

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

### **Mutual Legal Assistance**

**Treaty Between the  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
and TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

Signed at Port of Spain March 4, 1996

*with*

Forms



NOTE BY THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Pursuant to Public Law 89—497, approved July 8, 1966  
(80 Stat. 271; 1 U.S.C. 113)—

“ . . . the Treaties and Other International Acts Series issued under the authority of the Secretary of State shall be competent evidence . . . of the treaties, international agreements other than treaties, and proclamations by the President of such treaties and international agreements other than treaties, as the case may be, therein contained, in all the courts of law and equity and of maritime jurisdiction, and in all the tribunals and public offices of the United States, and of the several States, without any further proof or authentication thereof.”

## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

### Law Enforcement: Mutual Legal Assistance

*Treaty signed at Port of Spain March 4, 1996,  
with forms;*

*Transmitted by the President of the United States of America  
to the Senate September 3, 1997 (Treaty Doc. 105-22,  
105th Congress, 1st Session);*

*Reported favorably by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
October 14, 1998 (Senate Executive Report No. 105-22,  
105th Congress, 2nd Session);*

*Advice and consent to ratification by the Senate  
October 21, 1998;*

*Ratified by the President January 20, 1999;*

*Exchange of diplomatic notes at Port of Spain  
November 3 and 29, 1999;*

*Entered into force November 29, 1999.*

TREATY  
BETWEEN  
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
AND  
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
ON  
MUTUAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE IN CRIMINAL MATTERS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Article 1	Scope of Assistance
Article 2	Central Authorities
Article 3	Limitations on Assistance
Article 4	Form and Contents of Requests
Article 5	Execution of Requests
Article 6	Costs
Article 7	Limitations on Use
Article 8	Testimony or Evidence in the Requested State
Article 9	Records of Government Agencies
Article 10	Testimony in the Requesting State
Article 11	Transfer of Persons in Custody
Article 12	Location or Identification of Persons or Items
Article 13	Service of Documents
Article 14	Search and Seizure
Article 15	Return of Items
Article 16	Assistance in Forfeiture Proceedings
Article 17	Compatibility with Other Treaties
Article 18	Consultation
Article 19	Ratification, Entry Into Force, and Termination

The Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, hereinafter referred to as the Contracting Parties,

Desiring to improve the effectiveness of the law enforcement authorities of both countries in the investigation, prosecution, and prevention of crime through cooperation and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters,

Have agreed as follows:

## Article 1

### Scope of Assistance

1. The Contracting Parties shall provide mutual assistance, in accordance with the provisions of this Treaty, in connection with the investigation, prosecution, and prevention of offenses, and in proceedings related to criminal matters.

2. Assistance shall include:

- (a) taking the testimony or statements of persons;
- (b) providing documents, records, and articles of evidence;
- (c) locating or identifying persons;
- (d) serving documents;
- (e) transferring persons in custody for testimony or other purposes;
- (f) executing requests for searches and seizures;
- (g) assisting in proceedings related to restraint, confiscation, forfeiture of assets, restitution; and collection of fines;
- (h) examining objects and sites; and
- (i) any other form of assistance not prohibited by the laws of the Requested State.

3. Assistance shall be provided without regard to whether the conduct which is the subject of the investigation, prosecution, or proceeding in the Requesting State would

constitute an offense under the laws of the Requested State. However, the Requested State may, in its discretion, refuse to comply in whole or in part with a request for assistance under this Treaty to the extent that it appears to the Central Authority of the Requested State to concern conduct which would not constitute an offense under the laws of the Requested State.

4. This Treaty is intended solely for mutual legal assistance between the Parties. The provisions of this Treaty shall not give rise to a right on the part of any private person to obtain, suppress, or exclude any evidence, or to impede the execution of a request.

## Article 2

### Central Authorities

1. There shall be a Central Authority for each Contracting Party.

2. For the United States of America, the Central Authority shall be the Attorney General or a person designated by the Attorney General. For the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the Central Authority shall be the Attorney General or a person designated by the Attorney General.

3. The Central Authorities shall communicate directly with one another for the purposes of this Treaty.



### Article 3

#### Limitations on Assistance

1. The Central Authority of the Requested State may deny assistance if:

- (a) the request relates to an offense under military law which would not be an offense under ordinary criminal law;
- (b) the execution of the request would prejudice the security or similar essential interests of the Requested State; or
- (c) the request is not made in conformity with the Treaty.

2. Before denying assistance pursuant to this Article, the Central Authority of the Requested State shall consult with the Central Authority of the Requesting State to consider whether assistance can be given subject to such conditions as it deems necessary. If the Requesting State accepts assistance subject to these conditions, it shall comply with the conditions.

3. If the Central Authority of the Requested State denies assistance, it shall inform the Central Authority of the Requesting State of the reasons for the denial.

#### Article 4

##### Form and Contents of Requests

1. A request for assistance shall be in writing except that the Central Authority of the Requested State may accept a request in another form in emergency situations. In any such case, the request shall be confirmed in writing within ten days thereafter unless the Central Authority of the Requested State agrees otherwise. The request shall be in the language of the Requested State unless otherwise agreed.

2. The request shall include the following:

- (a) the name of the authority conducting the investigation, prosecution, or proceeding to which the request relates;
- (b) a description of the subject matter and nature of the investigation, prosecution, or proceeding, including the specific criminal offenses which relate to the matter, and a summary of the facts and the laws which form the basis thereof;
- (c) a description of the evidence, information, or other assistance sought; and
- (d) a statement of the purpose for which the evidence, information, or other assistance is sought.

3. To the extent necessary and possible, a request shall also include:

- (a) information on the identity, including, where available, full name, date of birth, address, and location of any person from whom evidence is sought;
- (b) information on the identity, including, where available, full name, date of birth, address, and location of a person to be served, that person's relationship to the proceedings, and the manner in which service is to be made;
- (c) information on the identity, including, where available, full name, date of birth, address, and whereabouts of a person to be located;
- (d) a precise description of the place or person to be searched and of the articles to be seized;
- (e) a description of the manner in which any testimony or statement is to be taken and recorded;
- (f) a list of questions to be asked of a witness;
- (g) a description of any particular procedure to be followed in executing the request;
- (h) information as to the allowances and expenses to which a person asked to appear in the Requesting State will be entitled;
- (i) any time limit within which compliance with the request is desired, stating reasons; and

- (j) any other information which may be brought to the attention of the Requested State to facilitate its execution of the request.

## Article 5

### Execution of Requests

1. The Central Authority of the Requested State shall promptly execute the request or, when appropriate, shall transmit it to the authority having jurisdiction to do so. The competent authorities of the Requested State shall do everything in their power to execute the request. The Courts of the Requested State shall have authority to issue subpoenas, search warrants, or other orders necessary to execute the request.

2. The Central Authority of the Requested State shall make all necessary arrangements for and meet the costs of the representation in the Requested State of the Requesting State in any proceedings arising out of a request for assistance.

3. Requests shall be executed in accordance with the laws of the Requested State except to the extent that this Treaty provides otherwise. However, the method of execution specified in the request shall be followed except insofar as it is prohibited by the laws of the Requested State.

4. If the Central Authority of the Requested State determines that execution of a request would interfere with an ongoing criminal investigation, prosecution, or proceeding in that State, it may postpone execution, or make execution subject to conditions determined to be necessary after consultations with the Central Authority of the Requesting State. If the Requesting State accepts the assistance subject to the conditions, it shall comply with the conditions.

5. The Requested State shall use its best efforts to keep confidential a request and its contents if such confidentiality is requested by the Central Authority of the Requesting State. If the request cannot be executed without breaching such confidentiality, the Central Authority of the Requested State shall so inform the Central Authority of the Requesting State, which shall then determine whether the request should nevertheless be executed.

6. The Central Authority of the Requested State shall respond to reasonable inquiries by the Central Authority of the Requesting State concerning progress toward execution of the request.

7. The Central Authority of the Requested State shall promptly inform the Central Authority of the Requesting State of the outcome of the execution of the request. If the request is denied, the Central Authority of the Requested State shall

inform the Central Authority of the Requesting State of the reasons for the denial.

#### Article 6

##### Costs

The Requested State shall pay all costs relating to the execution of the request, except for the fees of expert witnesses, the costs of translation, interpretation, and transcription, and the allowances and expenses related to travel of persons pursuant to Articles 10 and 11, which costs, fees, allowances, and expenses shall be paid by the Requesting State.

#### Article 7

##### Limitations on Use

1. The Central Authority of the Requested State may request that the Requesting State not use any information or evidence obtained under this Treaty in any investigation, prosecution, or proceeding other than that described in the request without the prior consent of the Central Authority of the Requested State. In such cases, the Requesting State shall comply with the conditions.



2. The Central Authority of the Requested State may request that information or evidence furnished under this Treaty be kept confidential or be used only subject to terms and conditions it may specify. If the Requesting State accepts the information or evidence subject to such conditions, the Requesting State shall use its best efforts to comply with the conditions.

3. Nothing in this Article shall preclude the use or disclosure of information to the extent that there is an obligation to do so under the Constitution of the Requesting State in a criminal prosecution. The Requesting State shall notify the Requested State in advance of any such proposed disclosure.

4. Information or evidence which has been made public in the Requesting State in accordance with paragraph 1 or 2 may thereafter be used for any purpose.

#### Article 8

##### Testimony or Evidence in the Requested State

1. A person in the Requested State from whom testimony or evidence is requested pursuant to this Treaty shall be compelled, if necessary, to appear and testify or produce items, including documents, records, and articles of evidence.

2. Upon request, the Central Authority of the Requested State shall furnish information in advance about the date and place of the taking of the testimony or evidence pursuant to this Article.

3. The Requested State shall permit the presence of such persons as specified in the request during the execution of the request, and shall allow such persons to question the person giving the testimony or evidence.

4. If the person referred to in paragraph 1 asserts a claim of immunity, incapacity, or privilege under the laws of the Requesting State, the testimony or evidence shall nonetheless be taken and the claim made known to the Central Authority of the Requesting State for resolution by the authorities of that State.

5. Evidence produced in the Requested State pursuant to this Article or which is the subject of testimony taken under this Article may be authenticated by an attestation, including, in the case of business records, authentication in the manner indicated in Form A appended to this Treaty. Documents authenticated by Form A shall be admissible in evidence in the Requesting State.



Article 9

Records of Government Agencies

1. The Requested State shall upon request provide the Requesting State with copies of publicly available records, including documents or information in any form, in the possession of government departments and agencies in the Requested State.

2. The Requested State may provide copies of any documents, records, or information which are in the possession of a government department or agency in that State, but which are not publicly available, to the same extent and under the same conditions as such copies would be available to its own law enforcement or judicial authorities. The Requested State may in its discretion deny a request pursuant to this paragraph entirely or in part.

3. Official records produced pursuant to this Article may be authenticated by the official in charge of maintaining them through the use of Form B appended to this Treaty. No further authentication shall be necessary. Documents authenticated under this paragraph shall be admissible in evidence in the Requesting State.

Article 10

Testimony in the Requesting State

1. When the Requesting State requests the appearance of a person in that State, the Requested State shall invite the person to appear before the appropriate authority in the Requesting State. The Requesting State shall indicate the extent to which the expenses will be paid. The Central Authority of the Requested State shall promptly inform the Central Authority of the Requesting State of the response of the person.

2. The Central Authority of the Requesting State may, in its discretion, determine that a person appearing in the Requesting State pursuant to this article shall not be subject to service of process, or be detained or subjected to any restriction of personal liberty, by reason of any acts or convictions which preceded his departure from the Requested State.

3. The safe conduct provided for by this Article shall cease seven days after the Central Authority of the Requesting State has notified the Central Authority of the Requested State that the person's presence is no longer required, or when the person, having left the Requesting State, voluntarily returns. The Central Authority of the Requesting State may, in its discretion, extend this period for up to fifteen days if it determines that there is good cause to do so.

Article 11

Transfer of Persons in Custody

1. A person in the custody of the Requested State whose presence in the Requesting State is sought for purposes of assistance under this Treaty shall be transferred from the Requested State to the Requesting State for that purpose if the person consents and if the Central Authorities of both States agree.

2. A person in the custody of the Requesting State whose presence in the Requested State is sought for purposes of assistance under this Treaty may be transferred from the Requesting State to the Requested State if the person consents and if the Central Authorities of both States agree.

3. For purposes of this Article:

(a) the receiving State shall have the authority and the obligation to keep the person transferred in custody unless otherwise authorized by the sending State;

(b) the receiving State shall return the person transferred to the custody of the sending State as soon as circumstances permit or as otherwise agreed by both Central Authorities;

(c) the receiving State shall not require the sending State to initiate extradition proceedings for the return of the person transferred; and

- (d) the person transferred shall receive credit for service of the sentence imposed in the sending State for time served in the custody of the receiving State.

#### Article 12

##### Location or Identification of Persons or Items

The Requested State shall use its best efforts to ascertain the location or identity of persons or items specified in the request.

#### Article 13

##### Service of Documents

1. The Requested State shall use its best efforts to effect service of any document relating, in whole or in part, to any request for assistance made by the Requesting State under the provisions of this Treaty.

2. The Requesting State shall transmit any request for the service of a document requiring the appearance of a person before an authority in the Requesting State a reasonable time before the scheduled appearance.

3. The Requested State shall return a proof of service in the manner specified in the Request.

#### Article 14

##### Search and Seizure

1. The Requested State shall execute a request for the search, seizure, and delivery of any item to the Requesting State if the request includes the information justifying such action under the laws of the Requested State.

2. Upon request, every official who has custody of a seized item shall certify, through the use of Form C appended to this Treaty, the continuity of custody, the identity of the item, and the integrity of its condition. No further certification shall be required. The certificates shall be admissible in evidence in the Requesting State.

3. The Central Authority of the Requested State may require that the Requesting State agree to the terms and conditions deemed to be necessary to protect bona fide third party interests in the item to be transferred.



Article 15

Return of Items

The Central Authority of the Requested State may require that the Central Authority of the Requesting State return any items, including documents, records, or articles of evidence furnished to it in execution of a request under this Treaty as soon as possible.

Article 16

Assistance in Forfeiture Proceedings

1. If the Central Authority of one Contracting Party becomes aware of proceeds or instrumentalities of offenses which are located in the territory of the other Party and may be restrainable, forfeitable, or otherwise subject to seizure under the laws of that Party, it may so inform the Central Authority of the other Party. If that other Party has jurisdiction in this regard, it may present this information to its authorities for a determination whether any action is appropriate. These authorities shall issue their decision in accordance with the laws of their country, and shall, through their Central Authority, report to the other Party on the action taken.

2. The Contracting Parties shall assist each other to the extent permitted by their respective laws in proceedings

relating to restraint, forfeiture, and confiscation of the proceeds and instrumentalities of offenses, restitution to the victims of crime, and the collection of fines imposed as sentences in criminal prosecutions. This may include action to temporarily restrain the proceeds or instrumentalities pending further proceedings.

3. The Party that has custody over proceeds or instrumentalities of offenses shall dispose of them in accordance with its laws. Either Party may transfer all or part of such assets, or the proceeds of their sale, to the other Party, to the extent permitted by the transferring Party's laws or as otherwise agreed and upon such terms as it deems appropriate.

#### Article 17

##### Compatibility with Other Treaties

Assistance and procedures set forth in this Treaty shall not prevent either Contracting Party from granting assistance to the other Party through the provisions of other applicable international agreements, or through the provisions of its national laws. The Parties may also provide assistance pursuant to any bilateral arrangement, agreement, or practice, which may be applicable.

Article 18  
Consultation

The Central Authorities of the Contracting Parties shall consult, at times mutually agreed to by them, to promote the most effective use of this Treaty. The Central Authorities may also agree on such practical measures as may be necessary to facilitate the implementation of this Treaty.

Article 19  
Ratification, Entry Into Force, and Termination

1. This Treaty shall enter into force when both Parties have notified each other through an exchange of diplomatic notes of the completion of their respective requirements for entry into force.

2. Either Party may terminate this Treaty by means of written notice to the other Party. Termination shall take effect six months following the date of notification.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, being duly authorized by their respective Governments have signed this Treaty.

DONE at *PORT-OF-SPAIN*, in duplicate, this *14<sup>th</sup>* day of March, 1996.

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

*Warren Christopher*

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO:

*Arthur J. Sunday*

FORM A

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHENTICITY OF BUSINESS RECORDS

I, (Name) , attest on penalty of criminal punishment for false statement or false attestation that I am employed by (Name of Business from which documents are sought) and that my official title is

I further state that each of the records attached hereto is the original or a duplicate of the original records in the custody of (Name of Business from which documents are sought) I further state that:

- (A) such records were made, at or near the time of the occurrence of the matters set forth, by (or from information transmitted by) a person with knowledge of those matters;
- (B) such records were kept in the course of a regularly conducted business activity;
- (C) the business activity made such records as a regular practice;
- (D) if such record is not the original, such record is a duplicate of the original.

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Signature

Date

Sworn to or affirmed before me.

(Name)

a (notary public, judicial officer, etc.) this \_\_\_\_\_  
day of \_\_\_\_\_ 19\_\_\_\_.

FORM B

ATTESTATION OF AUTHENTICITY OF FOREIGN PUBLIC DOCUMENTS

I, (Name) , attest on penalty of criminal punishment for false statement or attestation that my position with the Government of (Country) is (Official Title) and that in that position I am authorized by the law of (Country) to attest that the documents attached and described below, are true and accurate copies of original official records which are recorded or filed in (Name of Office or Agency), which is a government office or agency of (Country),

Description of Documents:

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(Signature)

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(Title)

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(Date)

FORM C

ATTESTATION WITH RESPECT TO SEIZED ARTICLES

I, (Name) , attest on penalty of criminal punishment for false statements or attestation that my position with the Government of (Country) is (Official Title). I received the articles listed below from (Name of Person) on (Date), at (Place) in the following condition:

Description of Article:

Changes in Condition while in my custody:

Official Seal

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(Signature)

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(Title)

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(Date)