son of Surinamese president, sentenced in March 2015 for providing material support to a foreign terrorist organization - Hezbollah - for the purpose of establishing bases in Suriname from which to launch attacks against the US . 3. Bottom: Shiite cleric, Kareem Ibrahim, national of Trinidad and Tobago, sentenced with others as co-conspirator in failed JFK plot



- Similarly, the more recent Dino Bouterse case of Suriname exposed the precariousness of having politically exposed persons easily accessible to the underworld. In the longer run, such exposure is not only compromising to the government in office but is seriously compromising to its close allies, and political blocs to which it may be affiliated, and in respect of which it openly professes shared interests and values.⁴²

- Specific to Trinidad, as with any unrequited historical injustice, twenty-five years after the failed coup and its outmaneuvering, another generation of Islamic adherents has been raised up who are more single-minded, ruthless and politically witted than the former.

- The radius for illicit markets throughout the Caribbean has considerably expanded and corruption and white-collar criminality have burgeoned in all jurisdictions. Terrorists, their financiers and operatives now form part of a much larger, sophisticated, diverse and interconnected underworld comprising organized crime cartels, private syndicates, political figures, and double-dealing bureaucrats operating across the state and corporate sectors.

VI. The Lure for Profiteering Has Surpassed Ideologically and Politically-Driven Motivations and Ambitions and Emerges as the Dominant Operating Rationale among Tainted Players.

Part II of the series provided a break-out of the hefty illegally derived financial endowments which ISIS is able to raise from a variety of sources. This imperative for substantial funding, which is an ongoing enterprise of terrorist organizations, once again came to light during the trial proceedings of the 'JFK Failed Plot.' The

testimony of one of the witnesses for the state unearthed tenacious efforts of the co-conspirators, in particular in the case of the Shiite cleric, to obtain funds locally, regionally and internationally (Illustration I). Terrorist organizations vary widely ranging from large state-like formations such as ISIS, to small, decentralized self-directed entities, many of which were precipitated with the degrading of the Al-Qaeda leadership. Correspondingly, their financing needs are reflective of this diversity. Funds are continuously needed to meet the broader organizational costs as well as to underwrite operations. In sharp comparison, the direct costs of mounting an operation are relatively low, but despite this these organizations require a significant amount of money to sustain their international networks, maintain an infrastructure of organizational support and finance activities that provide a veil of legitimacy to their nefarious activities. Consequently, a high level of creativity and adaptability is exercised in raising and moving funds. This problem of funding will become even more imminent when large numbers of extremists are forced underground by increasing pressure put on them by surveillance mechanisms and law enforcement efforts.⁴³

VII. Concerning International Linkages - Islamic Extremists from the Caribbean have long been known to Use Surreptitious Routes via the South American mainland bound for North Africa and the Middle and Far East Destinations. These Established Routes are Currently Being Exploited by 'fighters' Headed for Syria.

Apart from staple pilgrimages to Mecca and surreptitious trips to Libya by Caribbean Community fundamentalists (the latter being typical among JAM members during the 1980s), there is a regular flow of travelers heading the Middle East via the South American mainland. This situation is supported in part by the availability of consular services to certain Middle-Eastern countries in respect of which Venezuela has diplomatic ties. As recently as 2014 the

Servicio Bolivariano de Inteligencia detained a group of nationals of from Trinidad and Tobago for questioning in relation to their possible involvement in terrorist-related activity. Subsequent to this, some members of the team were permitted to return to home soil. The Venezuelan authorities, notwithstanding ongoing diplomatic dialogue, have since charged five detainees.⁴⁴

VIII. The Caribbean Basin is An Acknowledged Locale for the Trafficking of Firearms and Certain Parts are Increasingly Reputed for Violent Murders and Executions.

There is at least one major incident in which a former ‘1990 insurrectionist’ was tried and convicted in U.S. courts for conspiring to ship a cache of firearms into Trinidad and Tobago. The accused, Clive Small, deemed a ‘high priority alien’ was repatriated in 2015 upon his release from serving a ten-year prison term. He was made to answer charges on a three-count indictment for conspiracy to possess 60 AK 47 assault rifles and 10 machine guns with silencers and convicted in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida in August 2005.⁴⁵ The ATF team conducting the sting operation noted that many of the guns used by the Jamaat-al-Muslimeen prior to and after 1990 were sourced from Fort Lauderdale’s Broward County. That state of affairs is a mere microcosm of a larger and more sinister picture. Weak control measures at points of sale in the U.S. - reputed for its liberal gun control policies - in combination with notoriously porous borders along the entire Antillean chain extending from the south of Florida to the Columbus Channel off the Venezuelan mainland and the commingling of weapons with legitimate cargo as a commonplace modality, continue to contribute to the region’s magnetism as a smuggling route. Some aspects of this phenomenon were unearthed in the Bouterse trial wherein the supply to Hezbollah operatives of heavy weaponry (once they were furnished with false documentation and ‘set up shop’ on South American soil) was proven to be part of

a wider conspiracy entailing the illegal procurement/ diversion of heavy weaponry including surface to air missiles and their subsequent transshipment across multiple borders in the Americas.

IX. The Social and Economic Conditions in the Caribbean Community today are Reminiscent of the 1980s and 1990s; Corruption and a Thriving Underground Economy Persist as Drivers in Crime-terror Linkages.

In Part II this forum acknowledged that the regionalization of organizations such as ISIS was largely driven by intra-state and intra-regional factors at work in Iraq and Syria.

In so far as intra-regional factors relate to this discourse, the state of affairs in the Caribbean Community today is reminiscent of economic circumstances that prevailed in the late eighties and early nineties, when countries were experiencing the cumulative effects of major structural adjustment programs and were heavily reliant on external support for counter-narcotics efforts. As previously indicated, the situation is now made increasingly complex by the emergence of non-conventional threats and sub-national groups many of which have succeeded in cultivating ambiguous relationships with influential business and key political figures.

The imperative for structural adjustment prescribed by the World Bank during the 1990s was premised on the belief that growth restoration in adjusting countries would be the most effective way to alleviate poverty. At that time Caribbean societies were bogged down, as they presently are, with high levels of international debt service in the midst of economic reform efforts that gave their governments little room for maneuver to effectively wage wars against organized crime, specifically the illicit drug trade.⁴⁶ Also then, and as is now the case, economic conditions in the United States, a major trade partner to Caribbean nations had adverse implications for the entire region.

Structural Adjustment and its Social Impact

It is widely known that one of the unintended consequences of structural adjustment is its adverse impact on lower income groups. The reason for this is that this type of programmatic response by governments involves shifts in resource allocation and studies have shown that such shifts, in combination with privatization and economic re-structuring, invariably lead to higher levels of unemployment and under-employment and increasing poverty levels.

A second and equally notable consequence of this type of economic prescription is the stimulation of the “informal economy” whereby *illegal activities become increasingly palatable to many and makes others more susceptible and vulnerable to corruption*. In point of fact, the 2014 GTI noted that those countries with the highest levels of terrorism in the world - that is to say that were the most risk-prone - performed significantly worse in a framework of measurement developed by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) referred to as the Pillars of Peace. Within this framework, corruption has shown up as a key geopolitical driver for terrorism.⁴⁷

Corruption is a Key Geopolitical Driver of Terrorism

Most noticeable is the fact that the 2014 Corruption Perceptions Index released by Transparency International, which measures the perceived levels of public sector corruption in 175 countries and territories, tallied that corruption levels in Latin America and the Caribbean were above the global average. The former measured 45 and the latter 43. Of all the Caribbean Community nations accounted for in the Report, the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, Barbados, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Dominica achieved praiseworthy rankings of 17, 24, 29 and 39

respectively. In variation, the rankings of other Community members (Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Suriname) placed them below the “halfway score” of 50/100, denoting their closer proximity to the “highly corrupt” end of the continuum as distinct from the “very clean” extremity, where the Northern European states are substantially represented. Table 1 extrapolates the Caribbean Community scores.⁴⁸

Table 1

Rankings for Corruption Perceptions Index 2014

Showing Rankings Assigned to Caribbean Community Nations

Country	Place	2014 Score
Barbados	17	74
Bahamas	24	71
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	29	62
Dominica	39	58
Trinidad and Tobago	85	38
Jamaica	85	38
Suriname	100	36
Guyana	124	30

Source: Adaptation from

<https://files.transparency.org/content/download/1856/12434>

Accessed on 18th March, 2015

Moreover, the 2014 Corruption Perceptions Index reflected insignificant variations in the scores assigned to Inter-American nations during the preceding three years. No single explanation however could shed full light on the stagnation. Two possible, albeit compromising positions, have been suggested: the first, that politicians, public officials and some business people who deal with them ‘continue to follow their usual path;’ and/alternative to which, that ‘big corruption schemes that involve individuals at the highest level of power and the lack of punishment of the corrupt continue to prevail in the Americas.’ An intonation of well-founded concern is picked up in the reaction of Alejandro Salas, director of the Americas Department of Transparency International to the Regional Analysis, who has gone on record as bemoaning, and in the estimation of this forum rightly so, that ‘each year that passes without things improving is a lost year.’⁴⁹

Given the historical antecedents of Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Suriname the onus now rests with their respective administrations to take whatever steps are necessary to obviate the current global perception, and even more realistically and with due expediency, to address those factors that serve to foster corrupt practices that would potentially make these territories more risk-prone than regional partners, having regard to the GTI calculus and supporting rationale for risk factors.

Section III

The Threat Picture

This phase of our discussion included a review of the chronology of events that I consider material to the crime-terror nexus in the Caribbean Community over a 25 year period and the extent to which socio-economic conditions, state capacity and responses, political philosophy and political culture, extremist ideologies, a violent track record, ethnic tensions and a systemically corrupt environment have conspired to fuel transnational crime and enable terrorists to exploit illicit markets.

Capability and intention together define threat levels and although certain terrorist organizations may have a desire to inflict harm on a country and its government, for the time being the fundamentalists in the Caribbean lack a singular delivery capacity. However, if the barriers for acquiring weapons of mass destruction and biological weapons were for some reason lowered, the equation could change dramatically. Another important consideration is that international terrorist organizations are extremely dynamic and politically opportunistic and for this reason combating terrorism must be approached with reference to geopolitical context.

The study is a limited one given its modest sample size and confinement to jurisdictions that are considered heterogeneously representative and ‘terrorist-prone,’ based on their uniquely demographic realities and historical antecedents. The worth of the project nonetheless lies in its relevance to incidents that are specifically terrorist-related, dense and closely sequenced, as well as its reliance on impeccably researched primary and secondary sources, and the employment of a full panoply of universally adopted indicators that provided the appropriate research framework.

Any further detail, although highly desirable and certainly necessary at this point, lies beyond the scope of this forum. Each theme discussed certainly opens a universe of opportunities for further reading, discussion, debate, continuing scholarly research and peer review.

The Caribbean Community displays striking contrasts when compared with other denoted epicenters of terrorist activity in the Americas. Hezbollah has had a presence in Latin America since the 1980s due to the fact that Arabs of Lebanese stock migrated to this sub-region (specifically the tri-border area shared by Paraguay, Brazil and Argentina) in the wake of the turmoil that erupted during the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990). Islamists were heavily represented among this group of settlers, two-thirds of whom were Sunnis and the remainder Shias. The Islamists found succor and support within their own business sector in which merchants and traders were highly represented and it was against this backdrop that Hezbollah was able to seize opportunities to raise funds and recruit sympathizers. One such businessman who was very prominent, Assad Ahmad Barakat, a known sponsor of Hezbollah, was imprisoned in Paraguay in the mid-nineties for tax evasion. As suggested in the earlier sections, the more diffuse settlement patterns in the Caribbean, the smallness of the societies, the political culture which is characterized by quintessentially closely-knit and interlocking affiliations altogether render this subregion a culturally distinct part of the Americas.

This being the case the threat picture is informed by the following findings:

1. *That there is a real risk for the spread of discontent among diverse groups in Caribbean Community nations arising from the vagaries of austerity measures and this could be readily translated into anti-government sentiment, which terrorists would seek to exploit. As a revolutionary force, however, the locally based organizations lack*

widespread support and momentum to single-handedly instigate an epochal overturn of the present system. Although limited to two specific case studies and territories, the themes are sufficiently broad in scope for analogies to be drawn in potentially volatile situations arising in other localities within the region that may not necessarily be ideologically driven.

2. *That ethnic tensions in Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname are likely to persist and possibly feed into extremist tendencies, particularly among certain segments of the population, who perceive themselves to be politically and/or socially disenfranchised. Jack Menke, author of “Democracy and Governance in Multi-Ethnic Societies: The Case of Suriname” has made a very to-the-point observation. He states, “multiethnic societies with the tradition of a two-party system (Guyana) pose another problem. Here the political possibility of hegemony by one ethnic group could be an obstacle to political stability and ethnic harmony. In the majority system, small and new parties are discouraged as the chances for winning a seat are far lower than in an electoral system with proportionate representation.” Based on this overview alongside Barry Rubin’s conclusion of the impact of social and ethnic tensions on the harvesting of extremism, contained in his exposition “Guide to Islamist Movements Volume II, one can realistically foresee how this crucible of estrangement and disaffection between and among groups of differing ethnicities and ideological and religious persuasions, can be opportunistically stoked by extremists with a clearly demarcated political agenda. Interestingly enough, regarding the more homogeneously constituted societies in the Community, Jorge Heine who examined the Grenada Revolution in “A Revolution Aborted : The Lessons of Grenada” noted that one of the constituents to the political and social ferment that catapulted the ousting of Prime Minister Eric Gairy and which is common to many Caribbean Community members, was ‘the exponent of over-representation linking vote-share to seat-share ratios.’ In other words by inference, the*

constitutional tradition in terms of the region's entrenched Westminster-styled voting models, may be one of the cornerstones of current tensions surrounding popular representation, and by extension political stability.

3. *That given geographical realities, extremists may opt for alternative country bases, either on the mainland, which is considered very vulnerable from a border control perspective, or northward along the Antillean island chain with the objective of acquiring financial support, exploiting the trade in drugs and arms and, if possible, eluding the attention of home-based authorities.* The latter is a widely known strategem employed by the FARC of Colombia whose members are known to have found 'safe haven' in the remote border areas of neighboring Venezuela. This was pointed out in Part II. In this connection, the detention of a group of Islamic adherents in Venezuela in 2014 (all of whom are Caribbean Community nationals) on charges of suspected terrorist activity is very likely to diminish Venezuela's attractiveness as a 'safe haven' among local adherents in the near future.

Despite what would appear to be a political deterrent, the *Bolivarian Republic* is likely to continue to be exploited by Hezbollah operatives from other sub-regions who have an established a checkered history of evading U.S. authorities and entering the United States through Caracas. This was one of the 'eye-openers' in Operation Smokescreen (1995-2002), which resulted in the first conviction in the United States for the violation of federal code 2339B - '*providing material support or resources to designated foreign terrorist organizations.*' This inter-agency counter-terrorist operation, which mobilized the resources of no less than fourteen agencies, culminated in the arrest and conviction of several Lebanese nationals who were members of a Hezbollah terrorist cell that was set up in North Carolina. The range of offenses on the indictment included: immigration and identity fraud; tax evasion;

money laundering credit card fraud; bank scams as well as transshipment of operational accoutrements such as night vision goggles; Global Positioning Systems; laser range finders; military compasses; ultrasonic dog repellents; stun guns; hand-held radios and receivers; drilling and blasting equipment; aircraft analysis and design software, to name a few – destined for use by Hezbollah. Notably, a disproportionate number of the cell members, including headman Mohammed Youssef Hammoud, gained access into the U.S. via Venezuela, using forged documentation.

4. *The illicit trade in drugs and arms will continue to provide financial support to extremists and white-collar criminals alike.* For this reason Hezbollah and ISIS operatives, who have achieved limited penetration via soft entry points, will persist in their efforts to infiltrate the region. Alongside this, operatives who find themselves under extreme pressure from the authorities may resort to using the Dark Web to penetrate targets in the Americas, in much the same way that ‘the Silk Road’ was successfully exploited until 2014.
5. *With the intensified monitoring of persons of interest who may be contemplating leaving home soil to travel abroad to Syria, extremists will feel compelled to use more surreptitious methods to travel, and raise and transfer funds.* For this reason closer attention should be paid by all governments to the 2012 Revised FATF Recommendations during the current Fourth Round Mutual Evaluation Exercises (2014-2021) that focus on the potential for abuse of value transfer systems and charitable organizations.
6. The 2014 Global Terrorism Index stated that the influx of foreign fighters into Syria may enable ISIS to assume ‘a larger role’ and open doors to ‘a more universal agenda.’ Bearing in mind that a universalistic outlook has historically been one of the defining features of radical thinkers in the Caribbean, *the return*

of jihadists to home soil from Syria should be very closely monitored – this specific cohort has been indoctrinated into “lone wolf” styled attacks in the West and may attempt to execute such a strategy in an array of domains, including cyber-space as well as on critical infrastructure or the cruise ship industry which are the mainstay of certain economies.

- 7. On the diplomatic front, an overture worth considering among governments is co-opting China as a partner in the war on terror in this hemisphere for several reasons: the PRC is known to be challenging U.S. premiership in this and other sub-regions of the world and such cooptation could assist in neutralizing hemispheric tensions; the Caribbean Community (and Latin America) has been on the receiving end of no less than three waves of Chinese triads which rank among the most nefarious transnational actors in the world - their movements in and around these subregions are of paramount interest to analysts at the War College in Washington; and lastly, in light of the recent influx into the region of thousands of Chinese laborers engaged in politically controversial macro-projects which should be closely monitored.*

Conclusion

Islam is the most important political ideology to have emerged since the resolution of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet bloc. The aim of Islam *as a revolutionary movement* is to completely transform existing systems. This entails a direct challenge to the Western way of life, shared philosophy and ideals. For this reason, it is critical that Inter-American and European Union partners jointly frame our efforts with workable policies and strategies that are complementary and mutually reinforcing.

This forum recalled that immediately following the events of September 11, 2001, the Caribbean Community alongside Inter American partners displayed commendable agility in fast-tracking the ratification of international and hemispheric commitments. The forum also noted that a regional security architecture, consistent with the multidimensional approach being advocated at that time to effectively combat conventional and non-conventional threats, was assembled; and furthermore that for Community members, the push signaled a transition to a more strategic footing manifested in preparations for the landmark hosting of 2007 Cricket World Cup. This strategically proactive posture, which kicked off in earnest eight years previously appears to have been sustained (Appendices A and B). A continuous review of the threat picture is strongly advocated along with the fortification of legacy institutions and mechanisms.

Strategic Cultural Assessments

Lastly, supportive parallel initiatives that would brace future anti-terrorism initiatives and give direction to and catalyze capacity building in the future are in progress. In 2009 US Southern Command launched a partnership arrangement with the Florida International University Applied Research Center and the Latin American and Caribbean Center, respectively, with the objective of undertaking strategic cultural assessments of countries in the

Americas. The exercise is intended to achieve a more explicative understanding of the political, strategic, and cultural dimensions of state behavior and state foreign policy in the hemisphere. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the project includes *a findings report* on the impact of Islam and Muslims in Latin America. This underscores the importance that planners and decision-makers have attached to gaining a full appreciation of the conditions under which movements that result in wide-scale disturbances in different regions and sub-regions of the world originate and take shape.

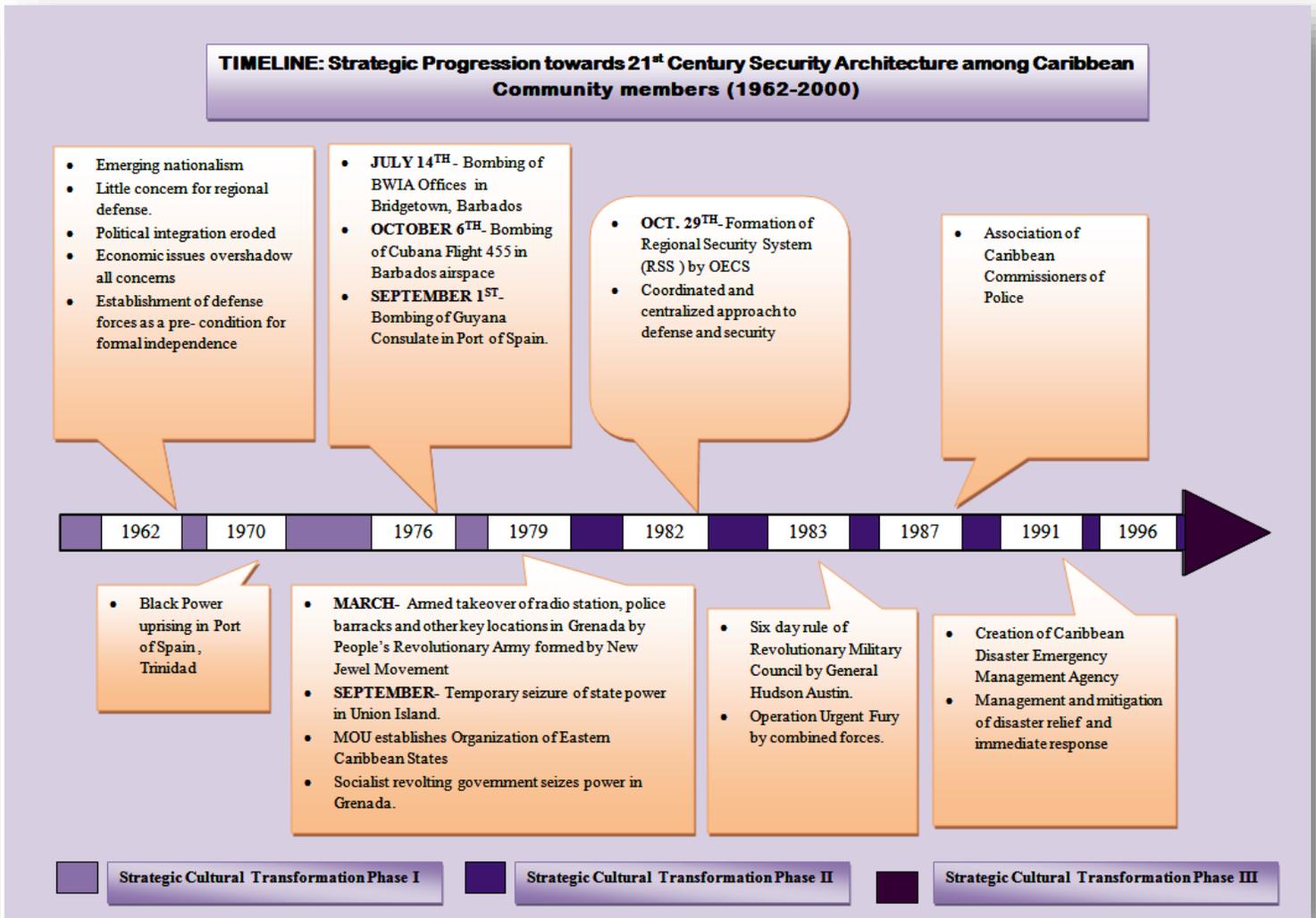
Thus far, Strategic Assessments have been extended to Guatemala, Peru, El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Honduras, Panama, Costa Rica, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Belize, Guyana and Suriname. The Surinamese Strategic Culture Findings Report, authored by Drs. Jack Menke and Orlando J. Perez, was presented to a working group that convened in Miami in 2011.⁵⁰ Likewise, the Guyana Strategic Culture Findings Report: Leaders Leveraging Landscapes formulated by Dr. Ivelaw Griffith, was put out later in the said year.⁵¹

But above all, Caribbean leaders should lose no time in working on ways to minimize the specific factors at local level that foster disillusionment and disenchantment and give rise to marginalization and social and economic ostracism (whether actual or perceived), particularly among children of school age, out-of-school youth and young persons. Failure to adopt these tactical moves merely opens opportunities for non-conformists to foment instability by promulgating, through a full range of media at their disposal, the false narrative that ultra-violence and hate are the only solution. State-driven responses would require asymmetric engagements and the employment of soft instruments of power. These will be explored in the later stages of this discourse.

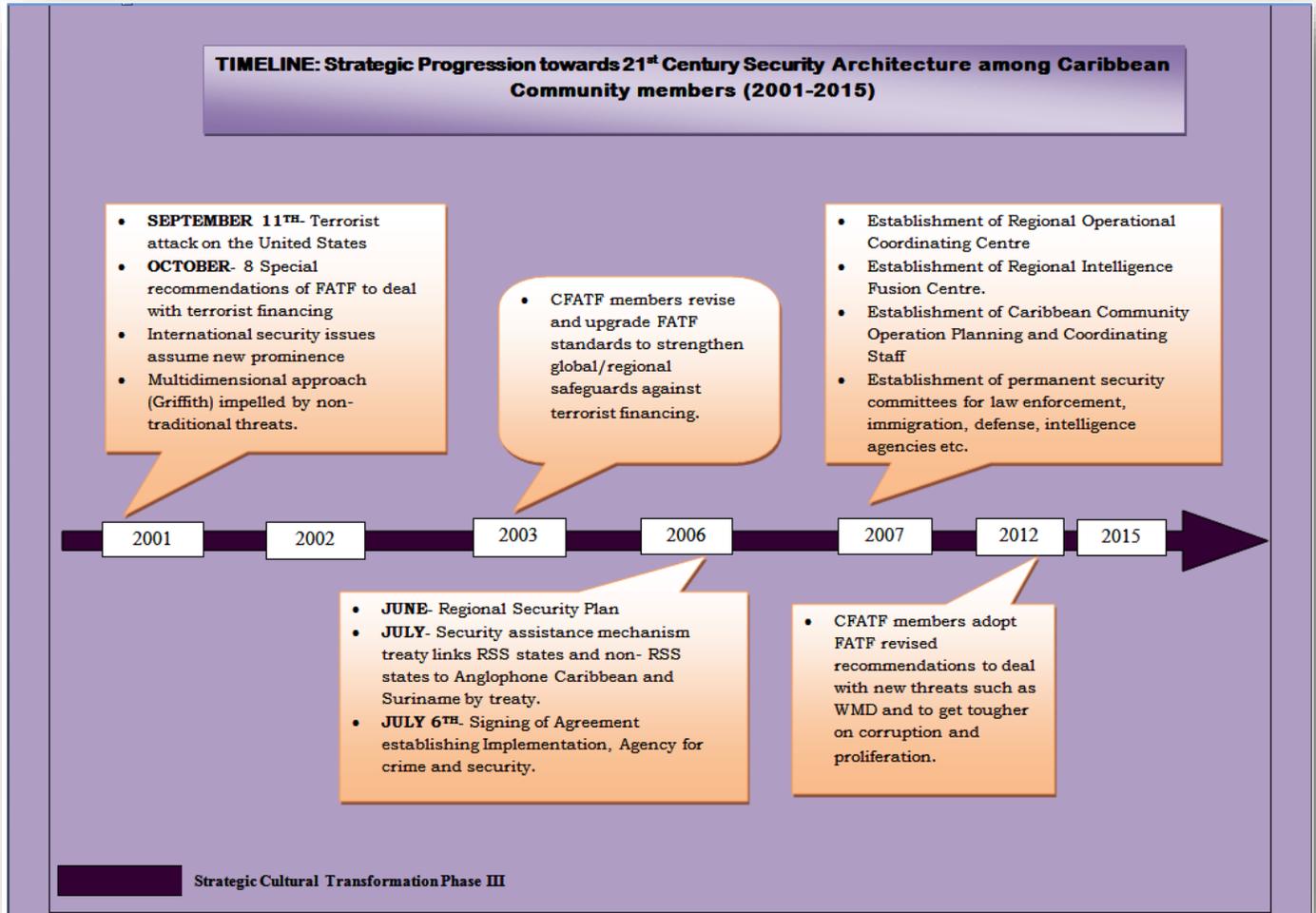
Serena Joseph-Harris ATA

April 3rd, 2015

APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B



APPENDIX C

IDGA White Paper

Actionable Intelligence Forum August 26-28, 2013

Submitted by: Serena Joseph-Harris ATA

Chief Executive Officer, Sirius International (Caribbean) Defense Contractors Ltd.

Intelligence, Integrity and Information Sharing

Extract: This Paper seeks to address key issues that are germane to the business of secure and effective information sharing and inter-agency collaboration which are among the key agenda items that will be discussed in the Actionable Intelligence Forum. Because developments in information technology make it much harder to control the distribution of information, this state of affairs has greatly increased opportunities for espionage and the amount of damage that can be perpetrated by a single insider. A more open and interconnected world makes it easier for those interested in selling information to establish contact with willing buyers, and conversely, for those interested in buying information to spot, assess, and recruit sellers.

We are presently in an era in which technology has become the centerpiece and main driver of decision support but recent developments within the intelligence community serve as a harbinger for more diligent attention to be paid to the medium of human agency and its integral role in the enterprise of intelligence sharing. We need to refocus on the elephant in the room.

Intelligence cooperation, successful information exchanges and the efficacy of fusion centers in joint missions compel the need for the harmonization of industry standards insofar as these relate to information classification and employee integrity. Intelligence is different in at least two ways from other types of information. Firstly, it is scarce and exclusive. Secondly, it is hard to come by because it is costly to collect, challenging to analyze and often it is extremely critical that our opponent does not know that we have it. Government requires information that is important to its functions and to the interests of the homeland, its official resources and classified equipment and accordingly material is classified according to the level of protection that is needed. Thus, the exclusivity of intelligence means that an intelligence consumer whether he is an analyst, operative, or decision-maker must prevent unauthorized persons from gaining access to it by controlling its distribution since the era of inter-agency collaboration and interoperability presents unique challenges to the intelligence community.

Since ultimately technology is supposed to be the servant of business needs there are some specific tenets that must be born in mind by decision makers and planners besides making the most judicious decisions in relation to hardware and application selection. These are itemized below:

I - Firstly, the principles of information classification should be adhered to. Certain types of information such as the identity of sources whose exposure would jeopardize human life, signals or imagery intelligence the loss of which may profoundly hinder the capability to collect data, or information that could aid terrorists must be uncompromisingly protected. Moreover, in establishing standards and categories of classification due consideration must be given to the benefit of public disclosure of the information when weighed against the need for initial or continued protection. For more effective protection security clearance procedures must preferably be standardized across agencies to determine who should or should not have access to the information. Additionally, rather than have all resources directed to the initial security clearance process, there should be ongoing investigative activities on subjects.

II Secondly, close attention must be paid to possible indicators of security risk. To this end it may be helpful if attention is directed to the prevalence of certain types of circumstances considered indicative of a possible security risk based on the past history of the organization or closely affiliated bodies. Examples include behavioral information on employees such as drug and alcohol use, personal relationships, foreign attachments, possible indicators of illegal income such as unexplained affluence, or indications of concern that one is being investigated or “watched.” It is interesting to note that the risk of betrayal of trust does not necessarily depend on the presence of an implacable foreign enemy. Rather, it depends very often on an “insider” with the opportunity to betray in addition to some combination of character weaknesses, situational stresses, and a trigger that sets the betrayal in motion.

When considering the possible motives for betrayal it is important to note that the real motive could be masked and may be totally different to what is being portrayed. An espionage case may at first glance appear to be financially motivated but can actually be driven by emotional needs of the subject such as a quest for power, an outlet for anger, a means of revenge, a source of excitement, divided loyalties, or an arrogant posture that one knows better than the Government.

In the movie The Silence of the Lambs, actress Jodie Foster, in her lead role as an FBI trainee, was spurred to become a federal agent by the trauma experienced in her earlier life, when at an impressionable age she witnessed her father gunned down as a police officer. This scenario is illustrative of several points, key to which is the likelihood that an individual's outward veneer, albeit of idealism, can innocently and unobtrusively mask behavior which may well be flawed or misguided.

The topics that will be discussed at the Operational Intelligence Forum such as Successful Exchanges Between Law Enforcement and Intelligence, Pressing Issues Facing the

Intelligence Community, Inter-Agency Cooperation, Security Standards to Fulfill Missions, to name a few, should advisedly be undergirded by these premises.

America's progress in the twenty first-century and beyond depends on the free flow of information. Nevertheless, throughout history national defense and security mandates that certain information be maintained in confidence in order to protect citizens, democratic institutions, the homeland, and interactions with foreign nations.

Notes and References:

Note: For many people Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim nation, is an anomaly. In terms of population size, it is the world's fourth largest after China, India and the United States. After hundreds of years of Dutch colonial rule that penetrated all sectors of political and economic life and a violently checkered political past, Indonesia has finally been able to achieve a sequence of democratic and transparent institutional transformation culminating in open and competitive Parliamentary elections. An interesting counterpoise in all of this lies perhaps in the views expressed by Benjamin Jones, communications officer of the U.K. National Secular Society, who argues that "while most British Muslims are 'peaceful' many are simultaneously anti-secular and opposed to liberal/British/secular values" and moreover that "the 'peaceful' description (of Muslims) allows a complacent evasion of the underlying problem out of fear and for political expediency."

See: [K/blob/2015/01/bbc-panprama-the-battle-for-british-islam-and-the-nonsense-of-peaceful-or-violent-muslims/](http://www.bbc.com/news/religion-2015-01-15-islam-peaceful-or-violent-muslims)

The Pew Research Center study has forecasted that by 2015 India would surpass Indonesia to have the largest Muslim population by any country in the world and that by 2050 in the United States "Muslims would be 'more numerous than people who identify as Jewish on the basis of religion.' This information may advisedly be cross-referenced with Part II of this ongoing forum which notes that the Americas was not only primarily represented by Catholic and orthodox Christianity, but was among the world's least religiously diverse populations.

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/In his monograph on the topic of "Intervention by Invitation" Nolte notes re- the issue of 'intervention by invitation,' that state practice can be grouped according to actors and regions; and that the U.S. has mostly used the claim that *an official invitation had been issued* not as a principal legal justification for their interventions, but as one of several factors which, when taken together, legitimizes the respective operation. The U.S. initially justified the intervention by referring to a call for help by the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). At the end of the day "a unique combination of factors" was attributed to the course of action as per Ambassador Kirkpatrick's Statement [(1983) 83 (No 2081) Dep St Bull 74, 75]).

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