This document is an interim report of a joint parliamentary committee investigating crime, security, and public safety issues in Trinidad and Tobago.

Mandate and Powers of the Committee

- The JSCNS is established under Standing Orders and mandated to review national security, including agency coordination and performance.
- It can summon persons, documents, and hold meetings concurrently with other committees.

Key Members and Support Staff

- The committee comprises members appointed since 2015, chaired by MP Fitzgerald Hinds.
- Secretariat includes officers and research assistants supporting evidence gathering.

Actions and Evidence in Inquiry

- The committee held multiple hearings in early 2020 to investigate crime and public statements.
- Evidence revealed concerns over politicians' links to criminal entities and the involvement of officials in organized crime.

Crime Trends and Law Enforcement Analysis

- Police reported a 8–15% reduction in violent crime, but homicide rates increased unexpectedly.
- Intelligence suggests deliberate attempts to inflate homicide figures as part of political motives.

Politician and Criminal Links

- Reports link opposition figures to gang activities, state contracts used to fund criminal groups, and questionable meetings.
- Past and current politicians are identified in connection with criminal elements, with allegations of protection and influence.

Recommendations and Procedural Findings

- The committee urged excluding Dr. Roodal Moonilal due to vested personal interests.
- It emphasized ongoing evidence collection and unresolved issues related to political-criminal relationships.

Committee Proceedings and Meeting Formalities

- Several meetings took place, with approvals, amendments, and internal discussions on minutes.
- Meetings were suspended and resumed multiple times, with discussions on interim reports and witness participation.

Crime and Security Challenges in Trinidad and Tobago

- The country experienced a spike in homicides, reaching 537 in 2019, with 20 cases early this year.
- There is public fear, and authorities recognize the escalating crime, especially gun violence and gang-related activities.

Minister of National Security's Role and Statements

- Minister Stuart Young highlighted ongoing national security briefings, monitoring persons of interest, and balancing public safety.
- He reaffirmed that his public statements were based on intelligence reports and official briefings, emphasizing their factual support and support for law enforcement.

Crime Incidents and Related Political Relationships

- Incidents include police confrontations, gang violence, and sporadic shootings unlinked to gang activities.
- Allegations surfaced of political figures, including Opposition Members, colluding with criminal elements, with reports of attempts to influence elections and protect gang associates.

Evidence and Intelligence Collection

- Security agencies supplied reports linking politicians and criminal gangs involved in criminal activities and electoral interference.
- Investigations involved discussions on criminal contacts, attempts to influence elections, and the involvement of gang leaders with state contracts.

Public and Political Response

- The Minister's statements drew criticism, with Opposition members describing them as reckless.
- The committee discussed the transparency, relevance, and impact of public disclosures on national security and investigations.

Surveillance, Investigations, and Law Enforcement Actions

- Surveillance of political figures and gang members was confirmed, with concerns over leaks and confidentiality.
- Ongoing investigations focus on criminal links, election interference, and illegal firearm activity, with efforts to secure convictions.

Alleged Political Interference in Security Matters

- Minister Young discussed receiving reports linking opposition figures and criminal entities to political activities.
- He emphasized he relied on police intelligence and clarified he did not request specific reports himself.

Criminal Activities and Political Associations

- Reports indicated connections between opposition leaders and known gang members involved in criminal behavior.
- Evidence included photographs and observations of meetings with questionable characters at political events.

Intelligence and Police Reports Procedures

- Minister Young stated he receives multiple reports daily from the police and intelligence agencies, but did not specify sources.

- He clarified he was informed of communications between incarcerated suspects and opposition figures but not about the mode of communication.

Incidents On December 31, 2019, and Organized Crime

- Intelligence suggested a gang leader instructed violence to surpass a previous murder record; police viewed this as politically motivated.
- Reports linked certain criminal incidents to efforts by opposition members to influence support in key areas.

Response to Crime and Security Threats

- Minister Young described the December 31 event as an act of terrorism due to the use of firearms and civilian casualties.
- He highlighted ongoing police investigations and noted measures taken to prevent further violence, emphasizing the balance with national security.

Parliamentary and Security Protocols

- Minister Young explained that he does not directly direct police actions but supports strategies based on intelligence.
- He rejected allegations of illegal activities involving himself or other MPs, citing no evidence or ongoing investigations against them.

Political Impact and Public Safety Concerns

- The discussions revealed concerns about criminal elements influencing political processes and potential destabilization.
- Minister Young stressed that the police work with the intelligence agencies and police investigations are ongoing, but he cannot comment on specific cases or evidence.

Police Response to Minister Young's Statements

- Police officials confirmed they had been informed of threats to increase murder rates and inciting violence.
- Authorities investigated intelligence about planned mass violence aiming for record-breaking homicides.

Political and Criminal Linkages

- Police reported connections between politicians, gang leaders, and criminal activities, including election-related contracts.
- Specific politicians, including prior and current MPs, allegedly interacted with gang leaders, possibly influencing criminal behavior.

Intelligence on Organized Crime and Threats

- Intelligence indicated plans by gangs to escalate violence, with targets to push homicide figures beyond historical levels.
- Evidence suggested deliberate acts aimed at destabilizing the country, potentially involving virtual terrorism.

Specific Incidents and Investigations

- Police confirmed credible intelligence about a planned terrorist-style attack at Prince and George Streets.
- Authorities identified and pursued gang leaders and their links to politicians, with investigations ongoing.

Minister Young's Public Statements

- Minister Young claimed information from police about inciting individuals and criminal activities influencing violence.
- He highlighted statements including political figures' involvement, with police corroborating some reports.

Court and Law Enforcement Challenges

- Police emphasized systemic issues like bail laws hindering crime reduction efforts.
- Data showed many suspects with firearms were released early, complicating security efforts.

Confidentiality and Intelligence Handling

- Police stressed that investigations are confidential and threatened to withhold sensitive information from public release.
- Police confirmed reports of planned meetings between gang leaders and politicians were monitored, even if meetings did not occur.

Summary of Key Concerns

- Allegations of politicians fraternizing with criminals and influencing crime.
- Ongoing investigations into organized crime, political connections, and attempted destabilization efforts.

Committee Proceedings and Suspension

- Meeting was suspended briefly for internal issues, then resumed and adjourned.
- Members thanked officers for their service amid tight schedules.

Minority Report Concerns

- Alleged bias of Chairman Hinds due to public statements.
- Opposition members denied full examination of police witnesses.

Evidence and Testimony Issues

- Minister of National Security's vague, unsupported claims linked to opposition.
- Lack of concrete evidence and inconsistent facts in the interim report.

Allegations of Bias and Procedural Flaws

- Chairman Hinds accused of prejudging statements, causing suspension.
- Opposition members called for recusal, challenging fairness.