



United Nations Security Council Open Arria Formula Meeting
“Transnational Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking in the Caribbean Region as a Threat to International Stability”
Friday 7 June 2019 (15:00 – 18:00)
Trusteeship Council Chamber - UNHQ

Hosted by the
Permanent Missions of the Dominican Republic, the United Kingdom, France, the United States, Peru, Barbados and the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations
with the **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**

Opening remarks and moderation:

- H.E. **Miguel Vargas**, Minister of Foreign Relations of the Dominican Republic.

High-level panel discussion:

- Mr. **Jose Vila del Castillo**, Representative, UNODC Regional Office for Central America and the Caribbean;
- Lt. Gen. **Ruben Paulino Sem**, Defense Minister of the Dominican Republic;
- Ms. **Tonya Ayow**, Director of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS);
- Ms. **Kurba-Marie Questelles**, Youth Activist (Trinidad and Tobago).

Statements by the co-hosts:

- H.E. **Karen Pierce**, **DCMG**, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations;
- H.E. **François Delattre**, Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations;
- H.E. **Jonathan R. Cohen**, a.i. Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations;
- H.E. **Gustavo Meza-Cuadra**, Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations;
- H.E. **H. Elizabeth Thompson**, Permanent Representative of Barbados to the United Nations;
- H.E. Mr. **Karel J.G. van Oosterom**, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations.

Members of the Security Council will be given the floor after the co-hosts. Other Member States and accredited civil society may also deliver brief remarks and make interventions from the floor during the interactive session.

Background information:

Transnational organized crime, including drugs, arms and human trafficking, affects peace, security and stability wherever it occurs. It undermines the authority and effectiveness of State institutions, erodes the rule of law and weakens law enforcement structures. There is little doubt that these transnational issues present major challenges to countries and regions across the globe. Organized crime and drug trafficking are complex problems that manifest themselves in diverse ways in different parts of the world. Transnational organized crime and drug trafficking do not exist in isolation. They belong to a malignant complex that can include terrorism, money laundering and illegal arms trafficking.

As highlighted in the 2018 World Drug Report, published by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the overall global production of opium and manufacture of cocaine has reached the highest levels ever recorded. The total global opium production jumped by 65 per cent from 2016 to 2017, whereas global cocaine manufacture in 2016 reached its highest level ever, rising by 56 per cent during the period 2013–2016. In addition, in recent years drug trafficking has contributed to a sharp increase in the availability and usage of firearms.

Transnational organized crime and drug trafficking not only constitutes a serious challenge to conflict affected countries, post-conflict situations, and fragile states; it is also a great challenge for small island developing states who are faced with the daily challenge of securing large, porous and remote sea and land borders against illicit flows of illicit drugs, guns and ammunitions, and trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants. For most of these countries, transnational organized crime, in particular firearms and drug trafficking, represent an existential threat to their way of life and their efforts being undertaken to establish safe, secure and developed societies.

Over the last two decades, the Security Council has addressed on several occasions the issue of transnational organized crime and drug trafficking, recognizing the need for the international community to counter those illicit flows in a coherent and holistic manner. Given that domestic policy responses to these threats, though significant and coordinated across governments, may be insufficient, the Security Council has also highlighted that the pervasive nature of organized crime can only be curbed through collective and concerted efforts based on the principle of shared responsibility. The Caribbean is located at a major crossroads between a main route of illegal drugs flowing from the Andean Region, the world's main cocaine producer, and the world's largest consumer markets. Curbing transnational organized crime, drugs and arms flows in the Caribbean presents a particular challenge for governments and local authorities with vast territorial waters and expansive coastlines. At the regional level, member states have continued to expand international cooperation to improve relevant national security infrastructure to deal with transnational organized crime through security frameworks such as the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS). Another example is the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), a partnership among members of CARICOM, the Dominican Republic, and the United States to substantially reduce illicit trafficking, increase public safety and security, and promote social justice.

Also, UNODC, through its Regional Office for Central America and the Caribbean, assists member states to strengthen their capacity to prevent and combat all forms of organized crime.

Purpose of the Meeting:

The Arria Formula meeting will focus on transnational organized crime, including illicit financial flows, trafficking in firearms and the significant increase of flows of narcotics, particularly from South and Central America through the Caribbean region.

The meeting will support Council members to take stock of efforts undertaken by many stakeholders to better prevent and counter this problem. The meeting will provide a platform for the Council to reaffirm its commitment to addressing the harmful effects of transnational organized crime, in particular drug trafficking, encouraging and commending regional and sub-regional initiatives to address this challenge.

During this meeting, participants are invited to consider the following questions:

- What are the main operational characteristics of transnational organized crime networks and strategic alliances among criminal groups and other actors along the key nodes of illicit trafficking routes?
- How do transnational criminal networks impact on fragile nations, threaten neighbours and pose risks of relapse into conflict and the spread of instability in the region?
- How does organized crime affect different population groups in the region, and what are the main negative effects of illicit drug markets on licit economies and development?
- How can States strengthen international cooperation in the region to prevent and counter organized crime, in particular drugs and arms trafficking, and improve the sharing of information? What can the international community and the Security Council do to support this cooperation?
- What are the most effective cross-sectoral conflict and crime prevention strategies, and how could the Council support them?
- What are the main gaps in preventing and countering organized crime in the region, and what can the international community do to address those gaps?
- What is the role of civil society, including women and youth groups, in preventing organized crime? What are some of the initiatives led by young people to prevent drug and arms trafficking?

Format:

The Arria Formula Meeting will be open to all UN Member States and accredited civil society. The event will consist of high-level panel discussion, followed by interventions from the co-hosts and by Security Council members. UN Member States and accredited civil society may also deliver brief remarks, time permitting. For further information and to **RSVP**, please contact Mr. Wellington Bencosme (Minister Counselor, Permanent Mission of Dominican Republic to the United Nations) at wbencosmerd@gmail.com, or (646) 476-4112, by **Monday 3 June 2019**.