

**Address by the Commissioner of Police, Mr. James Philbert at the Opening of
the Table Top Exercise in preparation for the Fifth Summit of the Americas
Tuesday February 10, 2009**

Good morning.

It is indeed an honour for me to be here this morning to address you as we prepare to host the Fifth Summit of the Americas. We at the Police Service are aware that this is the first time a Summit of the Americas is being held in this part of the Hemisphere. We also understand that the security architecture for the Summit is critical to its success and necessitates a proactive approach that is planned and executed flawlessly.

In doing so, the mission of the Police Service for this event is to promote a partnership with the community that reflects its values and make-up, along with a commitment to public awareness, information and intelligence sharing and integration, to ensure that people's rights; lives; communities and properties are secure.

In order to do this, we will ensure from the outset that our operational planning addresses all threats, including terrorism, high crime, cyber security, and any possible attacks that can emanate from the air, sea or land. In addition, the Police Service will be equipped to treat with any level of threat associated with participating countries or their respective leaders. Ladies and Gentlemen, the Police Service understands that the responsibility ahead of us is great, but we assure you that is one challenge, to which we can respond.

As part of the Law Enforcement thrust, is our resolve to seek ways of ensuring the highest level of security for this Summit and all participants. In this regard, a Specialised Unit has been mandated to oversee the operational planning aspects. I am sure you would appreciate the fact that for security reasons, all our initiatives being undertaken cannot be highlighted.

However, without compromising the integrity of our security arrangements, I can assure you that there would be improved and increased levels of security afforded to the public; both commercial and residential. The level of intelligence capability and training will be enhanced for specifically recruited staff with responsibility for specific protective duties and any attempts by persons to use altered or counterfeit documents or permits is also being addressed.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we are mindful that the Caribbean Region remains untouched by terrorist activity which has plagued many other destinations and regions, but we are continuing to work with all international agencies to ensure that there are no eventualities here.

The Police Service is resolute in our position to ensure safety and security for the Summit of the Americas and the civil rights of all clients, citizens and visitors shall be a priority. A deliberate attempt will be made to ensure that the highest ethical standards are maintained and a professional public image is displayed by all Police Officers in the performance of their duties as we are committed to ensuring that our citizens and visitors receive the highest quality service at all times, through excellence and teamwork.

In the coming months, we will endeavour to engage all public officers, civilian employees and citizens in supporting the safety and security initiatives being undertaken for the Summit.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Police Service believes that the event is one of the most ambitious and effective processes for Hemispheric cooperation and that our capital city will be highlighted as a platform for a concrete and positive agenda. Therefore, the shared values and principles being imbued by all our efforts will be promoted through continuous cooperation, respect for each other and visitors alike, high professional and ethical standards, courteousness and sensitivity to the needs of our citizens, delegates and all visitors.

It would be remiss of me if I say there are no challenges ahead. Yes, there are many challenges ahead but we are prepared to meet the challenges that may confront us and shall discharge our responsibilities with a high degree of commitment, professionalism and integrity.

During the actual week of the Summit, the city of Port of Spain will receive over 4,000 people for the Summit, and a lot of preparation will have to be in place in terms of logistics and security for our delegates and visitors. I can assure you that the Police Service is at the stage of synchronising our security arrangements together with our regional and international counterparts.

During the next two months, we will continue to work assiduously with our stakeholders to ensure that our strategies and initiatives are impenetrable.

I want to assure you that all arrangements are being made to ensure that critical vulnerabilities are reduced and the Summit takes place in an environment that is safe and secure, and where mitigation strategies for all perceived and real threats and risks are considered and implemented.

The Police Service shall continue to employ every effort and resource available to maintain and protect our visitors, our residents and our borders.

I can assure you that our nation's reputation for providing excellent service and hospitality will be preserved and we shall work fiercely to preserve our image as a safe haven for our delegates and visitors for the Fifth Summit of the Americas.

Thank you.