

## DE PRESIDENT VAN DE REPUBLIEK SURINAME | SPEAKING NOTES

### High-Level Security Conference - TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME:

A GROWING THREAT TO STABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT d.d. 21-04-2022

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- Vicepresident of the Republic of Suriname: **His Excellency Ronnie Brunswijk**,
- Speaker of the National Assembly, **mr. Marinus Bee**, and members of the National Assembly,
- Acting Prosecutor General, **Mrs. Garcia Paragsingh**
- President of the Collectivité Territoriale de Guyane (CTG), **Mr. Gabriel Serville**
- **The Honorable Horace Chang**, Deputy Prime Minister and Attorney General of Jamaica, in his capacity as Chairman of the Council for National Security and Law Enforcement (CONSLE),
- Distinguished visiting Ministers of Belize, Curacao, and Guyana,
- Members of the Organizing Board: The Ministers of
  - o Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation,
  - o Defense and
  - o Justice & Police, as well as other members of my Cabinet,
- Representatives of High State Organs,
- Representatives from regional and international organizations of OAS, UNODC and CARICOM IMPACS,
- Members of the Corps Diplomatique,
- Distinguished participants,
- Members of the media,
- Esteemed Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning,

- I take this opportunity, to warmly welcome you to the beautiful historical city of Paramaribo.

- I thank your governments for demonstrating their commitment, to collectively discussing the theme of this Conference, ***namely “Transnational Organized Crime: A Growing Threat to Stability and Sustainable Development.”***
- My friends, we have invited you, to share your experiences and respective best practices, as well as, emerging threats you have identified, in the area of security in an open, frank and constructive manner.
- I, therefore, encourage in-depth discussions, in the three working groups, which will be held later today, on several important issues:
  - Drug Trafficking, Illegal Trade and Trafficking in Firearms, Money Laundering and Corruption;
  - Migration, Border Management, and Maritime Security;
  - Cyber security, Cybercrime, and Cyberdefense.
- The Government of Suriname believes, that engagement with relevant actors at the international, regional and national levels on security matters, that are important to all in our region, could result in strengthened cooperation and collaboration, to effectively fight transnational organized crime **in all of its forms.**
- Suriname, underscores the importance of a “multidimensional approach to security”, and the fact, that security and development are multifaceted and inextricably linked.

- I expect, that for the two days of this Conference, we will not only have shared our experiences from a national or regional perspective.
- In a strategic and operational manner, we must analyze what needs to be done **more**, to take on the battle with organized criminal organizations **effectively**.
- We should also initiate or reiterate strong operational linkages, across the various stakeholders involved, to address transnational organized crime.
- We must also be willing to discuss the fundamental factors, that threaten our security and safety.
- And more importantly, we must be **willing and committed**, to doing something about it, **pragmatically** in a creative and innovative manner.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- To survive, we all need stability, peace, and a sustainable future.
- To achieve this, we will need to collectively address challenges, that come from several threats, among others:
  - Climate change and its impact on food production;
  - The Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on our economies and our lives;
  - Global, regional, and national economic decline, due to changing supply chains of goods, services, and capital, as well as, the high debt burden of many countries; and

- o Wars and international conflicts.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- In my view, to effectively confront the many challenges we as human beings, and the globe as a whole face, we have **no other choice** than to work together, to mobilize and put to work our collective resources and forces.
- Political will, is vital to ignite a new and reinvigorated commitment, to improving regional stability and security.
- Over the years, criminal networks have become increasingly structured.
- They are drivers of illicit activities, endangering national security and stability, and affecting the economy and the achievement of the sustainable development goals of our countries.
- They have penetrated in politics and all sectors, the public and the private, and infiltrated in several institutions.
- We also witness, that existing cooperation regimes are ineffective at countering the rapid changes, especially the increased diversification.
- Let us, at this Conference, agree to put in place functioning and effective mechanisms, for sharing information and intelligence and, if need be, **jointly act** on solid leads and damage lines of supply and demand, by using modern technology and systems.

- Strong and effective linkages between a wide array of stakeholders, in particular at the operational level, remain one of the critical assets, in fighting transnational organized crime.
- Today, we need to encourage and identify strategic alliances, with all participants present, by addressing the challenges and security threats, arising from transnational organized crime, which endanger and jeopardize the stability, peace, and sustainable development, wealth, and economies in the Guiana Shield, as well as, the international community.
- This Conference, will provide an opportunity, to illustrate past and ongoing activities and methodologies, and best practices, to develop and strengthen institutions, entities, and the capacity of groups and people within the region.
- Equally important, is that this Conference, addresses the new landscape of transnational organized crime, with the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- We can ask ourselves, if criminals have resorted to innovative methods, to continue their practices undetected, while the world was in lockdown.
- I cannot imagine, that they have locked down their criminal businesses too.  
Do you?

- In this regard, it is **crucial**, to evaluate the effectiveness of existing cooperation mechanisms.
- We have had many conferences, workshops, and other activities.
- Statements and commitments, should now materialize in **effective cooperation**.
- We have to analyze and identify the weaknesses, in our cooperation.
- It is a reality, that some countries have sufficient financial resources and technical capabilities, in their fight against transnational organized crime, while others face constraints.
- We must overcome these differences between our countries, by working together and assisting each other, to improve the capacity for effective cooperation.
- Let's elaborate, and let's focus on how to combine our respective strengths.
- We already know, that security is a goal with multifaceted dimensions.
- We also know, that we not only need to work at the governmental and multilateral levels, but also with stakeholders within and between our communities.

- The private sector, trade unions, religious organizations, and NGOs play a crucial role in fostering the required norms and values, that will strengthen our collective and individual resolve to defend democracy, an independent judiciary, human rights, promote good governance, and strengthen resilient communities.
- Ultimately, the structural goals should be, to create responsible citizens, supported by strong and functioning state institutions, who do not engage in criminal activities.
- And we need to embed the **consciousness** of the negative impact, of crime on the community, so that there is pro-active social control on criminal behavior in the family and the community.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- In closing, we all know, that a new era has begun in our precious world.
- We cannot stand idle, and just witness the impact of the threats, that come our way.
- We have made commitments, to do our best, to save the planet.
- We have committed to many treaties, conventions, and all sorts of agreements, which will **mean nothing**, if we do not see the **benefit of working together**.
- Everyone has brought a piece of the puzzle here today.

- Let us complete the puzzle, to identify the criminal networks, which are threatening our territories and region, and to design an effective roadmap, to tackle the criminal networks effectively, based on a collective approach and joint efforts.
- I urge you, to **work diligently** over the coming two days, to strengthen our collective resolve, assist each other, where needed, and come up with concrete initiatives and actions to fight transnational organized crime.
- **Agree**, to connect our law enforcement agencies in a meaningful way, to exchange staff, upgrade our systems, and provide training to those in need.
- Our efforts today and tomorrow, will ultimately result in a peaceful zone, with prosperity and sustainable growth, for our citizens of today and tomorrow.
- I wish you fruitful exchanges and deliberations, and I certainly look forward to a **positive outcome**.
- I thank you for your attention and presence.
- God Bless All of You!

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