Grenada was among sixty-seven countries to sign the Arms Trade Treaty, on 3 June 2013. Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Business, Honourable Nickolas Steele, participated in the historic Special Event to mark the opening of the Arms Trade Treaty for signature, in New York. Minister Steele was the sixth Minister to sign the Treaty making Grenada one of sixty-seven Member States of the United Nations to sign onto the Treaty on the first day of its opening for signature.

The journey towards an Arms Trade Treaty officially begun in 2006 when the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 61/89 entitled "towards an Arms Trade Treaty". Since then the initiative faced several hurdles, but finally on 2 April 2013 the General Assembly adopted the Treaty by a recorded vote with 154 Member States voting in favor. The Treaty was co-sponsored by over 100 countries, including all of CARICOM. The Treaty will come into force 90 days after the 50th instrument of ratification is deposited. Throughout the event, several countries, including Grenada, pledged their commitment to move their domestic agendas forward in a prompt and urgent manner to facilitate ratification of the Treaty as soon as possible as it is seen, for the first time, to be the means to regulate the international trade in conventional weapons. The Arms Trade Treaty will stem the flow of arms to conflict regions and prevent human rights abusers, terrorists, warlords, pirates, and gangs from being supplied with conventional weapons. Small arms and light weapons alone are responsible for the deaths of over 500,000 people each year and cause the majority of violent crimes and deaths.

Minister Steele, in his address during the Ministerial Segment of the Special Event, highlighted the importance of this Treaty for Grenada and the Caribbean area as a whole, as it Will save many of the innocent lives, which before today, have been lost as a result of the poorly regulated international arms trade."He added that it is his belief that this Treaty marks a point of inflection in the way conflicts are resolved and mitigated.
Grenada has again demonstrated its commitment to the control of firearms, when it signed the Arms Trade Treaty at the United Nations on 3 June 2013. Since 1991, Grenada has signed or ratified several international treaties on firearms and related materials. These include: Convention On The Marking Of Plastic Explosives For The Purpose Of Detection Done At Montreal On 1 March 1991; International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings; The (UN) Protocol Against The Illicit Manufacturing Of And Trafficking In Firearms; Inter-American Convention Against The Illicit Manufacturing Of And Trafficking In Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, And Other related Materials; and the Inter-American Convention On Transparency In Conventional Weapons Acquisition.

In addition, Grenada has established a policy in 2011, that all firearms be marked in import into the country, as part of its control regime on firearms. On 28 July 2011, OAS donated firearms marking equipment to the Government of Grenada.

Indeed the Government of Grenada must be complimented for its initiatives undertaken to control firearms and related materials. All the initiatives undertaken by the Government have succeeded in controlling the widespread circulation of both legal and illegal firearms in Grenada.

Representatives from thirteen Caribbean countries, including Grenada, participated in the Sub-Regional Meeting on Development of Alcohol Policy for English Speaking Caribbean Countries, held 25 to 27 June, 2013 in Belize. One of the main objectives of the meeting was to discuss the formulation of national alcohol policies. The development of such policies would be done through a multi-sectoral approach including a wide range of stakeholders such as NGOs and civil society.

One of the outcomes of the meeting was the preparation and presentation of road maps as a guide to formulation of the policies. Facilitators at the meeting included Dr. Maristela Monteiro, Regional Advisor on Alcohol, PAHO, and Dr. Tomo Kanda, Advisor on Chronic Diseases, PAHO Office.

In 2011, Member States of the Pan American Health organization (PAHO) adopted a Regional Plan of Action entitled “Plan of Action to Reduce Harmful Use of Alcohol”. Under the plan, the first Meeting of the Pan American Network on Alcohol and Public Health was organized in Mexico City, Mexico, in August, 2012.

Almost 4% of all deaths worldwide are attributed to alcohol, greater than deaths caused by HIV/AIDS or violence.
ALEXANDER IS COORDINATOR OF GEG

Drug Control Officer and Grenada’s Expert to the MEM, Dave Alexander, was selected as the General Coordinator of the Governmental Experts Group (GEG) of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM), for the Sixth Evaluation Round of the MEM, 2013 to 2015. The selection was done by members of the GEG, at its Preparatory Session for the Sixth Round of the MEM, convened 27 to 28 August 2013, in the United States.

The GEG is comprised of experts from the diverse areas of the drug problem and designated by each of the thirty-four (34) member states of the Organization of American States (OAS). The functions of the General Coordinator include: Preside over all activities of the GEG; Coordinate all Plenary session debates of the GEG; Conduct on-going communication with experts in between GEG sessions. Mr. Alexander served as the Deputy Coordinator, and later as the General Coordinator of the GEG, during the Fifth Evaluation Round of the MEM.

MEETING OF REGIONAL DRUG INFORMATION NETWORKS

A sub-regional workshop on, ‘Drug Information Network’ was held in Barbados March 29 to 30, 2013. The objectives of the workshop included: Review the Treatment Centre Intake Form which had been piloted in Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, and Report on status of Regional Drug Information Networks (DIN’s).

OAS Representative for Barbados Mr. Francis Mc Barnette in his remarks urged participants to rise to the drug challenge presently facing us, and thus review the present approaches used in dealing with the existing drug problem. Presentations were also made by DIN Coordinators from several Caribbean countries about the status of the DIN’s in their respective countries.

Assistant Drug Control Officer, Elizabeth Japal represented Grenada at the workshop.

CARIBBEAN WELLNESS DAY OBSERVED

Grenada celebrated, ‘Caribbean Wellness Day’; in with a series of activities in September 2013. These activities, geared toward promotion of healthy lifestyles, were conducted by the Ministry of Health. One of the activities was a panel discussion held on 9 September, which examined various aspects of health. Dave Alexander, Drug Control Officer, was among the panelist. He addressed the negative consequences of the consumption of alcohol.

The observance of Caribbean Wellness Day was one of the decisions taken by the CARICOM Heads of Government in 2007. They expressed concerns about the physical, economic and social burdens caused by lifestyle-related diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, stroke, heart disease, obesity and cancer. A plan of action to stop the epidemic of chronic Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) was established. (contd’ page 4)
IN THE NEWS

Teachers and students in Grenada will soon be better informed about the National Schools’ Policy on Drugs. Four (4) workshops, were held 12, 13, 26 and 27 June 2013, as part of its annual back-to-school program, the Drug Control Secretariat, Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development, Botanical Gardens, St. George’s, Grenada. Telephone: 473-440-7911; Fax: 473-440-7701; E-mail: dave.alexander21@gmail.com; ejapal@gov.gd; Webpage: www.gov.gd/ncodc.html

The Royal Grenada Police Force has expressed its concern, about the increasing trend of persons selling liquor (alcohol) without the relevant liquor dealers licenses. Section 43 (a) of the Liquor Dealers’ Licenses Act, Chapter 174 of Volume V of the 1990 Laws of Grenada states, ‘Every person who, has in his possession any intoxicating liquor for the purpose of selling or exposing for sale any intoxicating liquor, without the relevant license, is guilty of an offence. A person found guilty for a first offence of selling intoxicating liquor without a license is liable to a fine of three thousand dollars or three months in prison; on the second offence, a fine of five thousand dollars or six months in prison. The license must be obtained from the Licensing Board under the provision of the Act.

Law enforcement Officers from Grenada are now better able to deal with issues involving the sale of drugs via the internet. Four Officers from the Royal Grenada Police Force participated in a regional seminar, ‘Investigating the Sale of Drugs Over The Internet’, held 19 to 22 August 2013, in St. Lucia. Issues addressed at the seminar included: internet basic principles, investigation of electronic mail and other investigative methods. It was conducted by the by the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD).

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