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## THE CARIBBEAN MILITARY: AN INSTRUMENT OF NATIONAL POWER IN A RECONCEPTUALISED REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT

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**JCSP 38**

**Master of Defence Studies**

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**PCEMI 38**

**Maîtrise en études de la défense**

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CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE/COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES

JCSP 38/ PCEMI N° 38

MDS RESEARCH PROJECT/PROJET DE RECHERCHE MED

**The Caribbean Military:**

**An Instrument of National Power in a Reconceptualised Regional Environment**

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Word Count: 17,920

Compte de mots : 17.920

## **Abstract**

The role of the Caribbean military and its relevance as a primary source of national power have been the subject of active debate due to significant shifts in the emerging regional security environment. These shifts have been influenced by both changes in US foreign, defence and security policies toward the Caribbean basin and by the reconceptualisation of the security threats and challenges affecting the region. These shifts have influenced the extent to which the militaries in the Caribbean have been employed toward the achievement of national strategic objectives. This paper examines the notion of regional security cooperation as it applies to the Caribbean, the relevance of the concept of cooperative security within the context of a regional security complex and the shift toward human security as a primary element of the national security strategies of Caribbean states, in particular that of Trinidad and Tobago and the impact this has had on the role of the military. It argues that as a result of these strategic shifts, military power has been subordinated to economic and diplomatic elements of national power as principle enablers of strategic objectives due to the reconceptualised perspective of the security threats affecting the English-speaking Caribbean countries.

Notwithstanding, the paper establishes that the military, using the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force as the main point of reference, retains its relevance as a key contributor to the realisation of national objectives and a significant enabler to national power. While the military in the Caribbean may no longer be considered the “most powerful” element of national power, it remains one of the most versatile instruments that can provide the assurance of national well-being both within its traditional core function as well as in a reconceptualised role required to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century regional environment.

## ACRONYMS

ALBA	Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America ( <i>Translated</i> )
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARIFTA	Caribbean Free Trade Area
CHDR	Caribbean Human Development Report
CSBI	Caribbean Basin Security Initiative
FTAA	Free Trade Area of the Americas
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IMPACS	Implementation Agency for Crime and Security
NUFF	National Union for Freedom Fighters
OAS	Organisation of American States
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
OPEC	Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries
RSC	Regional Security Complex
RSCT	Regional Security Complex Theory
RSS	Regional Security System
TTDF	Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMIH	United Nations Mission in Haiti

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## **Chapter 1**

### **The Defence Environment in the Caribbean**

#### ***Introduction***

Security in the Caribbean basin is not new to either the agenda of policy-makers of the region or to the researchers who have dedicated their efforts toward finding a solution to the unique challenges that are presented in this part of the world. While the nature of the security issues may not be exclusive to the individual nations or to the Caribbean region as a whole, the combined influence of the geopolitical circumstances with the social, economic and transnational issues present an emerging environment that requires a somewhat customized solution to be effective.

The regional security environment within the Caribbean has reflected dynamic changes over the past 50 years. Following the end of the Cold War, the fear of a direct threat to national sovereignty through external aggression originating from another state actor has become less of a concern due to its perceived improbability over that of non-traditional threats. These threats to national and regional security which originate primarily from non-state actors are embedded in the activities of illegal transnational crime with its accompanying social and economic consequences. The shift in conceptual nature of securitisation coupled with the adjustments in the United States National Strategic Policy toward defence and security in the Caribbean Basin have demanded a review of the impact on the emerging security environment.

The post-Cold War policies of the US seem to have imposed a need for greater and more effective application of integral national resources toward regional security. A reduction of the



dominance of US influence has forced Caribbean authorities to become more prominent in shaping the focus of the regional security agenda and the approach to be employed in response. Over the years, Caribbean security strategies have reflected significant reliance upon the employment of military resources and strategies. This was evident when Trinidad and Tobago, one of the more powerful nations among the Caribbean states, in 2007 embarked upon a multi-billion TT dollar acquisition of military assets to be employed within the national and regional security strategy; assets that were deemed critical toward curbing the transnational security challenges. However, this militarised perspective has since changed, evidenced by the cancellation of this significant acquisition as authorities posited that economic considerations and the shift in security trends no longer warranted such a major investment in this type of military capability. Focus on the domestic aspect of ‘human security’ rather than the regional context of ‘national security’ now informs the national strategy.

Inferred in the political decisions to forego military expenditure and implied in the varying discussions at the national level is a perspective that the significance of the military as a key instrument in the pursuit of strategic objectives is in question and that the Caribbean armed forces have been relegated to a very limited role in today’s security environment. Further, utterances by public officials as well citizen discussions contained within media blogs have questioned the feasibility of retaining military forces as a necessary aspect of national power as greater focus has been encouraged to be placed upon economic development, social cohesion and diplomatic stability. The emerging security and defence environment now requires a re-examination of the role to be played by the Caribbean armed forces as an instrument to be employed within the national strategic policies and national security plans of countries within the region.

Recent trends in security now categorise traditionally viewed social, environmental and economic challenges as issues for consideration under the umbrella of security. These developments have had a significant impact on the regional perspective on security, the development of strategic objectives and the manner in which countries now employ their instruments of national power in pursuit of their national interests.<sup>1</sup> These unprecedented circumstances warrant a review of the reconceptualising of security within the Caribbean Region and the impact that this has had on the armed forces of the region. Of particular interest is a focus on the role, doctrine and capabilities required of the military to adequately retain relevance as an element of national power that contributes toward achieving national strategic objectives.

The intent of this paper is to examine the emerging national and regional security circumstances and the role of the Caribbean militaries within this context. The dynamic transnational security environment, characterised by the changing face of conflict and threats to national security, has raised questions as to the extent to which the local military institutions are currently relevant toward achieving national strategic objectives. In so far as it can be ascertained, the role of the Caribbean militaries will be examined, with particular focus on the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force, to determine whether the military can retain its relevance as an instrument of national power despite significant shifts in the regional security environment and continue to be a pertinent contributor toward the realisation of strategic objectives.

This paper will discuss the notion of regional security cooperation as it applies to the Caribbean. It will look specifically at the relevance of the concept of cooperative security within

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<sup>1</sup> Ivelaw Griffith. “*The Caribbean Security Arena: Some Threats and Challenges.*” Canada-Caribbean Ideas Forum II University of the West Indies Mona, Jamaica, June 23-24, 2008; [http://www.oas.org/atip/documentos/lecturas\\_sugeridas/Griffith%20for%20Ideas%20Forum%20Jamaica%202007.pdf](http://www.oas.org/atip/documentos/lecturas_sugeridas/Griffith%20for%20Ideas%20Forum%20Jamaica%202007.pdf); Internet; accessed 20 December 2011.

the context of a regional security complex and the shift toward human security as a primary element of the national security strategies of Caribbean states, paying particular attention to Trinidad and Tobago and the impact this has had on the role of the military. It will argue that as a result of these strategic shifts, military power has been subordinated to economic and diplomatic elements of national power as principle enablers of strategic objectives due to the reconceptualised perspective of the security threats affecting the English-speaking Caribbean countries.

Notwithstanding, , using the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force as the main point of reference, the paper will establish that the Caribbean military can retain its relevance as a key contributor to the realisation of national objectives and a significant enabler to national power. While the military in the Caribbean may no longer be considered the “most powerful” element of national power, it remains one of the most versatile instruments of power available to Caribbean governments.

### ***Methodology***

Major General (Retired) Edmund Dillon posited in his paper, “*In Search of an Identity: The Caribbean Military and National Security*” that the time has come for the militaries within the Caribbean to transition from its historical antecedents to forge a unique Caribbean identity that is more appropriately suited to the existing challenges and expectations of the region and modern developments.<sup>2</sup> Pursuant to his position, this paper will look specifically at the nature of the current defence and security environment and validate the need for a review of the role of the

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<sup>2</sup> Edmund Dillon. “*In Search of an Identity: The Caribbean Military and National Security in the Twenty-First Century.*” <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA395697>; Internet; accessed 14 November 2011.

English-Speaking Caribbean militaries and their relevance as a source of national power. The fact that General Dillon's research was conducted prior to the terror events of 11 September 2001 (9/11) implies that there is a significant shift in international security that was not factored during his deliberations. The implications of the post-9/11 "revolution" in security and defence will be considered during this review.

To begin, the role of the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force will be examined taking into consideration its antecedent functions which have transitioned somewhat to adapt to the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Caribbean environment. The evolving trends in the Caribbean security environment will also be discussed in the context of Regional Security Complex Theory and the influence this imposes on the emerging role and employment of the regional armed forces would be considered. The application of the concept of national power in the Caribbean will be discussed with a view to asserting the extent to which the military remains a significant element of national power in the context of national strategic objectives. Finally, an analysis of the gap between the military posture and the strategic requirements will inform shifts that are to be pursued by the military organisations to reinforce its relevance as a source of national power.

It is worthy to note, as will be presented during the discussions, that Trinidad and Tobago, although somewhat unique in respect to economic features, geopolitical circumstances and regional diplomatic influence, share similar considerations as other Caribbean states with regard to national security concerns. It is, therefore, useful to establish that while deliberations and recommendations focus specifically on the role of the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force, these considerations can be generalised and applied to other Caribbean militaries taking into account the uniqueness of the national environment of each state.

***Background:***

***Geopolitical Status of the Caribbean Region and Trinidad and Tobago***

The Caribbean islands became known to international audiences following the 15<sup>th</sup> century voyages of the Spanish sponsored Christopher Columbus who encountered these rich lands in his quest to find a passage to the Far East. This arrival by Columbus represented the first of European influences initiated in the Caribbean region that was followed by a series of power struggles between the major world authorities for rights and their claims to the wealth and natural resources found within. Among the prevailing colonial powers were the British, the French, the Spanish and the Dutch whose dominance during the period 1400s to 1950s was characterised by political, economic and military influences that shaped the culture and practises that are still evident in the geopolitical character of the region today.

As the presence of the colonial powers decreased following decolonisation and the United States of America simultaneously emerged as a world power, the character of the Caribbean Basin Region increasingly reflected the influence of US foreign interests and defence policies. During and after the Cold War period, the Caribbean region was and still is deemed a significant geographical border based upon security considerations primarily due to the ease of access to the US mainland and the potential vulnerability of that is associated with the region. The US interest in the Caribbean basin is therefore featured both in their economic as well as their national security agendas, but these interests are primarily driven by their realist values rather than concern for the development and well-being of the nations within the Caribbean. The extent of the US influence in shaping the security environment within the region will be discussed in greater detail later in this paper.

It is important, however, for the purpose of this discussion, to clearly establish the bounds of the Caribbean Basin as historically there have been many interpretations of what actually constitutes the region.<sup>3</sup> More importantly, the security dynamics that are evident within the Latin American and the Caribbean rim demonstrates significant variations throughout the region, from the major presence of insurgent and terror activities in the Central and South American sector to the challenges of non-traditional transnational activities that are predominantly featured within the English-speaking Caribbean.

### ***The Caribbean Region***

For the purpose of this discussion, the Caribbean region will be limited to the English speaking Caribbean that is formed by the chain of islands that separates the Caribbean Sea to the West from the Atlantic Ocean to the east, with Trinidad and Tobago as the most southerly islands extending up to the Bahamas in the North. Geopolitically, the Caribbean region comprises 30 territories with thousands of islands and islets (See Figure 1).

Following the colonial presence of the British in the region up to the 1950s, ten of the English speaking territories formed the Federation of the West Indies in 1958, a political arrangement intended to gain independence from the British. By 1962, this political union was dismantled and the individual nations successfully sought their independence from the United Kingdom over the period 1962 to 1983. Suriname, on the other hand, gained their independence from the Dutch in 1975.

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<sup>3</sup> Gail Verasammy. “*Toward a Reconceptualization of Caribbean Basin Security.*” In-Spire Journal of Law, Politics and Science, Vol 4, No 1 (2009); <http://www.in-spire.org/archive/Vol%204-no1/Verasammy41.pdf>. Internet; Accessed 21 January 2012, Page 62.

Figure 1. Map of the Caribbean Region and neighbouring territories.



These newly independent Caribbean territories established unions principally for mutual political and economic benefit. The first economic coalition was established through the formation of the Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA) in 1965 for the purpose of facilitating a joint economy and to increase the region's significance on the international scene. The focus of CARIFTA was to increase, diversify and liberalise trade among the nations of the region while promoting industrial development among the lesser developed countries.

In 1972, CARIFTA was transformed into the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), not only establishing a common market but more importantly providing for the free movement of labour and capital and the coordination of policies among the nations.<sup>4</sup> Today, CARICOM comprises fifteen (15) member states which includes Belize (Central America), Guyana and Suriname (South American mainland) and five (5) associate member states. Although

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<sup>4</sup> Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat website; [http://www.caricom.org/jsp/community/community\\_index.jsp?menu=community](http://www.caricom.org/jsp/community/community_index.jsp?menu=community); Internet; accessed 15 February 2012.

CARICOM is focused on the economic development of the region and bears no security related mandate, the forum has been used as a catalyst for the establishment of further partnerships in pursuit of common interest such as regional integration and regional security.

### ***The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago***

The island of Trinidad sits approximately nine miles off of Venezuela at the closest point and as such displays significant cultural and geographical features that can be associated with the South American mainland. Among the Caribbean nations, Trinidad and Tobago has one of the most industrialised economies and is listed as the second richest Caribbean country with a per capita GDP of USD \$28, 400 (2009) behind the Bahamas.<sup>5</sup> Its economic strength is mainly based upon the petrochemical industry. It is the fifth largest exporter of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) in the world and the single largest supplier to the United States, providing approximately two-thirds of US imports.<sup>6</sup> This places Trinidad and Tobago as a significant partner to the US and of strategic interests on the security agenda.

Trinidad and Tobago has grown to be a regional financial centre and has also been at the forefront of diplomatic arrangements spearheading regional membership to organisations such as the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). During the 2007 International Cricket Council World Cup hosted in the Caribbean, two regional commands were established for security, Jamaica having responsibility for coordination of the

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<sup>5</sup> CIA World Fact Book. Trinidad and Tobago: Economy; <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/td.html>; Internet; accessed 20 January 2012.

<sup>6</sup> US Department of State. “Trinidad and Tobago.” <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/35638.htm>; Internet; accessed 21 January 2012.



Northern Caribbean while Trinidad and Tobago was headquarters for the Southern Caribbean Sector.

### ***Antecedents of Caribbean Militaries – The Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force***

In the pre-independent years, security in the British Caribbean colonies was the mandate of the West India Regiment, an integral element of the British Army, which was stationed throughout the Caribbean.<sup>7</sup> These ground forces, which were established mainly in the interest of English settlers, served primarily as instruments of social order. The function of these established garrisons was principally to ensure the protection of British interests in the then profitable plantation economy.<sup>8</sup>

Following the First World War (WW1), the Regiment was disbanded in 1927 for economic reasons. It is worthy to note that during the period of disbandment, the mandate for security of the colonies was retained by the British authorities. The West India Regiment however was raised once again in 1958 when the West Indian Federation was founded. This Regiment, which comprised three Battalions and included soldiers from the Caribbean Islands, stood up for only four years and was once again disbanded in 1962. The decision by British authorities to disband the Regiment was to facilitate the formation of national defence forces as a pre-requisite for independence from Great Britain.

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<sup>7</sup> Castor Williams. “*The 1<sup>st</sup> Bn, West India Regiment: A Short Historical Review.*” <http://www.westindiaregiment.org/orderbulletin3.pdf>; Internet; accessed 15 February 2012, 2.

<sup>8</sup> Dion Phillips. “*Defence and Security in the Anglophone Caribbean: The Roads to Cooperation.*” Red de Seguridad y Defensa de América Latina (Security and Defence Network of Latin America); <http://www.resdal.org/atlas/atlas10-ing-09-the-caribbean.pdf>; Internet; accessed 20 February 2012. 125

Stewart Hilton Edwards, one of the British officers recruited during the initial formation of the military in Trinidad and Tobago, recalls that “the formation of some sort of defence force was expected, even required by the ex-colonial power, no matter how small but loyal to the legally elected government”.<sup>9</sup> This obligation was further reinforced by the British Chief of Staff, Admiral Lord Earl Mountbatten of Burma, following a visit to Trinidad in 1962. He declared that “unless a nation had an adequate defence force, it would not qualify for Commonwealth defence aid in the event of an attack”.<sup>10</sup> It is worthy to note that during this period the concerns associated with the prevailing Cold War was very relevant to defence considerations in the Caribbean region.

Defence and security were conceptually hinged on the protection of territorial boundaries and the potential threat of communist ideologies being established within striking distance of the United States. Based upon these considerations, among others, the West Indian Regiment was used as the platform to form the defence forces of the territories seeking independence. Up until World War 2, the troops in the British West Indies were commanded either by the Northern Caribbean Command, headquartered in Jamaica or by the Southern Caribbean Command, headquartered in Trinidad.<sup>11</sup> The soldiers of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion eventually formed the Regiment in Jamaica while those of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion formed the Trinidad and Tobago Regiment in accordance with the pre-independence requirement. The role of these forces were ostensibly to deter or defend against external threats when national interests were threatened with the expectation that further assistance will be forthcoming from the ex-colonial powers and from the

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<sup>9</sup> Stewart Hilton Edwards. “*Lengthening Shadows: Birth and Revolt of the Trinidad and Tobago Regiment*”. Trinidad Imprint Caribbean. 1982. 11.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*,27.

<sup>11</sup> Dion Phillips. “*Defence and Security in the Anglophone Caribbean*” ..., 125.

allied United States.<sup>12</sup> In countries that were unable to establish their own military forces, the extra-regional powers of the British, the Dutch, and the French maintained continued engagement for security purposes either through the provision of forces or responding to circumstances as required.<sup>13</sup> Notwithstanding, the orientation of the newly established national forces, as we shall see, emerged primarily with an emphasis on internal security as the potential for external threat to territorial sovereignty was deemed to be unlikely or non-existent.

The development of the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force and most of the other militaries of the Caribbean was significantly shaped by the existing security environment of the region as well as the predominant influence of US policies. Although the formation of military forces in the Caribbean nations was founded upon the ex-colonial British traditions, national defence policies were significantly guided by US foreign policy toward the Caribbean. US policies in the 1960s were based upon considerations related to the Cold War against Soviet powers and the protection of US interest in the region. US realist interest focused on securing critical sea lanes of communication to and from the United States through the Caribbean Basin. Additionally, the economic significance of the region was maintained once the US was assured access to key natural resources available within while minimising or preventing external influences, in particular that of the communist Soviet Union by ensuring the maintenance of pro-US political regimes.<sup>14</sup> To demonstrate this perspective, the United States House of

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<sup>12</sup> Dion Phillips. “*Caribbean Defence Forces: Support to Civilian Authorities During Natural Disasters.*” <http://www.docstoc.com/docs/35340092/The-Military-Support-of-Caribbean-Defense-Forces>; Internet; accessed 20 January 2012.

<sup>13</sup> Paul Sutton. “The Politics of the Small State Security in the Caribbean” in *Size and Survival: The Politics of Security in the Caribbean and The Pacific*; edited by Paul Sutton and Anthony Payne. Frank Cass and Co. Ltd. 1993, 12.

<sup>14</sup> Richard Bernal. “Influencing Policy Toward the Caribbean: A Post-Cold War Strategy” in *The Caribbean: New Dynamics in Trade and Political Economy*. University of Miami, North-South Center, Transaction Publishers, 1995. 212

Representatives declared in September 1965 that it retained the right to shape political choices in the Caribbean, ensuring pro-western political alignment and reserving the right to intervene against international communism, in the exercise of self-defence.<sup>15</sup>

These declarations by the hemispheric hegemon inadvertently reinforced a regional complacency among national governments that contributed to the lack of development of integral military power that could ensure the defence of territorial sovereignty against a capable external threat. This guarantee of US response was further reinforced following the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 when his administration identified the Caribbean basin as a priority arena and thereafter increased US aid and training development in the eastern Caribbean region.<sup>16</sup> Hence, authorities, having accepted this guarantee, paid “lip service” to the development of their national defence capability. As such, minimal effort was reflected in the development of integral forces as most nations refrained from investing scarce economic resources choosing to rely upon extra-regional powers for training and aid and, if necessary, response.

The absence of a credible threat to the territorial sovereignty of individual states and the over-shadowing guarantee of intervention and aid from the United States created an unfounded sense of regional assurance amongst the political powers therein. At the regional level, the need for an integrated regional defence mechanism was peripheral on the agenda of Caribbean governments and as a result the defence and security focus was geared toward the development of individual national security institutions and capabilities. These institutions were developed primarily to respond to threats originating from internal subversion or internal social disorder.

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<sup>15</sup> Kwame Nantambu. “An Overview of US Policy Toward the Caribbean in the 1970’s.” <http://www.trinicenter.com/kwame/2005/2011.htm>; Internet; accessed 11 March 2012.

<sup>16</sup> Paul Sutton. “*The Politics of the Small State Security in the Caribbean*”..., 14.

This predominance of national based interests expressed among Caribbean countries served as an obstacle to the development of any substantial regional mechanism that would serve as the primary response to Caribbean-wide threats to defence and security.<sup>17</sup> As an example of the evolution and development of Caribbean militaries, the emerging role Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force since its formation will be discussed.

### ***Evolution of the TTDF from 1962 to the Post 911 Era***

The Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force, comprising the Army and the Coast Guard at the time of its formation, was assigned the *de jure* responsibility for defence of Trinidad and Tobago and with such other duties as may from time to time be defined by the Defence Council in accordance with Section 5(2) of the Defence Act, Chapter 14:01.<sup>18</sup> Between 1962 to the early 1970s, the Force represented only a token presence that was intended to delay any external threat allowing for the arrival of the British and US forces who retained a responsibility for intervention if and when their national interests were threatened. As such, the real or *de facto* responsibilities of the Trinidad and Tobago military were actually grounded in internal roles to include the following:

- Defence against threats to national sovereignty from external sources limited in real terms to maritime border disputes,
- Assistance to the Civil Authority (as designated from time to time),
- Aid and support to the Civil Power (in the maintenance of law and order),
- Ceremonial Duties to include guards and parades, and;

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<sup>17</sup> Dion Phillips. "Defence and Security in the Anglophone Caribbean" ..., 127

<sup>18</sup> The Defence Act, Chapter 14:01 of the Laws of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Section 5(2).

- Subsequently, assistance in the development of the national community.<sup>19</sup>

These roles and responsibilities inadvertently moulded a very domestic perspective of the existence of the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force in the adolescent years of its formation and presence. This internal orientation of the Trinidad and Tobago military was emphasised during the events of the early 1970s when the country experienced a wave of social movements that challenged the political and military authority. In April 1970, members of the Regiment, inspired by the revolutionary movement of social activist and trade unions, attempted to take armed action to further their dissatisfaction with the existing state of affairs and the lack of opportunities for progress. This action was quickly contained with the assistance of the loyal members of the Army and the Coast Guard thus ending a potentially devastating series of events had the situation been allowed to develop further. Later in the 1970s, in response to similar revolutionary objectives staged by the National Union for Freedom Fighters (NUFF), the internal security role of the Trinidad and Tobago Regiment was further exemplified. The military was one of the primary agencies employed, to not only quell subversive activities but, to also assist in the dismantling of this organisation that was allegedly involved in criminal and destabilising activities.

By the late 1970s to early 1980s, Trinidad and Tobago was beginning to establish itself as having one of the more prominent domestic military capabilities among the English-speaking Caribbean and began posturing to assume an expeditionary role in support of its neighboring island states. This became evident during the 1983 US invasion of Grenada where the roots of Marxism were being planted. US intervention in Grenada, which was supposedly invited by the

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<sup>19</sup> Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force Website; [http://www.ttdf.mil.tt/df\\_hq/about.html](http://www.ttdf.mil.tt/df_hq/about.html); Internet; accessed 21 January 2012.

members of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), served a significant purpose for the US administration in its fight against Soviet influence within the region.<sup>20</sup> Although the situation was resolved primarily by US military power, an infantry element of the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force was being prepared for deployment to Grenada as part of the supporting regional contingent.

In July 1990, the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force was called upon to respond to an armed insurrection against the Government of Trinidad and Tobago staged by an Islamic extremist group known as the Jamaat al Muslimeen further demonstrating its national defence role. The unsuccessful events of the coup d'état not only changed the national security landscape of Trinidad and Tobago, but it served as a catalyst for a perspective on security in the Caribbean region, noted as well by the United States. The events of 1990 immediately prompted a review of the structure, organisation, doctrine, training and capabilities of the Defence Force and the other national security institutions in an attempt to create and maintain a more effective and proactive national and regional intelligence and security infrastructure.

Following the 1990 attempted coup d'état, the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force assumed a more prominent role in support of the civil powers in the maintenance of law and order. Policing patrols, which were predominantly military in composition with two police officers and four to six members of the Defence Force, dominated the local landscape for many years thereafter. The military involvement in domestic law enforcement has become and continues to be a key consideration in the employment of the Defence Force as the political directorate saw the military as a key source of confidence in ensuring public safety.

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<sup>20</sup> Terry Nardin and Kathleen Pritchard. "*Ethics and Intervention: The US in Grenada, 1983.*" <http://www.princeton.edu/~bsimpson/Hist%20725%20Summer%202006/US%20invasion%20of%20Grenada%201983.pdf>; Internet; accessed 20 February 2012.

The 1990s also presented significant opportunities for the Defence Force to become one of the key contributors to national development and nation building. The establishment of the Engineering Corps and the launch of several military-led youth development programmes targeting “at-risk” youths demonstrated the significant domestic role of the military. Crime and social disorder were becoming a growing issue of concern and although efforts to curb this trend were primarily the responsibility of the social development arm of the state, the military was becoming increasingly involved in strategy development and, in the operational context, an actively actor in the implementation of the various initiatives.

The role of the Defence Force however, was not restricted to domestic deployment and responsibilities. By the mid-1990s, the Force was mandated to prepare for two main foreign assistance functions. Firstly to be prepared to participate in disaster relief and humanitarian assistance operations within the region. As one of Trinidad and Tobago’s political and strategic instruments, the military represented one of the enabling institutions that facilitated further regional cooperation; the other approaches toward regional integration were embodied within diplomatic and economic strategies. To this end, elements of the Defence Force continued to be deployed to render assistance throughout the Caribbean region. In 1979, members of the infantry arm were deployed to St Vincent in the wake of the eruption of the Soufriere volcano to assist with evacuation. In the same year, Coast Guard assets were deployed to Dominica in the wake of Hurricane David. Other deployments included Jamaica in 1988 in response to Hurricane Gilbert and again in 1989 following Hurricane Hugo; military engineers were also deployed to St Kitts



and Nevis, Montserrat and Antigua and Barbuda.<sup>21</sup> This disaster relief role continued after the turn of the century with a major deployment to Grenada in 2004 following Hurricane Ivan.

The second foreign assistance function that was assigned to the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force was oversees peacekeeping and peace support operations. Already mentioned was the preparation for deployment to Grenada in 1983. Subsequent to this effort, TTDF personnel formed part of CARICOM Battalions I, II, III and IV to Haiti between 1994 and 1996. Battalions I and II were under the command of a US-led multinational force while III and IV were part of the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Haiti (UNMIH). Outside of peace support operations, the Defence Force has also been deployed regionally rendering assistance to the civil powers. A recent example can be seen in the May 2009 deployment, during Operation VINCYPAK in St Vincent, a counterdrug operation that involved multi-national forces geared toward the eradication of marijuana (Cannabis) plantations in St Vincent, unequivocally a law enforcement operation.<sup>22</sup>

By the turn of the millennium, the Defence Force's domestic operations were primarily focused on maritime protection and interdiction operations, public order and public safety assistance, and nation building activities. The role of the Force evolved but maintained at its core the functions as captured in its original mandate established during its formation. Notwithstanding, by 2011 the functions of the Defence Force have been expanded although not supported by legislative proclamation. The *de facto* role of the Defence Force has evolved over the years to include the following:

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<sup>21</sup> Dion Phillips. "The Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force: Origin, Structure, Training, Security and Other Roles". Caribbean Quarterly, Volume 43, No. 3, Security in the Caribbean. September 2003, 29.

<sup>22</sup> Operation VINCYPAK was authorised by Special Operational Orders (unavailable for release). It involved 132 members of the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force and was conducted over a two-week period resulting in significant destruction of field, seizure of illegal arms and ammunition the arrest of several suspects.

1. Aid to the civil power in maintaining law and order
2. Humanitarian assistance in times of natural and man-made disasters
3. Ceremonial duties
4. Search and Rescue operations in accordance with national, regional, and international commitments
5. Counterdrug operations in support of the national law enforcement agencies
6. National environmental monitoring and protection
7. Protection of the economic exclusion zone
8. Safety of shipping in territorial waters
9. Community development
10. Civilian Conversation Corps
11. Youth and sport development.<sup>23</sup>

Today, the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force is one of the largest military forces in the English-speaking Caribbean comprising, the Army, the Coast Guard, the Air Guard and the Reserves. Its mission is “to secure Trinidad and Tobago against external threat, to protect our sovereign interests, including the Exclusive Economic Zone, and to take action to meet likely contingencies in Trinidad and Tobago's area of strategic interest.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Ancil Antoine, Brigadier General. “*What Should Be The Role Of The Trinidad And Tobago Defence Force In Combating The Illegal Drug Trade?*”. Master’s Thesis, US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. 5.

<sup>24</sup> Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force Website; [http://www.ttdf.mil.tt/df\\_hq/about.html](http://www.ttdf.mil.tt/df_hq/about.html); Internet; accessed 21 January 2012.

## **Chapter 2**

### **The Caribbean Regional Sub-complex and the Emerging Challenges in the Caribbean**

The concept of cooperative security within the Caribbean Basin is embedded in the notion that the states within the region share an interdependent security relationship that relies upon the collective capabilities of each actor. In this context, the idea that the Caribbean forms a security sub-complex and the requirement for a cooperative regional approach which enhances national and regional stability will be contemplated. The security challenges that face the region as a whole, as well as the vulnerabilities exhibited by member states served to shape the security arrangements during and post-Cold War. These issues will be examined with the intent of identifying existing vulnerabilities that are now present in an era of reconceptualised security and the potential role of the military as a national instrument of power. To begin the concept of the Caribbean as a regional security sub-complex is discussed.

#### ***Defining the Caribbean as a Sub-complex***

The Caribbean region has, since its independence from colonial powers, consistently sought to establish effective systems and mechanisms that serve the collective good of the states contained within. Throughout the years the region as an entity has implemented several approaches to regional development. However, most of these efforts, which have primarily been focused on economic development and political cooperation, have realised comparatively modest or conservative progress in the area of regional security. There have been, not surprisingly, varying perspectives on the best approach to regional security that serves both the collective

well-being of the Caribbean region as a whole while also enabling the national interests of the individual member states.

The 1958 formation of the West Indian Federation, that sought to amalgamate the political voice of the individual territories to pursue independence as a single entity from Great Britain, was a short-lived effort at collective integration. This attempt at political unification lasted only four years when Jamaica, followed by Trinidad and Tobago, decided that the collective objectives of the Federation were not aligned to that of the individual territories and therefore opted to pursue their independence separately. This decision led to the collapse of the Federation and the concomitant disbandment of the West India Regiment in 1962.

Throughout the preceding years there have been several debates arguing for and against a regional security mechanism that is focused on the security challenges that are common threats to the countries of the English-speaking Caribbean. The formation of such an operational entity has not significantly progressed although it remains on the discussion agenda within regional diplomatic forums. The Regional Security System (RSS) represents the closest form of an established operational mechanism which serves a few islands of the Eastern Caribbean. This arrangement has materialised and continues to exist primarily due to the fact that these small states do not maintain an integral defence force or military resources of their own, as will be discussed in the following section.

Historically, the failure to establish a regional operational force has mainly been due to the economic costs of maintaining these forces. However, separate and apart from economics, concerns over the command and coordination of such an entity have been raised by the political heads of the various countries. Realist approaches toward the formulation of foreign policy of the

Caribbean countries have shaped defence priorities and have, therefore, contributed to the lack of progress in the establishment of a regional force. Others have suggested that the predominant role played by the United States in the region prior to the events of 9/11 significantly contributed to the creation of the perspective that a regional force represents a redundant capability. Hence, the complacency that has resulted is reflected in the lack of strategic commitment toward the establishment and maintenance of an operational regional mechanism. Since 9/11, the US has refocused its foreign agenda, reassigning significant resources and aid previously allocated to the Caribbean Basin which in effect has had a notable impact on the geostrategic circumstances of the region and the security assurance therein.<sup>25</sup>

In light of regional strategic lethargy toward a comprehensive integrated mechanism, the question begs, “Why then is a cooperative approach toward the security challenges faced by the nations of the English-speaking Caribbean of such great interest to security advocates today?”<sup>26</sup> The answer to this debate relates to the Caribbean being categorised as a sub-complex within the North American Regional Security Complex (RSC). Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, in advancing their concept of the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT), posited that “since decolonisation, the regional level of security has become more autonomous and prominent in international politics and that the end of the Cold War has accelerated this process”.<sup>27</sup> Following

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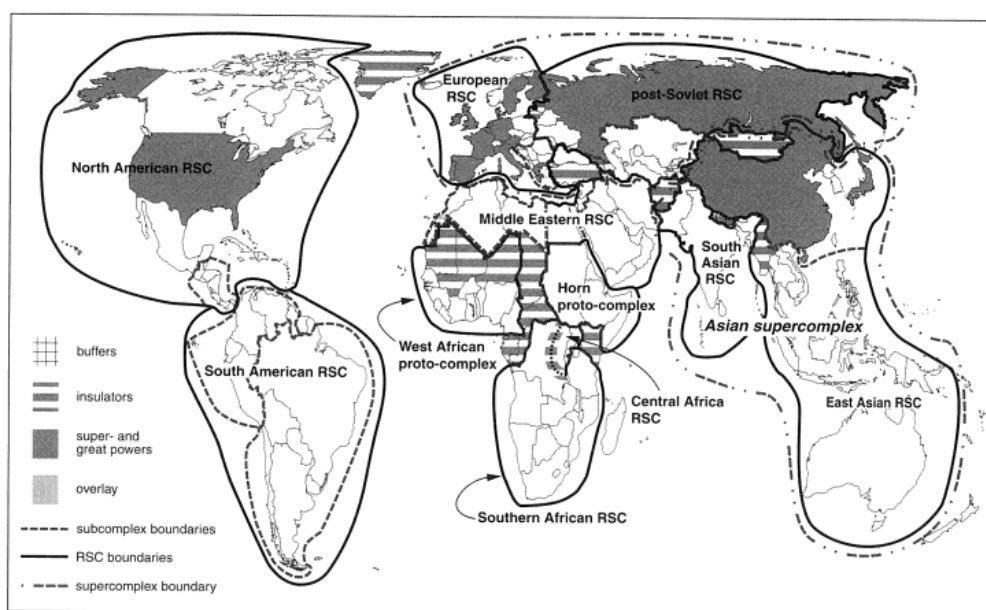
<sup>25</sup> Robert Pastor. “The Caribbean Basin” in *US and Russian Policy Making with Respect to the Use of Force*. RAND Corporation; [http://www.rand.org/pubs/conf\\_proceedings/CF129/CF-129.chapter8.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/conf_proceedings/CF129/CF-129.chapter8.html); Internet; accessed 20 January 2012.

<sup>26</sup> The concept of cooperative security suggests that the traditional and non-traditional security challenges facing countries are beyond the capacity of any one country to resolve. These challenges now include economic and environmental security issues. This approach demands that states build capabilities in order to enable collective initiatives and that the cooperation between states potentially reduces the likelihood of conflict between nations. See Michael Moodie, “*Cooperative Security: Implications for National Security and International Relations*”. Cooperative Monitoring Center, Occasional Paper/17; Available from <http://www.cmc.sandia.gov/cmc-papers/sand98-050514.pdf>; Internet; accessed 03 January 2012.

<sup>27</sup> Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver . “Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security”. Cambridge University Press. 2008, 3.

the end of bipolarity, regional powers have assumed greater responsibility for security within their regions. To this end, geographical regions have been mapped that form RSCs based upon their security interdependence and relative isolation as a regional complex. The Caribbean basin reflects this dynamic interdependence that warrants further examination.

Together with other regions such as Europe, the Middle East and Asia, Buzan and Wæver identified the North American Regional Security Complex (RSC) which encompasses Canada, the United States of America, Central America and the Caribbean Region (See Figure below).<sup>28</sup> For this purpose they defined a regional security complex as “a set of units whose major processes of securitisation, de-securitisation, or both are so interlinked that their security problems cannot be reasonably analysed or resolved apart from one another.”<sup>29</sup>



Map 2. Patterns of Regional Security Post-Cold War

<sup>28</sup> Map extracted from Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver . “Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security”. Cambridge University Press. 2008, page XXVI showing the patterns of regional security Post-Cold War.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 492.

The analytical application of the regional security complex theory is based upon geographically clustered coherent patterns of security interdependence. According to Buzan and Wæver, security concerns “do not travel well over distances and threats are therefore most likely to occur within the [geographical] region”.<sup>30</sup> The security of each actor [nation] interacts with that of the other actors and the combined effect between the interplay among the nations, the balance of power consequence of the anarchic structure of the international system and the pressure of geographic proximity work in tandem to derive RSCs.

Buzan and Wæver went further to explain that the regional security interdependence between actors is strongly mediated by the powers of the nations concerned; great powers with superior security capabilities transcends the regional imperative while small powers tend to reinforce it by confining their security interests to their neighbours within the region. In order to qualify an area as an RSC, a group of states must possess a degree of security interdependence that link them as a set and differentiates them from surrounding security regions.<sup>31</sup> North America is categorised as one RSC with the United States being the super power that transcends globally beyond the limitations of the region. However, in accordance with the theory by Buzan and Wæver, at least two sub-complexes may exist within the North American RSC; that of the Central American sub-complex and the English-speaking Caribbean sub-complex that incorporates Guyana and Suriname on the South American mainland.

Central America is distinct enough from the Caribbean that they both can be considered as sub-complexes within the North American RSC. Central America, although historically linked to the Caribbean, has developed divergent dynamics during and after the Cold War and has

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<sup>30</sup> Buzan and Wæver. *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*..., 45.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

become a separate sub-complex from that of the Caribbean Region. In this context the emerging threats to regional, national and human security justifiably warrant an integrated regional approach unique to the Caribbean circumstance. A collective security approach will prove to be a significant enabling mechanism in advancing development, improving efficiency as well as coordinating the collective capability to eradicate or mitigate threats particularly to smaller or weaker states.<sup>32</sup>

### ***Regional Cooperation and Collective Security Efforts***

Notwithstanding the shift in the strategic foreign and defence agenda, post-Cold War US policy toward the region facilitated continued cooperation with the local militaries and police forces, albeit involving to a far lesser extent the physical presence of US military resources within the Caribbean.<sup>33</sup> As an example, the Regional Security System (RSS) is one such initiative which was promoted by the US to respond to the emerging security issues facing the Eastern Caribbean states that has continued to receive integral support from the US.<sup>34</sup> The RSS was initially established as a collective response to threats to the stability of the Eastern Caribbean states during the late 1970s and early 1980s which served primarily as a US tool to ultimately combat the spread of communism in the region. Today, this RSS continues to serve as

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<sup>32</sup> A report by the UWI Institute of International Relations (IIR). “*Caribbean Regional Integration.*” <http://www.iadb.org/intal/intalcdi/PE/2011/08559.pdf>; Internet; accessed 26 February 2011. 13.

<sup>33</sup> To demonstrate the dynamic shift in the US presence in the Caribbean region, in the 1980s and 1990s, the US maintained considerable military presence throughout the Caribbean retaining over 25,000 military and civilian personnel as well as associated military assets in defence and security related roles. By 1997, post-Cold War, less than 6,000 personnel remained employed in the Caribbean following a US strategic redesign and force redeployment. The primary command headquarters in the region, the US Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), was relocated from Panama to Miami with a shift in focus toward supporting counter-measures against transnational issues that became an increasingly prominent concern on the US security agenda. For further information see, Ivelaw Griffith, “*US Strategic Interests in Caribbean Security.*” Joint Force Quarterly, Autumn 2000, 65.

<sup>34</sup> Buzan and Wæver. *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security...*, 209



a defence mechanism providing for the protection of national sovereignty while responding to ensure regional stability against emerging transnational challenges.<sup>35</sup>

More recently, the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) launched in 2010 is another example of Caribbean-US security cooperation that recognises the value of collective engagement intended to reduce duplication of effort and to generate a more sustainable impact in advancing common security objectives.<sup>36</sup> The partnership is geared toward strengthening of the regional security structure and institutions, the development and implementation of sustainable programmes and the development of defence and security capacity among other objectives aimed at ensuring human security. The establishment of such partnerships, among other collective initiatives, is testimony to the acknowledgement and acceptance that the post-Cold War regional security challenge, which has evolved somewhat since the 1980s, can effectively be engaged through coordinated engagements and cooperation. It is useful therefore to consider the comments of Barry Buzan as he notes that “...security cannot be achieved by either individuals or states acting on their own” implying that a cooperative security approach must be considered in response to transnational challenges and emerging threats in an age of globalisation.<sup>37</sup>

It is generally accepted that the divergence in strategies needed to effectively cope with the emerging threat to state and human security in the region includes not only military strategies but also political and diplomatic policies at both the national and regional levels.<sup>38</sup> Any attempt

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<sup>35</sup> Regional Security System website; <http://www.rss.org.bb/Index.htm>; Internet; accessed 25 February 2012.

<sup>36</sup> Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) *Joint Statement from the Second US-Caribbean Security Dialogue* held at Nassau, the Bahamas in November 2010; <http://www.anguillanews.com/enews/index.php/permalink/4102.html>; Internet; accessed 02 March 2012.

<sup>37</sup> Barry Buzan. “*People, States and Fear*” Harvester Wheatsheaf (1991), 378.

<sup>38</sup> Jessica Byron. “*The Eastern Caribbean in the 1990’s: New Security Challenges*”. *Caribbean Quarterly*, Vol. 43, No. 3, 1997; <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40653998>; Internet; accessed 13 Mar 2012. 55.

at collective security requires the support from the wider international community especially to complement limited resources where they exist. Arguably, Caribbean states have been deemed “the smallest and most vulnerable national units within the Western Hemisphere”.<sup>39</sup> It is, as a result, worthwhile to review the security environment, focusing specifically on the emerging threats facing the regional community, its potential impact on the smaller, vulnerable states and assess the capacity of states to respond to these sources of insecurity.

### ***The Security Challenge - Threats and Vulnerabilities***

Most of the states of the Caribbean are comparatively weak as powers and therefore generate few security threats to the sovereignty of other states.<sup>40</sup> Initially, when national defence institutions were established, their primary functions were related to “defence against external aggression, maintaining territorial integrity and assisting the civil power in times of national emergencies and disasters”.<sup>41</sup> Within more recent times, the most significant threats facing Caribbean nations have been assessed to be “mainly non-military and transnational in nature, but with extremely destabilizing consequences”.<sup>42</sup> Security functions are now coined predominantly in domestic and increasingly in transnational terms.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*...54.

<sup>40</sup> W. Andy Knight. “The Caribbean on the World Scene: Security Regimes, Instruments and Actions” in *Caribbean Security in an Age of Terror: Challenge and Change* edited by Ivelaw Griffith. Ian Randle Publishers (2004), 435.

<sup>41</sup> Jeffery Bostic. “*Shifting Patterns of Security Policy of The Commonwealth Caribbean Since World War II*”. Research Paper presented to the Inter- American Defence College, Washington DC, 1995. 19.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*...56.

<sup>43</sup> Buzan and Wæver. *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*....279

The involvement of the military in internal security matters and in response to the reconceptualised securitisation of the transnational threats has been debated somewhat as many of the non-traditional concerns were previously marginalised, treated as social problems and/or were left within the jurisdiction of both the social and criminal justice institutions at the national level.<sup>44</sup> Notwithstanding, military engagement throughout the Caribbean region in public security matters has been consistently increasing, albeit beyond conventional functions, with a focus on combating the transnational challenge as part of a multidimensional response both at the national and the regional level.

Compounding the effects of the security threats are the limitless vulnerabilities experienced by the smaller states as they are challenged to deal effectively with illegal transnational non-state actors. These vulnerabilities are virtually the catalysts that encouraged the formation and implementation of regional institutions and programmes such as the CARICOM Task Force on Crime and Security, the Regional Security System, the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) and the Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) in an effort to apply a cooperative security approach in response to these challenges. The vulnerabilities exhibited by the Caribbean states are further compounded by the securitisation of non-traditional issues such as crime, drugs and their accompanying social and economic consequences. In addition to the imposing circumstances, the dilemma faced by Caribbean countries is not only exacerbated by their power deficiencies but also by the perceived infringement of the regional hegemon, the United States, upon national sovereignty as it pursues arrangements in furtherance of its own national interests which may not always be aligned to the priorities of the smaller Caribbean nations.

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<sup>44</sup> Gail Verasammy. “*Toward a Reconceptualization of Caribbean Basin Security*” ..., 70

These issues are among some the considerations contemplated at the regional level when analysing the dynamics of Caribbean security today. In order to understand the security challenge and the emerging role of the military as an instrument of national power in responding to the threat environment, it is necessary to trace the evolution of the threats and vulnerabilities following decolonisation up to more recent times. Analysing the threats and vulnerabilities would confirm the value that the military institution would add in the “*War Against*” and the “*War On*” strategies that have been devised to pursue regional cooperative security, to preserve national sovereignty and to ensure human security within the region.

### ***Security in the Caribbean during the Cold War Era***

In the 1960s, following decolonisation, the Cold War between the US led western alliance and the communist Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) influenced, to a large extent, the security environment within the Caribbean Basin. Consistent with the concept of the Regional Security Complex theory (RSCT), the foreign and defence policies of the US, the dominant regional power, dictated the regional security agenda to the weaker regional states as a vigorous attempt was made to ensure the eradication of extra-regional influences, particularly communism, whilst reinforcing political ideologies that were aligned to US national interests. Policies were influenced by concerns related to the post-independent evolution of Caribbean states, the potential vulnerability of US economic and security interests, to include the protection of the US mainland and critical sea lanes of communication throughout the Caribbean, and to the

mitigation of extra-hemispheric influences which were increasingly penetrating the regional political environment.<sup>45</sup>

Between the 1970s and the 1980s, the major defence and security concerns hinged on ensuring the protection of territorial and political sovereignty against threats originating from regional and extra-regional powers. Although inter-regional territorial disputes between Caribbean Basin countries were cause for some anxiety throughout the period, such as was the case with the Dominica Republic - Haiti, Guyana - Venezuela, Nicaragua - Colombia, Trinidad and Tobago – Venezuela and Trinidad and Tobago – Barbados, CARIFTA (subsequently CARICOM) and other established regional organisations worked toward the resolution of these issues to a large extent.<sup>46</sup> Politically, the emergence of leftist and pro-communist movements such as in the case of Grenada during the period 1979 to 1983 was the opportunity for the US to demonstrate its policies toward extra-hemispheric penetration into the region and was therefore used to shape the political priorities of the Caribbean governments which sought to align with the US for political, economic and defence purposes.

Of less prominence, but equal concern, were the acts of subversion and internal security challenges that threatened political stability within the region. The Black Power Movement in Trinidad and Tobago and the associated mutiny led by military officers Raffique Shah and Rex Lassalle in 1970, followed by the emergence of the revolutionary strategies of the National Union of Freedom Fighters are examples of the dynamic internal security environment that prevailed. An event of greater regional significance was the previously mentioned 1979

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<sup>45</sup> Thomas Moorer and Georges Fauriol. “*Caribbean Basin Security*”. The Washington Papers/104 Volume XI. 39.

<sup>46</sup> Wendy Grenade. “*An Overview of Regional Governance Arrangements Within the Caribbean Community*”, Jean Monnet/Robert Schuman Paper Series 5 (12), Miami: University of Miami (2005). 2.

revolutionary movement in Grenada perpetrated against the duly elected Eric Gairy administration. These destabilising acts, which were executed by the National Jewel Movement under the leadership of Maurice Bishop, led to the eventual invasion by the US military supported by the forces of the Regional Security System in 1983. An attempted coup d'état in Dominica in 1978 and uprisings in St Vincent in 1979 further illustrates the level of political strife and potential destabilising movements that characterised the internal regional landscape in this uncertain period.

By the mid-1980s the regional security arrangements assumed a more modest disposition but nevertheless, the era marked the beginning of a redefined US military engagement in the Caribbean region through aid and training cooperation.<sup>47</sup> This shift in focus was characterised by training for disaster preparedness, maritime policing and drug interdiction. As a matter of social and economic interest, the developing transnational drug trade which significantly affected the United States on the consumption end of the process was gradually becoming a priority in the regional political agenda influenced, of course, by US stewardship. Latin American countries such as Colombia facilitated the production process while the Caribbean was used for transshipment to both US and European markets. During this period there was a relatively low consumption rate of illegal drugs such as cocaine in the Caribbean countries, marijuana (Cannabis) being the homegrown drug of choice which still maintained a comparatively low usage rate. Nevertheless, despite the emerging drug trade in the Caribbean prior to the 1990s, the response to this threat by regional authorities suggested that it was deemed a policing and social issue.

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<sup>47</sup> Jessica Byron. "The Eastern Caribbean in the 1990's: New Security Challenges".

## *Reconceptualising Security Post-Cold War*

The end of the Cold War had significant implications for security within the Caribbean Basin as the geostrategic relevance of the region to the US security agenda was dramatically transformed.<sup>48</sup> Caribbean defence concerns were no longer “confined to the traditional analytical prism of the East-West” ideological confrontation.<sup>49</sup> Nevertheless, the end of the Cold War did not mean an end to conventional security threats considerations.<sup>50</sup> Territorial disputes persisted during the 1990s and into the new millennium however, the predominant nature of the defence and security threats assumed a more non-traditional form that created a more complex challenge for national and regional authorities. Sovereignty and security threats originated primarily from two sources: firstly from internal subversion and political instability and secondly, from non-traditional securitised issues. Terrorism, transnational organised crime, the illicit drug trade with the accompanying destabilising consequences which became the prominent nature of the threat were not limited to territorial boundaries and were predominantly the activities of non-state actors.

In the traditional context, the 1991 and 2004 Haitian coup d'états serve as examples of the threat to political stability in the region. Both events, which involved the ousting of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, punctuated a period of political instability warranting not only a regional but international response to restore and uphold democracy. In both instances, diplomatic and military cooperation became necessary and further exemplified the need for a military capability

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<sup>48</sup> Barry Buzan. “New Pattern of Global Security in the Twenty-First Century” *International Affairs* 67 (3), 431-451.

<sup>49</sup> Michael Collier. “Rethinking Latin America and Caribbean Security : A Transtate Approach.” <http://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=laccwps>; Internet; accessed 02 March 2012.

<sup>50</sup> Gail Verasammy. “*Toward a Reconceptualisation of Caribbean Basin Security*”..., 67

response to the threats within the region. As mentioned earlier, the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force responded as part of the CARICOM Battalion to the circumstances in Haiti in the 1990s. In more recent times, as a further example, internal disorder and political disquiet was evident in countries such as Trinidad and Tobago having declared a state of emergency between August to November 2011. Social disorder related to uncontrollable crime, public protests associated with political discontent and demonstrations related to industrial action informed a decision to impose the state of emergency thus mobilising the armed forces in a public order role.

In Trinidad and Tobago in 1990, the attempted coup d'état by the Jamaat al Muslimeen led by Imam Abu Bakr, holding parliamentarians and other public officials under siege at the Red House and at the state media building serves as a further example. This event demonstrated that there were and continues to exist legitimate grounds for concern that public and citizen security will remain a priority on the security agenda within the Caribbean.<sup>51</sup> Even today the Jamaat al Muslimeen remains a major target on the watch list of the security agencies within the region.

The events of 1990 in Trinidad represented one of the first security related events driven by Islamic extremism in the English-speaking Caribbean. To some extent, it heralded the age of Islamic terror which has now become a pre-occupation in the region since the events of 9/11. This relatively new concept of insecurity initiated renewed focus on security in the Caribbean Basin and with it a redefinition of threats and vulnerabilities. The new millennium however has certainly demonstrated that threats from internal subversion and political instability remain a major issue of concern to national and regional stability.

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<sup>51</sup> James Millete. "Power in the Streets: The Muslimeen Uprising in Trinidad and Tobago". *Caribbean Quarterly*, Vol. 37, No 2/3, 1991. 89-107.



Despite the continued existence of traditional threats to the political and economic stability of states within the Caribbean, security has now been reconceptualised to capture the concerns that are shaped by “globalisation, liberalisation, regionalisation, information technology and the increasing transnational civil society”.<sup>52</sup> Referring to the concept of security as defined by the renowned Ivelaw Griffith, it is useful for the purpose of eradicating ambiguity to establish a clear understanding of security related terms. Griffith defined security as:

....protection and preservation of a people's freedom from external military attack and coercion, from internal subversion, and from the erosion of cherished political, economic, and social values.<sup>53</sup>

Deliberate effort was made to capture the multidimensional aspects of security alluding to the political, economic, military and social characteristics encompassing the needs of human security. He further distinguished “National Security” as an all-encompassing term that included national defence, public security and citizen security whereby:

...*national defense* [pertains] to the protection of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nation state, largely from threats by foreign state and non-state actors; *public security* [pertains] to the maintenance of internal law and order; and *citizen security* as [it relates] to the protection of the civil and political rights by people resident within the nation, both citizens and non-residents.<sup>54</sup>

Clarification of these notions of security definitions will assist in reconceptualising what constitutes non-traditional threats in the modern age of globalisation and the referent levels of vulnerability ranging from the individual citizen to international actors. Jorge Nef agrees that a

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<sup>52</sup> Gail Versammy. “*Toward a Reconceptualisation of Caribbean Basin Security*” ....69

<sup>53</sup> Ivelaw Griffith. “*Understanding Caribbean Security: Back to Basics and Building Blocks*”. Social and Economic Studies, Vol. 53, No. 1, March 2004,13.

<sup>54</sup> Ivelaw Griffith. “*Security in the Caribbean: State Sovereignty or Public Order.*” <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/Pubsecurity/ch3.pdf>; Internet; accessed 02 January 2012. 22

redefinition of what constitutes a threat to security is in order.<sup>55</sup> This is in keeping with Ivelaw Griffith's observation that non-traditional threats have long been the convention in the Caribbean context and that it has gone beyond the mere protection from military threats.<sup>56</sup>

It is useful to refer to the Copenhagen School of security studies in which Barry Buzan's concept of securitisation broadens the scope of issues that are now deemed significant threats to human security, state and regional stability.<sup>57</sup> Griffith argues that, the more salient an issue becomes the greater is the legitimacy to invoke a security response particularly when the issues are prominent throughout the region.<sup>58</sup> This concept is clearly evident in the Caribbean region when one considers the nature of transnational organised crime. Concerns such as money laundering, poverty, HIV/AIDs, environmental instability, natural disaster, criminal deportation and illegal migration have been securitised and considered significant destabilising issues that threaten citizen security, public security and the sovereignty of states. Concomitant with securitisation is the relevance of the Welsh school of analysis which places the focuses upon human security rather than applying the nation state as the referent actor of vulnerability.

The emerging focus on human security is in contrast to the classical realist perspective that places a restricted scope of security to military or tradition threats by and against states.<sup>59</sup> The human security approach takes into consideration threats from non-state actors, the negative

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<sup>55</sup> Jorge Nef. *Human Security and Mutual Vulnerability: The Global Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment*. Ottawa: International Development Research Center, 1999, 12.

<sup>56</sup> Ivelaw Griffith. "Security in the Caribbean: State Sovereignty or Public Order"....3

<sup>57</sup> Barry Buzan. *New Patterns of Global Security in the Twenty First Century*

<sup>58</sup> Ivelaw Griffith. *Caribbean Security in an Age of Terror: Challenge and Change*. Ian Randle Publishers, 2004. 19.

<sup>59</sup> Kanti Bajpai. *Human Security: Concept and Measurement*. Kroc Institute Occasional Paper #19:OP:01 (August 2000); [http://www.hegoa.ehu.es/dossierra/seguridad/Human\\_security\\_concept\\_and\\_measurement.pdf](http://www.hegoa.ehu.es/dossierra/seguridad/Human_security_concept_and_measurement.pdf); Internet; accessed 02 March 2012. 3

implications of globalisation and modernisation on the sanctity of the individual citizen or human being. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Caribbean Human Development Report (CHDR) 2012 emphasises the need for a shift in ideas to focus on human security which ensures citizen safety and the protection of people from both violent and non-violent threats and safety from both state and non-state actors.<sup>60</sup> “Human security is conceived as the social situation in which all persons are free to enjoy their fundamental rights and in which public institutions have sufficient capacity, against a backdrop of the rule of law, to guarantee the exercise of those rights and respond efficiently”.<sup>61</sup>

The shift toward human and citizen security as the focus of national security strategies, placing the individual as the referent factor as oppose to the nation state, is already being considered in some Caribbean nations. The Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and Lead CARICOM Head of Government on Security, declared during the launch of the CHDR in February 2012, that Trinidad and Tobago fully supports the recommendations contained within the report. The CHDR places focus on Citizen Security and the need for a transformation in the relationship between the citizen and the state, and the adoption of a citizen-centred approach to security.<sup>62</sup> Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar further acknowledged that personal security has been a critical area of concern and Caribbean countries continue to be affected by crime and social violence which undermines the overall human development of the region. Interestingly, the Prime Minister declared that a comprehensive

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<sup>60</sup> UNDP. “*Caribbean Human development Report 2012: Human Development and the Shift to Better Citizen Security.*” <http://hdr-caribbean.regionalcentre-lac-undp.org/download-report>; Internet; accessed 10 March 2012, 7.

<sup>61</sup> IACHR 2009. “Annual report on the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.” <http://www.cidh.org/pdf%20files/ANNUAL2009.pdf>; Internet; Accessed 10 March 2012.

<sup>62</sup> Feature address by the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago at the launch of the Caribbean Human Development Report 2012 in Port of Spain, Trinidad, February 2012; <http://www.news.gov.tt/index.php?news=10443>; Internet; accessed 11 February 2012.

review of Trinidad and Tobago's national security plan has been conducted and the plan now focuses strategies and resources toward achieving the country's international, hemispheric and national obligations, especially those of national and personal security. These strategies and resources include the employment of the armed forces as part of a multi-agency, multi-dimensional approach toward achieving this reworked national security mandate.

The tendency to apply military-political analysis to security has been expanded to now include concerns of an economic and environmental nature.<sup>63</sup> As mentioned earlier, environmental concerns such as natural disasters have been securitised as these phenomena are deemed to be threats to the security and development of nations and its citizens. Two major events will be mentioned to demonstrate the relevance: first, in 2004 the Category 3 Hurricane Ivan which affected the Caribbean Basin leaving 64 people dead and a devastated Grenadian economy prompted a hemispheric response in aid. The destabilising effect of this natural disaster, which negatively impacted on the potential economic growth and development of Grenada, also adversely affected Jamaica and other nations. As a result of the devastating impact of the event and Grenada's lack of capacity to recover, it was unable to sustain the incurred debt that followed requiring external aid to ensure the security of its citizens.

As a second example, the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, measured at 7.0 on the Richter magnitude scale, was reported to have affected 3,000,000 people leaving an estimated 316,000 people dead.<sup>64</sup> Haiti's political instability has been compounded by the coinciding incidents of natural disasters to include earthquakes, floods and wild fires. The combination of the lack of

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<sup>63</sup> Ivelaw Griffith. "*Understanding Caribbean Security: Back to Basics and Building Blocks*"....5.

<sup>64</sup> CBC News Report. "*Haiti Raises Quake Death Toll on Anniversary.*" <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/story/2011/01/12/haiti-anniversary-memorials.html>; Internet; accessed 20 February 2012.

infrastructure, the absence of the capability to effectively respond to these challenges as well as the heavy dependence upon external aid and assistance has made Haiti one of the weakest and most vulnerability Caribbean nations. The absence of national power is manifested in that country's inability to ensure citizen and public security.

### ***Conclusion***

In this chapter, the concept of regional security complex theory has been applied to the Caribbean Region. It has been demonstrated that the countries of the English-speaking Caribbean naturally form a sub-complex within the North American Regional Complex based upon the interdependence to resolve the common security challenges that are faced. It is understood that none of the Caribbean states individually possesses the capability or capacity to respond to these security threats and therefore the Caribbean states share a common regional interest that underscores the need for a cooperative security approach.

Several attempts at regional initiatives have been undertaken to respond to the threats and to reduce the vulnerabilities experienced by Caribbean countries. It has been recognised that the threats to security has shifted following the end of the Cold War and that the reconceptualisation of security present new challenges that have increased the susceptibility of individual countries. The vulnerability of states, however, is not the function of one factor but several, which combined can reduce or remove a state's influence or power causing a nation's security to be compromised.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Ivelaw Griffith. "*Understanding Caribbean Security: Back to Basics and Building Blocks*"..., 8.

A country's vulnerability is not only determined by the prevalence of or shift in the type of threats but is also a factor of deficiencies that impact on the ability to ensure the protection of its territory, its citizens and its ability to wield influence or power. National power then is a product of a country's ability to generate influence and to repel the effects of threats to its political stability, economic well-being and the security of its public and its citizens. The role of the military as an instrument of national power in the Caribbean context will therefore be examined in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Caribbean Militaries and the Elements of National Power**

The issue of national power among Caribbean states is complex and multidimensional in nature. While in other jurisdictions military capability forms a most significant element of a state's ability to influence other actors, in the Caribbean this dynamic is less prominent. To illustrate the role of the Caribbean military as an instrument of national power the theoretical concept of power will be discussed. The application of this notion will be examined in the Caribbean context and the role of the military as an enabler of the preconditions that facilitate national leverage will be considered.

#### ***A Realist Perspective***

“Realists consider the military force the most important power capability.”<sup>66</sup> This perspective on power articulated by Joshua Goldstein and Jon Pevehouse assumes that states within the international system that maintain a realist approach toward foreign policy perceive that their national interests can be achieved through dominance or by the demonstration of a capability that is greater than that of neighboring or competing states. Hans Morgenthau, one of the leading figures in the study of international politics in the twentieth century, posited that the world comprises nations, as independent actors, with opposing interests and therefore conflict is inevitable; a theory labelled as realism.<sup>67</sup> He argued that international politics is driven by

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<sup>66</sup> Joshua Goldstein and Jon Pevehouse. “*International Relations.*” Brief, Sixth Edition, Longman Publishers (2011). 40.

<sup>67</sup> Hans Morgenthau. “*Politics Among Nations.*” Revised by Kenneth Thompson, 6th edition, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1993.

nations whose objectives are in conflict which fuels a struggle for power in a zero-sum game. This is in contrast to a system that is based on interdependence and community, in which nations work in collective pursuit of mutually beneficial outcomes, subordinating individual national interest; a concept embedded in the notion of idealism.<sup>68</sup>

For the purpose of understanding the relevance of the Caribbean militaries as a power instrument in regional politics, the basic concept of national power will be discussed and superimposed onto the Caribbean political environment. As a foundation, the anarchical concept of the international system will be examined in the regional context and the cooperative security approach would be debated as a contradictory notion.

The modern international system, which emerged at the end of the Thirty Years War following the treaties of the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, set out the basic rules that established the territorial sovereignty of states as independent and equal agents at the international level free from external intervention.<sup>69</sup> The equality of states as actors meant that the international system exists in a state of anarchy, without an overarching governmental authority, and with each state having the right to protect its sovereignty and pursue its national interests. This realist perspective introduces the potential for conflict between countries as these independent actors reserve the right to use the means and capabilities available to them to cope with and influence

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<sup>68</sup> Anne-Marie Slaughter. "*Liberal International Relations Theory and International Economic Law.*" *American University International Law Review* 10, No. 2 (1995). 728.

<sup>69</sup> G. R. Berridge and Alan James. "*A Dictionary of Diplomacy.*" Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, 148.



external actors in the protection of its sovereignty.<sup>70</sup> Prioritisation of national interest and security is a feature of *realpolitik* or power politics.<sup>71</sup>

The international system is one of self-interest and therefore cooperation among members within the system is primarily shaped by the capabilities and intentions of the actors. Consequently, cooperation among states is driven by the need for protection against insecurities. Conversely, potential vulnerabilities are created by a dependency on others to provide for deficiencies in elements of national power.<sup>72</sup> Even in a system characterised by a liberalist political approach, advocates believe that cooperation between nations is a means of ensuring national security interests, albeit veiled in a collective interdependent arrangement. The imbalance in capabilities and resources among nations creates a relative distribution of power with some states becoming more powerful than others. In the anarchical system, great powers dominate while weaker powers comply to survive. This struggle for dominance and power is shaped by the potential of nations, based upon their integral capabilities and resources, to influence others; a struggle that is dependent on national power. This dynamic of greater and weaker powers is evident in the regional sub-complex of the Caribbean basin and has influenced the power relationship between nations as shall be discussed.

The concept of power is a complex one. Hans Morgenthau refers to political power as the “psychological relation” between those who have the ability to influence and those over whom

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<sup>70</sup> Kenneth Waltz. “Theory of International Politics.” McGraw-Hill, 1979. 96.

<sup>71</sup> Joshua Goldstein and Jon Pevehouse. “*International Relations*”..., 35.

<sup>72</sup> Kenneth Waltz. “Theory of International Politics”..., 106.

that influence is exercised.<sup>73</sup> The purpose of this influence is to enable an actor to initiate a predetermined response by another actor, to force the discontinuance of a course of action or to maintain the status quo.<sup>74</sup> In *realpolitik*, power is a key enabler in the pursuit of national interests as this is a primary factor that impacts on a nation's ability to shape the behavior of other states within the international system.<sup>75</sup>

A country's will and ability to leverage other actors is defined by its external objectives as well as by the resources and capabilities at its disposal. In an environment in which nations are in competition for resources and face a threat to territorial sovereignty, military force becomes a powerful capability and is deemed one of the most significant instruments of national power. It represents a nation's centre of gravity as it provides the capacity, freedom of action and will to act in pursuit of its national interest. This, however, is relative as influence or inducement is only possible if competing nations do not possess greater or similar capabilities. To protect one's sovereignty or to ensure a nation's security, weaker nations tend to form alliances or gravitate toward more powerful nations that can guarantee its protection or provide assistance when needed. This is evident in the Eastern Caribbean where the smaller regional states have facilitated collective initiatives such as the Regional Security System and the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative in collaboration with the powerful United States. These initiatives serve as a means of establishing deterrence against potential threats to security and facilitating the development of their country's resources. This dependency, however, raises concerns over the

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<sup>73</sup> Ghazi Algosabi. "*The Theory of International Relations: Hans J. Morgenthau and His Critics*". Background, Vol. 8, No. 4 (Feb. 1965); <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3013729>; Internet; accessed 02 March 2012. pp. 221-256.

<sup>74</sup> K.J. Holsti. "*The Concept of Power in the Study of International Relations*". Background, Vol. 7, No. 4, (Feb. 1964); <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3013644>; Internet; accessed 14 March 2012. 184.

<sup>75</sup> Ancil Antoine, Brigadier General. "*What Should Be The Role Of The Trinidad And Tobago Defence Force...*"

preservation of sovereignty and the creation of vulnerabilities as national foreign priorities can be unavoidably influenced by the stronger power and a response in time of need is dependent upon the consideration and preparedness of external actors.

In circumstances where threats to sovereignty and national security from other states or through military force is less likely, as in the case of the Caribbean region today, then military capability becomes a less influential instrument of power. In these environments, other sources of influence and inducement become more relevant. Power is, therefore, generated through the possession of resources, the economy, technological advancement, a country's population and even through credible diplomatic relations. Possession of physical resources and capabilities, however, does not translate automatically into power; these resources represent power potential and are base indicators of national power. An important factor in enabling these indicators is the mobilisation of these resources and its alignment to national and foreign policy objectives.

Power potential is useless unless it can be mobilised and can be effectively used to influence, induce, deter or compel another actor to respond in alignment with the nation's objectives or in furtherance of its national interest. The efficacy of power is defined by a nation's ability to transform its power potential into an effective means of influence within the international system. For example, a country that is endowed with natural minerals or fisheries resources but is without the technology, the knowledge and expertise or the alliances that can exploit the availability of this potential, is failing to transform its resources into a source of economic power. Maximising natural resources is an enabling factor toward national development, alleviation of poverty, high standards of living, and the potential for an improvement in the provision of public services and education for the national citizenry. All these tangible capabilities lead to intangible socio-psychological sources of power that impact

upon the national will and morale of the population. These circumstances, in effect, create the platform upon which national cohesiveness can be built and trust and legitimacy in the country's leadership is established. Domestic development and population cohesiveness enables the national leadership to wield diplomatic influence externally, and in a domino effect, facilitates the development of other instruments of power that can be drawn upon to further national interest without the reliance on compulsion through the application of military power.

Power is built upon control and mobilisation of resources that in effect generate influence. In some cases, nations are able to access and control resources outside their territorial borders by means of global influence which is then applied through modernisation and industrialisation to build economic strength. Countries such as Japan have emerged as powerful actors in the international system using industrialisation to create significant influence within the global economy. Japan now has the third largest economy in the world and is ranked as the world's largest crediting nation. Although Japan is resource poor and its economic success is dependent upon imported materials, much of its rise to global power has been accredited to industrialisation, a well-educated and highly trained population and national leadership.

Geopolitics, the relation between location and foreign policy, is also a factor to be considered when examining the power potential of a nation. Spatial features such as the existence of water boundaries that separate nations or serve as lanes of communication can be exploited to create leverage in the pursuit of national interest. The separation of the Caribbean nations scattered throughout the region, for example, highlights the potential for the maintenance of sovereign rights and the reduction in disputes over resource control despite some interlocking exclusive economic zone boundaries. Nevertheless, the relatively close proximity of the nations and common transnational challenges that are emerging creates an interdependence and potential

opportunity for cooperation toward mutually beneficial national objectives. The collective relationship between these states allows those nations with access and control of greater natural resources to wield superior national power enabling them with the ability to influence and shape the regional agenda in alignment with its own strategic interests. This geopolitical influence is embedded in the concept of regional security complex where interdependence can be manipulated by the more powerful nations within the region and smaller nations comply to ensure security and survivability.

As a further example, the creation of the Suez Canal in Egypt linking the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea and the Panama Canal across Central America that links the Atlantic with the Pacific Oceans serve as critical communication arteries that facilitate international trade. Egypt and Panama, by the mere fact of their location, creates geostrategic power that enables these countries to forge alliances or deter actions toward them that will not advance their interest. Outside of security interest, these arteries serve as an economic resource that provides for massive domestic employment, enables the accumulation of wealth and the growth of the countries' gross domestic product hence contributing toward national economic capability.

Natural resources, military capability, geography, industrialisation and population have been described as “hard power”; the asymmetric possession of material resources that allows an actor the ability to generate influence over another.<sup>76</sup> However, Hans Morgenthau alluded to other sources of power that are less tangible, soft power, that has significant influence on the acceptance of a country's vision and goals.<sup>77</sup> Intangibles such as national cohesiveness,

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<sup>76</sup> Masahiro Kohara. “*Information Power and International Security*”. National Institute of Informatics; [http://www.nii.ac.jp/pi/n1/1\\_39.pdf](http://www.nii.ac.jp/pi/n1/1_39.pdf); Internet; accessed 28 March 2012. 40.

<sup>77</sup> Hans Morgenthau. “*Politics among Nations*”

leadership character, diplomacy and quality of government are shaped by perception; perception which in turn influences public trust and state legitimacy. Governments no longer hold a monopoly on information and “managing the message” represents a critical challenge in today’s information environment; a challenge which, if not effectively managed, could lead to the undermining of trust and legitimacy.<sup>78</sup>

Power through information and messaging is not limited to governments. Non-state actors have found that informational power has become a critical tool in pressuring governments into action or legitimising their cause among the public. Global struggles have been shaped by the use of information and communication technology and in some instances “wars” have been fought and resolved in the virtual battlefield of cyberspace and the verdict declared in the court of “public opinion”.

So far, much of the discussion has been hinged upon the power potential of states and the influence they have upon other state actors within the international system. However, non-state actors and international organisations also wield significant influence on the national, regional and international levels that impacts upon the course of action and behaviours of countries. International organisations such as the United Nations (UN) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) are organisations which own no integral military capability and are dependent upon the national capabilities of its member states, however, are able to wield significant influence over defence and security activities globally. So too are the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (*Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de*

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<sup>78</sup> Dennis Murphy. “*Information as Power*”. US Army War College: An Anthology of USAWC Student Papers; [http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/army-usawc/info\\_as\\_power\\_v2.pdf](http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/army-usawc/info_as_power_v2.pdf); Internet; accessed 28 March 2012.

*Nuestra América* - ALBA), the intended alternative to the FTAA in the Latin American and Caribbean region, which are economic based organisations that attempt to control trade and economic activity on a regional and global level.<sup>79</sup> Outside of security and economic lobbying, non-state actors have been actively involved in issues of a social nature such as human rights and environmental concerns which have, to a greater extent in more recent times, eroded governments monopoly and power position as these actors have become increasingly powerful on the international scene.<sup>80</sup>

Similar to the international organisations that collaborate toward interests in economic development and the national well-being of its members, other non-state international organisations pursue objectives that may compromise the well-being of countries and, deliberately or inadvertently, erode the national power of affected countries and its citizens through their activities. Terrorist organisations such as al Qaeda with its global influence as well as transnational organised crime networks, acting in pursuit of their own objectives, like parasitic organisms, draw down on the power of states, directly or indirectly. Their actions often serve to impact upon the economic stability, undermine national leadership, and compromise human and public security of countries and regions. Collectively, these actions serve to eventually diminish or challenge a state's ability to create or mobilise its power potential. It therefore stands to reason that, similar to the notion that the military is one of the most important power capabilities, so to, insecurity is one of the most devastating and impacting factors on national development and a country's ability to wield national power.

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<sup>79</sup> Marta Harnecker. "*Latin America and Twenty-First Century Socialism: Inventing to Avoid Mistakes.*" [http://venezuelanalysis.com/analysis/5531&favtitle=Latin%20America%20&%3B%20Twenty-First%20Century%20Socialism:%20Inventing%20to%20Avoid%20Mistakes,%20Chapter%201?&lang=en\\_us&output=json](http://venezuelanalysis.com/analysis/5531&favtitle=Latin%20America%20&%3B%20Twenty-First%20Century%20Socialism:%20Inventing%20to%20Avoid%20Mistakes,%20Chapter%201?&lang=en_us&output=json); Internet; accessed 20 February 2012.

<sup>80</sup> Gregory Treverton and Seth Jones. "*Measuring National Power*". RAND Corporation (2005); [http://www.rand.org/pubs/conf\\_proceedings/2005/RAND\\_CF215.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/conf_proceedings/2005/RAND_CF215.pdf); Internet; accessed 20 February 2012.

### ***National Power in the Caribbean Region***

The ability of a state actor to advance its national interest within the international system is dependent upon its capacity and will to generate influence defined by national power. This concept holds true in the Caribbean context as countries must continue to uphold some aspect of a realist approach in pursuit of its own development while maintaining an ideological agenda in the interest of regional integration and cooperation. As such, it will be naïve to infer that as a result of the absence of major sovereignty disputes between the nations of the English-speaking Caribbean, that individual national agendas have been suppressed or abandoned for the sake of the regional cause. Power is complex and in the Caribbean context this characteristic of power and national interest is very evident.

As discussed previously, power is a function of tangible and intangible sources. Power is impacted upon by threats, vulnerabilities and national instruments of response employed against the diminishing effects of power-reducing activities and the state's ability to mobilise capabilities that generate greater national influence in pursuit of strategic objectives. A review of national power among Caribbean nations demonstrates that states within the region exhibit several structural features that undermine their ability to exercise leverage regionally and internationally.<sup>81</sup> Individually, Caribbean countries are considered small and weak power generators as a result of several tangible, structural features. Caribbean states share the reality of being actors in the anarchical structure of the international system and subject to complex interdependence. Due to their relatively small size in terms of geography, population and natural resources in the international context, these limited power generating elements restrict their ability to leverage other international and even regional actors. These tangible structural

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<sup>81</sup> Ivelaw Griffith. "A New Conceptual Approach to Caribbean Security"..., 223.



limitations further accentuate other elements of power as social, economic and diplomatic vulnerabilities are either created or enhanced.<sup>82</sup>

The vulnerability of the individual countries and the region as a whole is further exemplified by the impact of global events that have had direct negative influence on the economies and well-being of these small states. The events of 9/11 initiated an immediate impact on the economy of the Caribbean states which is based largely upon tourism and foreign trade.<sup>83</sup> Employment was directly affected due to the resulting inactivity in the tourism sector while the economy was further stressed by the expenditure of scarce financial resources on security arrangements related to the protection of critical infrastructure. In the case of Trinidad and Tobago, the US insisted, albeit under the veil of cooperative security, that specific security arrangements be implement to ensure the protection of the energy sector, initiating the Energy Sector Security Initiative geared towards the security of US interest in the local source of petroleum based resources and natural gas.<sup>84</sup>

The global financial crisis of 2008 rendered several nations in the region vulnerable and those countries with stronger, more resilient economies, such as Trinidad and Tobago, immediately became regional “powerhouses”. This is evidenced by such arrangements as the transfer of ownership of the Jamaican airline, *Air Jamaica*, which has been bought out by the

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<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 223.

<sup>83</sup> According to the Caribbean Tourism Organisation website (<http://www.onecaribbean.org/>) tourist arrivals in the Caribbean were steadily increasing between January to September 2001. In fact there was a 6.9% increase in arrivals over the previous period in 2000. Immediately following the events of 9/11, arrivals in the Caribbean reflected a dramatic decline ranging from a 19% decrease in September 2001 continuing to 13 % in January 2002. Although the decline was primarily associated with tourist arrivals via air travel the trend was also reflected in Cruise ships arriving in the Caribbean which affected both the North American and European travellers.

<sup>84</sup> Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, “*Trinidad And Tobago and The United States Of America Collaborate On The Protection Of Critical Energy Infrastructure*”. Media Release. Available from [http://www.energy.gov.tt/content/TT\\_US\\_Collaboration\\_on\\_Energy\\_Infrastructure.pdf](http://www.energy.gov.tt/content/TT_US_Collaboration_on_Energy_Infrastructure.pdf); Internet; accessed 22 March 2012.

Trinidad and Tobago owned Caribbean Airlines following negotiations which started in 2009 during the financial crisis experienced globally. The earthquake and tsunami of 2011 which was experienced in Japan had an immediate impact on the Caribbean due to trade and economic relations, further emphasising the vulnerability of these small states as they lack the economic resilience to withstand the negative effects of events that occur external to the region. The motor vehicle industry which was directly affected experienced unexpected unemployment, leading to economic downturn and negative effects on social well-being in some parts of the region serves to further exemplify these vulnerabilities.

Caribbean nations are subject to the overwhelming impact of greater regional powers such as the United States. This influence is evident in the policies that are pursued and implemented on the political, economic and security agendas of the countries of the region. Terrorism, which accounted for the events of 9/11, has become a preoccupation on the security agenda in the Caribbean as a result of the dictates of the US powerhouse. Caribbean countries have been made to agree to treaties and policies that are aligned to US national interests but not necessarily a priority on the Caribbean national agendas. Adherence and cooperation is often as a result of the need to align to a greater power for the purpose of survival and security. Due to these challenging circumstances, some nations have attempted to align with alternative arrangements as an option to US trade and economic dominance.

To reduce the effects of vulnerabilities and the dictates of extra-regional events and influences, Caribbean nations have attempted to forge regional alliances that enhance their economic, diplomatic and security standing on the regional and global level. One such effort is the *Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América* (ALBA), an alternative to the FTAA, which was coordinated by the President of Venezuela, Hugo Chavez.

Despite expressions of regional alliances and integration, states have maintained as a priority the pursuit of national interest and intent to further their own national agendas. An example of such dilemmas is the Venezuelan initiated PetroCaribe Oil deal facilitated through ALBA. Thirteen members of CARICOM, including Haiti as of 2006, as well as Cuba and the Dominican Republic, have signed to an agreement with Venezuela to purchase oil on conditions of preferential payment over a twenty-five (25) year financing arrangement. In some instances countries are allowed to trade goods such as agriculture to offset the cost of fuel received.<sup>85</sup> This arrangement has had a direct impact on the economy of Trinidad and Tobago which is a competing oil-producing CARICOM member.

Despite being interpreted as an “undermining” arrangement toward their CARICOM neighbor, the signing countries proceeded into negotiations that are in their individual interests in spite of long standing trade and aid facilitation between Trinidad and Tobago and its English-Speaking Caribbean partners. Trinidad and Tobago, however, has been able to withstand the negative effects of this arrangement by maintaining a global reach, by maintaining its status as the single largest natural gas supplier to the United States, a market that continues to remain secure once Trinidad and Tobago maintains its diplomatic and economic relationship with the US. While these circumstances enable Trinidad and Tobago to build economic power, it has simultaneously increased its vulnerability toward US policies and introduced aspects of diplomatic indifference towards CARICOM neighbors.

Despite the maintenance of diplomatic relations reflected in Trinidad and Tobago’s regional policies, the perspective of the Trinidadian public is not as forgiving as the feelings of

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<sup>85</sup> Ricky Singh. “CARICOM in Harmony on PetroCaribe Oil deal” Jamaica Observer, February 2006. Internet: [https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/98682\\_Caricom-in-harmony-on-PetroCaribe-oil-deal](https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/98682_Caricom-in-harmony-on-PetroCaribe-oil-deal). Accessed on 28 March 2012.

indignation over the PetroCaribe Oil deal continue to fester and hence there is some reservation in supporting the continuance of aid policies. As a matter of interest, newly elected Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Kamla Persad-Bissessar, in July 2010, expressed these sentiments somewhat when she warned regional heads of Government at a summit in Jamaica that Trinidad and Tobago was not prepared to fund the regional security budget; a message that the oil-rich country was re-examining its financial commitment to regional cooperation and that other members of the CARICOM needed to do their part.<sup>86</sup>

The power dynamics in the Caribbean region are not founded upon the military capability of the various states. Although, as mentioned earlier, realists suggest that military force is the most important power capability, in the Caribbean this is not so; power dynamics are far more complex and multidimensional. More important than military might is economic and diplomatic prowess upon which national agendas are formulated and pursued. These power instruments, however, can only be realised if the appropriate security environment exists to allow economic development to be achieved, to enable national leadership to be deemed effective and to strive, and to accommodate the fostering of public trust and national cohesion. Leverage is dependent upon the ability to ensure national security which includes protection and enhancement of all elements of national power.

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<sup>86</sup> The Observer. “*T&T Refuses to be CARICOM’s ATM Card.*” <http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/T-T-refuses-to-be-Caricom-s--ATM-Card->; Internet; accessed 28 March 2012.

## *Conclusions*

The issue of national power among Caribbean states has been demonstrated to be complex and multidimensional as national power is primarily hinged on economic and diplomatic influence. Conceptually, military capability enhances a state's ability to influence other actors in the international system and more so those existing within a regional complex. However, within the Caribbean sub-complex, military prowess is far less applied as an instrument than other sources of national power. Notwithstanding, military capability plays a significant role as an enabler that sets the preconditions to facilitate national leverage and thus enhances national power.

Caribbean militaries must, therefore, translate into being a contributor to the preservation of economic, diplomatic and social instruments of national power either directly or indirectly. In today's regional environment, based upon our examination of the emerging security circumstances and the nature of the power dynamics in the Caribbean, the role of the military, and in particular that of the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force, will be analysed to determine the extent to which the institution can remain a relevant instrument of national power. The alignment of the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force will, therefore, be examined in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 4**

### **The TTDF - An Instrument of National Power in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

#### ***Introduction***

As identified earlier, Trinidad and Tobago share an interdependent security relationship with the other nations of the region embedded within the notion of Regional Security Complex and the Caribbean as a sub-complex. The securitisation of developing issues and the reconceptualisation of security threats have created an emerging environment that requires an integrated, multidimensional, non-traditional approach toward national security. The recognition and inclusion of human security as a key concern of national objectives has instigated a concomitant reconceptualisation of the strategies developed and implemented against these new challenges and the application of the integral capabilities in response at the national and regional levels. Failure to effectively respond to these emerging circumstances encourages destabilising effects that impact on citizen security, public security and national defence thus potentially compromising the sovereign status and well-being of nations and the region.

The complex nature of the regional environment is not only complicated by the fact that there is an interdependent relationship between nations on issues of regional security, but there is also a direct nexus between security and the nation's ability to build national power. As discussed, power is complex and a nation's ability to ensure its well-being is dependent upon the employment of its instruments of national power. Realists posit that military force is the most powerful of national instruments but in the Caribbean this is less evident as national power has been focused primarily upon economic and diplomatic prowess.

In this context, the role of the Caribbean militaries has been subordinated to other elements of national power and must therefore re-align the capabilities and contribution toward achieving strategic objectives to remain a relevant instrument of national power. For the purpose of this analysis, re-alignment of the Caribbean military would be discussed specific to the case of the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force (TTDF). Notwithstanding the focus on the TTDF within its national context, much of the deliberations remain relevant to other regional armed forces and the nations that they serve. This analysis will contemplate the implications for the TTDF within the context of the strategic objectives at the regional and at the national levels. An examination of the role of the TTDF in domestic security and as a contributor toward the preservation and enhancement of economic, diplomatic, environmental and social aspects of national power in the existing circumstances will be undertaken.

### ***Aligning Capability with National Strategic Objectives***

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has developed a National Policy built on the premise of ‘Prosperity for All’.<sup>87</sup> Within this context, the national foreign policy, which is one of seven pillars of the sustainable framework that is focused upon economic development, seeks to maintain and develop bilateral and multilateral relations that support these objectives. In this respect the National Strategic Plan has outlined several objectives that focus on regional cooperation and development to include:

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<sup>87</sup> Ministry of Planning and the Economy. “*National Development Agenda for Trinidad and Tobago.*” UNDP Workshop on Trinidad and Tobago Country Strategy Action Plan 2012 – 2015, Crowne Plaza, Port of Spain, August 2011; <http://www.undp.org.tt/News/CPAP/pics/Ministry%20of%20Planning%20presentation.pdf>; Internet; Accessed 30 March 2012.

- Support for the development of sustainable regional economies and business enterprises,<sup>88</sup>
- The securing of national interests through international, regional and local defence efforts by actively participating in international peace support and humanitarian operations;<sup>89</sup> and,
- The pursuit of Trinidad and Tobago's integration in regional and international security, defence, anticrime and safety efforts.<sup>90</sup>

These economic and social objectives have been linked to cooperation in areas of regional security and public safety as they serve as strategic avenues toward the strengthening of the relationships between Trinidad and Tobago and its CARICOM partners in the pursuit of national economic interest.

There are several key dimensions that are encapsulated in this approach. Firstly, the development and maintenance of sustainable economies within the region translates into viable markets for the manufacturing sector of Trinidad and Tobago. Secondly, Trinidad and Tobago's continued contribution to the well-being of regional partners in the form of security collaboration, disaster relief and humanitarian assistance creates the platform for other forms of cooperation to include diplomatic and economic partnership. Finally, the nexus between emerging threats such as organised crime, illegal drugs, human trafficking and money laundering, and the rise in social instability and fear of economic decline due to the negative

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<sup>88</sup>Draft National Strategic Plan, Trinidad and Tobago. "*Vision2020 Draft National Strategic Plan.*" [http://www.meetmanning.com/home/pdf/national\\_plan.pdf](http://www.meetmanning.com/home/pdf/national_plan.pdf); Internet; accessed 20 January 2012. 173.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid....189.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid....194.



impact on investor confidence and cost of counter-measures, have imposed a need for a cooperative regional security approach; one that is supported by security and military prowess.<sup>91</sup>

In order to demonstrate its commitment to its strategic objectives, Trinidad and Tobago will be well advised to invest in capability development that can be projected as part of a multi-national approach toward regional well-being. With a view to effect these articulated interests. Trinidad and Tobago needs to become increasingly involved in the coordination and participation in multinational security efforts. The country's involvement needs to be made through the projection of capability and resources that are interoperable with or enhance the regional capacity to deter or mitigate against transnational threats. For this purpose, the development and deployment of superior maritime and air capability is necessary to compensate for the withdrawal of military resources previously provided by greater powers such as the United States and the British that have since been reallocated to support other foreign interests critical to their international policies.<sup>92</sup> Capacity building is not only necessary to enable regional powers to respond to traditional and non-traditional threats but is also important to remain effective against an evolving criminal enterprise which seeks to employ modern technology and improved methodology in their system of operation. Transnational crime is now facilitated through the use of available improvements in technology and transshipment methods that overcome the existing capabilities of the law enforcement resources.

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<sup>91</sup> Remarks by the Hon. Ramesh Lawrence Maharaj, Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago at the Opening of the Caribbean-United-States-European-Canadian Ministerial (Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement) Conference," Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, June 12-13, 2000.

<sup>92</sup> See previous discussion on the reduction in US military presence during the 1990s amounting to a withdrawal of approximately seventy percent of personnel in the Caribbean in support of defence and security initiatives during the period. See footnote #36.

Domestically, one of the key areas of strategic interest is the protection of the nation's economic "blood-line", the energy sector. This economic element of national power is susceptible to emerging threats such as acts of terrorism, "piracy" and illegal bunkering of fuel for sale on the black-market. Trinidad and Tobago's energy infrastructure and resources are dispersed throughout the territorial landscape including off-shore platforms that are vulnerable to the motivated adversary or entities of security interest that are driven by criminal enterprise. Theft, destruction or sabotage of critical infrastructure and an atmosphere of insecurity can have catastrophically damaging effects on the country's economic well-being. The potential consequence on social stability and public confidence in the political leadership that is hinged on economic sustainability cannot be underestimated. Any negative outcomes can impact on the regional and international reputation of Trinidad and Tobago as a viable partner in diplomatic and trade matters. Preservation of economic sustainability is therefore critical to enabling national strategic interests.

Protection of the economic sector is not limited to the energy infrastructure but the other areas of manufacturing and industry which are found concentrated in industrial complexes in various parts of Trinidad. Additionally, the concern for protection extends to the critical port facilities that are the gateway to regional and international trade. These industrial complexes not only create centralised and focused areas of susceptibility but also introduce public safety concerns that, if compromised, will have significant HAZMAT and disaster response requirements that necessitate specialised capabilities from the public safety institutions including the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force.

As presented earlier, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago is focused upon sustainable development that is able to support the vision of the country to be respected as a First World

Nation in the international forum. This development includes the assurance of human security, preservation of the environment, human development and the creation of a technologically advanced information based society. In this respect, Trinidad and Tobago must advance its reputation in the various metrics of development particularly in the spheres of economic growth, security and social development. The greater success that this nation realises toward achieving these goal places Trinidad and Tobago in a relatively powerful position not only in the regional context but also establishing a significant voice in the international arena, either as a stand-alone entity or as part of the collective regional complex that can reflect the national interests of the country.

To this end, the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force presents significant potential in the actualising of these national objectives, either directly or indirectly, as it offers unique and diverse capabilities ranging from leadership in strategy development to physical capabilities that are critical to national strategic intent and the creation and wielding of national power. The Defence Force is important in the response to the traditional and non-traditional threats that challenge the region and the national well-being and acts as an enabler to nation building and human development as shall now be discussed.

### ***TTDF and Regional Cooperation***

The Defence Force has consistently been involved in regional efforts focused on security cooperation aimed at reducing security concerns with particular focus on the prevalence of transnational crime. However, in the reconceptualised environment of security, the force does not now possess the required capability critically needed to enhance the regional effort to

mitigate some aspects of this complex organised enterprise. In this respect, the military could become a significant asset in countering the transshipment aspect of the illegal drug trade and its accompanying features such as human trafficking, money laundering, the movement of illegal guns and ammunition which are strongly linked to the developing gang cultures that are becoming more prevalent in the Caribbean nations.

In 2007, the former governmental administration in Trinidad and Tobago negotiated the acquisition of three Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs) at a cost of £150 million that would enhance the ability to police the maritime environment beyond the littorals. These vessels were built with enhanced capacity that were to be used toward curbing illegal transnational trends and deter the occurrence of piracy, illegal transshipment and deter any consideration of maritime terrorism; a concern that has escalated since the events of September 2001. The acquisition has since been cancelled leaving the nation and the region without this potential capability which included support for airborne assets on board and the ability to project military force either in a constabulary, peace support or humanitarian assistance role. The vessels have since been acquired by Brazil for use by their national armed forces.

Notwithstanding, while the absence of this capacity limits the nation's involvement in maritime security operations, it does not eliminate the potential for the Defence Force to enable the nation's objectives in respect to defence cooperation, in the form of disaster relief and humanitarian assistance. The regional deployment potential in response to disasters is still retained in the engineering and infantry capability of the Trinidad and Tobago Army which can be employed in theatre on very short notice with the assistance of either civil resources or deployment platforms from another nation. In order to fully enable this capability however there is need for an integral deployment platform that is able to provide enhanced support for troops

employed in theatre without over-reliance on an extended logistic arrangement that reaches back to the shores of Trinidad and Tobago. In other words, effective deployment in this environment requires the capacity to support the troops and assets deployed; a capacity that is built into an expeditionary force that is ready for short notice response.

Separate and apart from force projection, the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force can make a significant contribution to the development of strategies to be employed at the regional level such as was the case in the hosting of the 2007 ICC Cricket World Cup Tournament held among several nations throughout the region. The capacity for planning and intelligence development has been a major component of the professional development of the members of the Defence Force and as such will enable Trinidad and Tobago to make a significant contribution to the regional effort through entities such as the Regional Intelligence Fusion Centre and the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security.

As mentioned earlier, the strategic objective of contributing toward sustainable economic development within the region is built on the premise of a permissive security environment that facilitates and enhances development strategies. Similarly, national growth is also founded upon the construct of a permissive and conducive domestic environment that not only complements economic, social and environmental development but it also mitigates against the potentially destabilising and destructive effects of the emerging security issues evident in the national landscape. The Defence Force, therefore, is a key enabler to nation building and a facilitator of political legitimacy and social cohesion; key aspects of building related elements of national power.

### ***Military Contribution to Economic Sustainability***

Transnational terrorism and criminal networks involved in illicit trafficking in narcotics, humans, and weapons as well as piracy are growing problems which can seriously disrupt the flow of international commerce.<sup>93</sup> The Defence Force's contribution at the regional level is intended to establish a permissive environment that mitigates against transnational threats to enable the facilitation of sustainable economic growth and accommodate regional and international trade. This notion is also applicable at the domestic level as protection of critical infrastructure and economic related complexes fall within the remit of the Force. Planning for and developing the capability to respond to threats to industry and critical aspects of trade such as the protection of port facilities is an accepted mandate of the Defence Force.

The continued involvement of the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard in fisheries protection and enforcement, anti-smuggling and counter-narcotic operations, as well as pollution surveillance and enforcement are all geared toward the creation and maintenance of the conditions that facilitate national stability, growth and power. This is demonstration that the arms of the Defence Force are already aligned, to some extent, to enable the achievement of strategic objectives. There is, however, the need for new capability development as was mentioned in the form of the establishment of an expeditionary capability intended for regional deployment. Further, there must be a demonstrated acceptance of some non-traditional roles to be able to contain new challenges and threats encountered in the national environment. This acceptance must be demonstrated at both the political and military strategic levels in order that efforts are not made to simply apply conventional thinking to unconventional threats.

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<sup>93</sup> Milan Vego. "On Naval Power." Joint Force Quarterly, No 50 (Summer 2008). 8.

The Defence Force must be viewed by the Trinidad and Tobago public as something more than just a military force that is oriented toward the application of force against conventional threat circumstances i.e. an adversary bearing insurgent characteristics that threaten the sovereignty and political stability of the nation. Whilst the ability to engage these threats is still a primary responsibility of the Force, the engagement of this institution as a nation building tool and a precursor to national power is matter of creative and emboldened leadership that is prepared to explore the potential of the military in productive and innovative approaches in the interests of national development. In this respect, the application of the military capability in non-securitised arenas is worth exploring.

### ***TTDF Involvement in Human Development and Social Cohesion***

Social cohesion and human development can best be facilitated in an environment that is conducive to growth, one that is founded upon economic stability, a common perception of safety among the general populace and the presence of the will by the national leadership to invest and pursue these conditions as a matter of national interests. The precursor to enabling these conditions is the establishment of economic sustainability and the preservation of public and citizen safety, two conditions that have been demonstrated to be achievable employing the Defence Force as one entity within a multiagency approach. Additionally, the Defence Force also presents unique capabilities that can be used to enhance human development targeting “at-risk youths” who are often coerced into the socially dysfunctional communities characterised by anti-social and sometimes criminal behaviour that compromises social cohesion.

The Defence Force has been mandated in the past to establish and deliver youth development programmes focused upon empowerment, skill transfer, using environmental preservation as a means of altering dysfunctional behaviour demonstrated by youths who have not benefited from the public education process. These programmes, such as the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Military Led Academic Training (MILAT) and the Military Youth Programme of Apprenticeship and Reorientation Training (MYPART) have realised partial success in reorienting at-risk youths who generally originate from societies labelled as high-risk in respect to crime or disorganised communities.

The achievement of these programmes has been marked by partial success as the resources required to successfully deliver the training and realise the desired effect have been limited thus impacting directly on the end results. Further, these programmes tap into allocated resources that are required for the accomplishment of core functions. The reallocation of resources such as personnel has had negative impacts on the Force to perform its core functions thus creating a significant efficiency challenge for the leadership of the military. It is strongly advised that these endeavours be specifically catered for by increasing the organisational structure and personnel strength to attend specifically to these roles mandated by the political directorate. These are the type of adjustments that must be understood and accepted by the leadership, both political and military, to enable the Defence Force to assume roles that are non-traditional in nature but contribute toward human development and national cohesion in effect.

Apart from the direct benefit of contributing to the establishment of a perception of public safety and the youth development programmes that are conducted by the Defence Force, the military can be employed as a key contributor to community development programmes using entities such as the Engineering Corps. Self-help programmes that are conducted under the



auspices of the Ministry of Social Development can be coordinated with the assistance of the military to enhance efficiency and enable public officials to enter into communities that have not been permissive due to high rates of crime and disorder. The continuance of disorder in these societies prevail as state enterprises and state officials have been reluctant to work within these areas due to the perceived threat to personal safety. Through the Defence Force, these barriers to social development can be dismantled creating the conditions for cohesion and advancement.

### ***Environment Protection – an Instrument of Response***

As mentioned earlier, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has established through the Defence Force a proactive initiative that combines youth development with the preservation of the environment through the Civilian Conservation Corps. On the other end of the spectrum, there are circumstances that warrant a specialised response toward environmental protection that can, in some instances, only be delivered by the military or specially trained departments within the National Security Ministry. Trinidad and Tobago depends heavily on industry to support its economic interests. Large industrial complexes such as those that are based on the production of steel, cement and the petrochemical industry produce potentially hazardous materials (HAZMAT) and by-products that can pose significant environmental threats for the populations and the landscape that is located within the affected zone around these complexes. In collaboration with the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service, the Defence Force should be the other institution that responds to accidents that can create a public hazard as a result. However, in instances where an incident is the result of an act of sabotage, terrorism or an armed assault, then the military becomes either the primary responder or acts directly in support of the Trinidad and

Tobago Police Service. It is a known fact that the police service does not have the necessary capability, knowledge or equipment to respond to HAZMAT circumstances. Therefore, the Defence Force should be the primary entity for the development of these capabilities and the custodian of the necessary resources to respond in the time of need.

In the maritime environment, the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard is already engaged in the surveillance of pollution that affects the territorial waters but is significantly limited to observation within the twelve mile limitation of the territorial bounds as they do not have the capability to patrol extensively the Economic Exclusion Zone (EEZ) due to the unavailability of appropriate maritime assets. While the Coast Guard is entrusted with the environmental surveillance function, it is limited in its ability to perform this role effectively more so in circumstances where other nations within the region are affected thus requiring a multi-national effort in response.

The continued involvement of the Trinidad and Tobago Armed Force suggests that the military still retains a relatively high level of respect from the general public and officials writ large, and is a key institution to be engaged in the building of national cohesion and the enabling of human development. Likewise, once appropriately resourced and restructured the Defence Force can prove to be a most significant contributor toward the achievement of national economic, social and political objectives and a key instrument of national power that enables national interest at both the domestic and regional level.

## *Conclusions*

The Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force presents significant potential to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago as an enabler to the conditions necessary toward achieving national objectives. Directly or indirectly, the military offers both tangible and intangible capabilities that preserve the sources of national power that are more dominant in the Caribbean such as economic and diplomatic influence.

Regionally, the military enhances diplomatic influence as it acts as a tool to be integrated into the regional security initiatives that are implemented in response to transnational concerns and non-traditional threats that have become more prevalent in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In so doing, a permissive environment can be established that enhances regional economic stability; a strategic objective that is intended to this country's own national well-being.

Domestically, the assurance of national security and economic sustainability are interdependent issues to which the military can make a significant contribution. These two preconditions also act as enablers to the enhancement of the legitimacy and the credibility of the national leadership as well as creating the foundation for building national cohesion. The Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force, therefore, can retain its relevance as a key contributor toward achieving national objectives and an enabler of national power. It is, however, important that to maximise the potential contribution of the military, the national decision makers and the military leadership must embrace the role the armed force must play and enable this prospective by ensuring that the necessary resources and opportunities are available.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Conclusions and Future Research**

#### ***Conclusions***

This paper sought to discuss the role of the military in a reconceptualised regional security environment. The end of the Cold War introduced impacting dynamics on the regional landscape that influenced the role of the Caribbean militaries as they are employed regionally and domestically. We have seen that the US interests during the Cold War were driven by the bipolarity of the global powers and that the Caribbean basin served as a key consideration within the United States foreign and national defence policies. Since the end of the Cold War, the US strategies have been realigned toward other global interests mainly driven by its preoccupation with the “Global War on Terror” in the wake of the events of 11 September 2001. The re-assignment of military resources and capabilities that previously contributed toward regional security has been followed by the prevalence of transnational challenges embedded in organised criminal activity linked with the international drug trade.

As posited by Buzan and Wæver, the countries of the English-speaking Caribbean naturally form a security sub-complex within the North American Regional Complex based upon the interdependence to resolve the common security challenges that are present within the region. It is understood that none of the Caribbean states individually possesses the capability or capacity to respond to these security threats and therefore the Caribbean states share a common regional interest that underscores the need for a cooperative security approach.

Notwithstanding this common interest, it has been established that, despite the demonstration of an idealistic agenda based upon regional security, economic development and

diplomatic cooperation, nations have maintained a realist perspective toward national interests and therefore have opted to wield national power in pursuit of their own strategic objectives. It has been established that, contrary to the realist perspective of power, the military within the Caribbean context is not the most powerful source of national power but has been subordinated to economic and diplomatic prowess. This perspective of power has been reinforced based upon the nature of the threat to the sovereignty of nations and the reconceptualisation of challenges based upon the process of securitisation. This process of subordination, therefore, has made it necessary for the armed forces to become a significant enabler of economic and diplomatic power in order to retain relevance.

It has been confirmed that issues traditionally viewed as social challenges now pose a significant threat to the well-being of countries and have been securitised as potential threats to the economic, social and environment safety of states and their citizens. This shift in the threat assessment has influenced leaders at the national level to reorient their strategic security policies to place greater emphasis on human security vice national security in its traditional context. This reorientation has inadvertently reinforced the perception that the role of the Caribbean militaries and its contribution toward the achievement of national objectives are now subject to debate.

Notwithstanding the doubt, it has been established that the military, in this case the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force, retains its relevance as a key contributor to the achievement of strategic objectives and a significant enabler of national power. While the military in the Caribbean may no longer be considered the “most powerful” element of national power, it remains one of the most versatile instruments. Once resourced adequately and employed creatively within the national security context, the military will provide the assurance of well-

being to the state and its citizens, albeit in a traditional role or in a reconceptualised function to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century regional environment.

### ***Future Research***

This research paper looked specifically at the role of military in the emerging security environment in the Caribbean. Several impending factors influenced the need for a review of the role of the armed forces as an element of national power. These included the changing dynamic of security in the region and the refocus of the US defence and security strategies. Future research is recommended to determine the extent to which US foreign policies will continue to inform the national policies of Caribbean states and the influence this would have on security, trade and diplomatic relations. It will also be interesting to examine the extent to which emerging global powers such as Brazil, India and China, who are already establishing influential links within the region, will influence the security environment in the Caribbean and the development of the armed forces therein.

Additionally, the reconceptualisation of security in the Caribbean places greater emphasis on the threats to human security which include transnational crime and the related consequences. Would these trends further fuel the debate on the continued existence and future development of the military institutions as the need for policing capabilities and resources become more relevant to the concerns of the Caribbean policy makers and populace writ large? These are issues that have a most significant bearing on the future posturing and alignment of the military and therefore should be given due consideration to determine their implications.

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