



Integrated Country Strategy

BARBADOS AND THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN

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1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Now is the time to revitalize our relationships in the Eastern Caribbean to ensure stability, prosperity, and effective law enforcement in a region critical to U.S. national security on our vast maritime southern border. The seven independent countries we cover from Embassy Bridgetown are eager to work with us on a wide range of issues due to a shared sense of national priorities and enduring cultural, historical, economic, and political ties to the United States. Those ties bring hundreds of thousands of American visitors to the Eastern Caribbean each year, and we have no higher priority than their safety and security.

The Biden-Harris Administration's focus on climate, economic prosperity, and engagement through regional partnerships closely aligns with the region's own priorities and presents exceptional opportunities for engagement on areas of U.S. national interest, including:

- Building a safer and more secure region by strengthening local and regional security institutions;
- Fostering a more prosperous and resilient region by revitalizing economies ravaged by the COVID-19 pandemic and climate-driven shocks; and
- Achieving a closer diplomatic alignment with Eastern Caribbean countries in regional and global fora to promote shared goals and counter the harmful influence of some of our global competitors.

Partner countries' high debt loads, narrow economic bases, and vulnerability to natural disasters and other external shocks increase their susceptibility to malign influences by external state and non-state actors. Meaningful progress on these issues require that we work creatively with Washington agencies to respond more quickly to regional priorities in order to narrow gaps in our engagement that our global competitors currently exploit.

The Ambassador is accredited bilaterally to seven Eastern Caribbean countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and attached Mission agencies cover a total of twenty-eight countries and territories in the broader Caribbean. In addition to the chancery in Bridgetown, U.S. facilities

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include the Embassy in Grenada, consular agencies in Antigua and Martinique, and a Peace Corps main office in Saint Lucia with sub-offices in Dominica, Grenada, and Saint Vincent. The unique nature of our area of responsibility – spread across a wide geographic area and more than a dozen different legal and regulatory jurisdictions – places extraordinary demands on human and financial resources for all agencies and requires a creative approach in both Washington and the field to accomplish our share goals.

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2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: A Safer and More Secure Eastern Caribbean

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Improved border and U.S. citizen security through the professionalization of security forces to combat transnational organized crime, terrorism, trafficking, and cyber threats while maintaining secure and efficient passport and visa services.
- **Mission Objective 1.2:** Strengthened regional and national justice and security institutions that ensure the equitable application of the rule of law, enhanced transparency, and reduced corruption to promote safer communities. (Links to RDCS RDO 1: Government Accountability and Transparency Improved.)

Mission Goal 2: A More Prosperous and Resilient Eastern Caribbean

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** An improved business and investment environment to promote equitable growth, enhance and diversify trade with the United States, and foster a more economically competitive region. (Links to RDCS RDO 1: Government Accountability and Transparency Improved.)
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Enhanced resilience to the impacts of climate change through improved infrastructure and food and water security, along with the adoption of clean and renewable energy sources. (Links to RDCS RDO 2: Community Resilience Strengthened.)

Mission Goal 3: Democratic Alignment on Shared Values

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Increased partner government support for U.S. positions and leadership in multilateral and regional institutions.
- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Strengthened democratic institutions, civil society, and media capacity for greater constructive democratic participation. (Links to RDCS RDO 2: Community Resilience Strengthened.)

Management Objective 1: Information technology resources and tools are modernized to expand data availability and accessibility, increase collaboration, and improve service delivery.

Management Objective 2: Increased commitment evidenced by clear actions to increasing diversity and fostering a culture of inclusion, where people feel welcome, heard, and confident in their contribution to our national security is vital to Mission's success.

Management Objective 3: Effectiveness and efficiency improvements leverage data to enhance internal controls, contain costs, and improve customer services across the Mission.

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1: A Safer and More Secure Eastern Caribbean

Description: The Eastern Caribbean suffers from porous borders, poorly resourced and trained security personnel, and weak justice sectors, which combine with endemic corruption to undermine the rule of law and leave the region vulnerable to transnational criminal activities in the areas of narcotics and firearms trafficking, cyber and computer crimes, and movement of illicit financial proceeds. Limited capacity in law enforcement, the judicial sector, and social services institutions leave Eastern Caribbean governments unable to adequately address the high levels of youth crime and violence and physical and sexual violence against women and girls.

Objective 1.1: Improved border and U.S. citizen security through the professionalization of security forces to combat transnational organized crime, terrorism, trafficking, and cyber threats while maintaining secure and efficient passport and visa services.

- **Justification:** Ensuring the safety and security of U.S. citizens living or traveling in the Eastern Caribbean and protection of U.S. borders are top priorities of Mission Bridgetown. We accomplish both of these goals by building the capacity of national and regional security services through bilateral and regional partnerships, and by providing security assistance and training. The Eastern Caribbean has extensive air and maritime linkages with the United States and safeguarding these routes against exploitation by terrorists and criminal organizations is a primary responsibility of the Mission's U.S. law enforcement agencies. Caribbean members of terrorist groups and the rise of home-grown extremism in the Caribbean and Latin America, coupled with the ease of travel among CARICOM countries, create continued opportunities for terrorists to target U.S. interests. The Regional Security Office covers 14 Eastern Caribbean countries and territories that receive U.S. citizen and visa services from Embassy Bridgetown's consular section, and from Embassy St. George's in Grenada. The Mission's area of responsibility encompasses large numbers of U.S. citizen residents and tourists, with

December 2021 statistics indicating an estimated total of approximately 135,000 U.S. citizens in our consular district on any given day.

- **Linkages:** Links to the Interim National Security Strategy Guidance (INSSG), the Bureau of Consular Affairs Functional Bureau Strategy Goals 2: Maintain secure, efficient Passport Services and improve customer experience and 3: Facilitate legitimate travel while ensuring secure U.S. borders, National Defense Strategy, State/USAID Joint Strategic Plan, Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) Joint Regional Strategy (JRS), U.S. Southern Command Campaign Strategy, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) CBSI Regional Implementation Plan.
- **Risks:** A failure to achieve Objective 1.1 could lead to increased local criminal activity, terrorism, and regional instability, endangering the safety of U.S. citizens who travel to, or live in the region. Failure would also mean increased threats to our national security at home, given the geographic proximity of the Eastern Caribbean. Destabilized and compromised governments could result in disorderly migration flows and present opportunities for malign activities by corrupt foreign actors, terrorists, and foreign adversaries. The Mission seeks to mitigate these risks by working with a wide range of regional law enforcement and justice sector partners, including police, corrections departments, prosecutors, coast guards, drug squads, financial intelligence units (FIUs), and attorneys general to modernize outdated laws, strengthen institutions, streamline inefficient practices, upgrade equipment, and provide much-needed training to personnel.

Objective 1.2: Strengthened regional and national justice and security institutions that ensure the equitable application of the rule of law, enhanced transparency, and reduced corruption to promote safer communities.

- **Justification:** Weak enforcement and limited training and capacity hinder an effective local response to transnational organized crime-linked trafficking, corruption, and financial crimes. This undermines the rule of law and citizen confidence in their government's ability to provide security and provide redress. Increased trafficking in

drugs, weapons, and persons, along with associated criminal activity, pose a threat to U.S. interests. Mission law enforcement agencies, INL, and USAID are focused on building regional networks and awareness through enhanced training, professional exchanges, and the provision of equipment. The wide maritime expanse of the Eastern Caribbean present further challenges to the limited domain awareness and enforcement capacity of partner country security services in tackling trafficking. To prevent youth crime and violence across the Eastern Caribbean, the U.S. government will use new evidence-based approaches to identify at-risk youth and provide localized solutions that reduce their engagement in crime and violence. Efforts will also focus on improving government systems that reinforce citizen security, such as social services to vulnerable populations, and data collection for the security sector, child justice systems, and education.

- **Linkages:** Links to the Interim National Security Strategy Guidance (INSSG), National Defense Strategy, State/USAID Joint Strategic Plan, Western Hemisphere Affairs Joint Regional Strategy, U.S. Southern Command Campaign Strategy, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs CBSI Regional Implementation Plan. (Links to RDCS RDO 1: Government Accountability and Transparency Improved and RDCS RDO 2: Community Resilience Strengthened.)
- **Risks:** A failure to achieve Objective 1.2 could lead to poorly managed and ill-equipped Eastern Caribbean security services and justice sectors that suffer from corruption, inept leadership, and low morale. Poorly run and under-resourced regional prosecutorial, judicial, police, and military services could create fertile ground in the Eastern Caribbean for transnational criminal organizations, which could take advantage of institutional failures to operate more freely in geographic proximity to U.S. borders. The Mission seeks to mitigate these risks by improving Eastern Caribbean institutional capacity to monitor the maritime domain, secure borders and territorial seas, and develop a modern justice sector. Assisting partner countries in developing self-sustaining investigative, intelligence, prosecutorial, judicial, and citizen security programs will improve law enforcement capabilities. Increased capability in tracking

illicit criminal proceeds, utilizing civil asset forfeitures, and managing complex criminal investigations will help disrupt transnational criminal organizations. Continuing to support the RSS, through additional training of personnel and provision of modern equipment will further increase the region's capacity to interdict traffickers and investigate and prosecute complex organized crime.

Mission Goal 2: A Prosperous and Resilient Eastern Caribbean

Description: The countries in our area of responsibility are primarily funded by income derived from tourism and the "offshore" financial sector. They are heavily dependent on foreign energy suppliers, imported agriculture, and the sale of citizenship, making diversification of the economic base and energy independence key development goals. Eastern Caribbean countries are small island developing states (SIDS) that are highly vulnerable to the impacts of external shocks that affect local and regional economies such as supply chain disruption, health crises, and climate change. As a result, Eastern Caribbean countries are more likely to take on large public debt or unsustainable foreign infrastructure investments that increases their vulnerability to malign influence and pressure by external state and non-state actors. Our Mission emphasizes strategic partnerships, education, development finance vehicles, and capacity building to support economic growth and to help mitigate the effects of external shocks. Emphasis on greater economic sustainability also reduces pressure to migrate helps countries to increase energy independence and diversify energy suppliers and resist coercion or undue foreign influence. The U.S. government will utilize advocacy and trade missions to pursue strategic opportunities, including for small-and-medium enterprises in the United States, capitalizing on regional receptiveness toward collaboration with the United States and U.S. entities.

Objective 2.1: An improved business and investment environment to promote equitable growth, enhance and diversify trade with the United States, and foster a more economically competitive region.

- **Justification:** Eastern Caribbean economies continue to struggle with low growth and productivity, poor public debt management, overreliance on volatile tourism sectors, underdeveloped financial markets highly vulnerable to foreign influence, high energy costs, vulnerability to natural disasters, and inflated public sector wage bills. Most of these countries do not have appropriate fiscal buffers or have diversified economies to adequately resist attempts to influence their foreign and domestic policies by external actors. To help meet the goal of promoting sustainable and equitable economic growth, Mission Bridgetown will work with local and regional institutions to encourage governments to develop and adopt sound macroeconomic policies, socially inclusive practices, fiscal transparency, decrease debt and deficit levels, strengthen regional integration, and lessen reliance on foreign oil imports. Mission Bridgetown will also work with the private sector, business associations, and Ministries of Economy and Trade to improve the investment climate to encourage private sector-led growth and increase U.S. foreign direct investment into diverse sectors.
- **Linkages:** Links to Interim National Security Strategy Guidance, State/USAID Joint Strategic Plan, WHA JRS, USAID Regional Development Cooperation Strategy: RDO 1: Government Accountability and Transparency Improved.
- **Risks:** While Eastern Caribbean economies have begun to recover from the impact of the pandemic and some are forecasting strong growth in 2022, they remain largely dependent on the volatile tourism industry. New COVID variants and catastrophic natural disasters will continue to threaten sustainable recovery and could lead to an increase in public debt, overwhelming the region's ability to meet domestic financial commitments and causing program disruptions and dependency on external actors or undue foreign influence. The absence of economic opportunities for youth could become a push factor for migration and an increase in crime, violence, and the proliferation of gangs. External shocks, unforeseen needs, and natural disasters divert

attention, resources, and priorities elsewhere. Diplomatic engagement, advocacy, and the use of development finance approaches and partnerships can help overcome risks related to economic stagnation. Furthermore, programming across other objectives will help address additional key risks that can hamper economic inclusion, such as shocks related to climate change or future health crises.

Objective 2.2: Enhanced resilience to the impacts of climate change through improved infrastructure and food and water security, along with the adoption of clean and renewable energy sources.

- **Justification:** The impacts of climate change exacerbate the Eastern Caribbean's vulnerability to external shocks including hurricanes, flooding, drought, and food security. Most countries have a limited number of government officials and NGO partners dedicated to disaster risk reduction (DRR) and have limited experience in carrying out those activities without external support or assistance and limited human resource capacity. Our goal is to reduce the impacts of climate change through enhanced institutional and community capacities to respond to and mitigate its effects, strengthen resiliency of vulnerable communities, and reduce exposure to hazards. The Mission will seek opportunities to strengthen the region's resilience to both the acute and chronic hazards associated with climate change, particularly in sectors that are critical to overall economic stability and growth such as clean energy, agriculture, and water. The U.S. government will work to facilitate financing and development that encourages private investment in Eastern Caribbean country renewable energy and infrastructure sectors to improve energy security and advance regional efforts towards emissions reductions. Eastern Caribbean countries are influential in international climate policy, providing the opportunity to use regional adaptation and resilience support to help bridge negotiation divides and showcase U.S. technical support to governments, civil society, and the private sector.

- **Linkages:** USAID Regional Development Cooperation Strategy RDCS RDO 2: Community Resilience Strengthened, USAID Climate Strategy, USAID Resilience Policy, WHA Climate and Clean Energy Engagement Strategy, Secretary Blinken’s Policy Guidance on Exercising U.S. Leadership to Tackle the Climate Crisis (21 State 97546)
- **Risks:** The cycle of recurring external shocks including health crises and natural disaster events forces institutions to focus resources on response and recovery, leaving less capacity to plan and implement longer-term, more transformative strategies. Cascading impacts have spillover effects into economic development and stability, increasing crime and migration. Governments lack the economic resources and technical ability to transition to renewable energy. Diplomatic engagement, advocacy, and facilitation of financing and development for renewable energy can mitigate risks related to climate change and other external shocks.

Mission Goal 3: Democratic Alignment on Shared Values

Description: Countries in the Eastern Caribbean share democratic values and history with the United States. The Mission strives to expand collaboration with Eastern Caribbean governments for defending and realizing these values in the region and around the globe. The Mission uses government-to-government engagement and public diplomacy to build support for our goals and objectives among opinion leaders and the broader population. Over the long-term, the Mission envisions Eastern Caribbean countries leveraging their voice and votes in multilateral fora to protect security, expand economic prosperity and opportunity, and defend democratic values in the region and around the world.

Objective 3.1: Increased partner government support for U.S. positions and leadership in multilateral and regional institutions.

- **Justification:** The seven independent countries of the Eastern Caribbean represent an influential voice in regional and multilateral institutions. By collaborating with governments on shared priorities and addressing longstanding irritants in our bilateral and regional relations, the United States can reinvigorate and strengthen our

partnerships in the region. Climate and economic vulnerabilities expose our partners in the Eastern Caribbean to the risk of malign influence from external actors, and the United States must assist our partners in offering other options to access financing and investment from trusted partners that share common values and operate transparently. The United States will continue to deepen partnerships with regional institutions like the Caribbean Development Bank and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) to build support for U.S. priorities, including promoting security, sustainable and inclusive economic growth, and democracy and human rights.

- **Linkages:** Links to the sections on defending democratic values in the Interim National Security Strategy Guidance, the State/USAID Joint Strategic Plan, the State WHA JRS, and the INL CBSI Regional Implementation Plan.
- **Risks:** Stagnant funding for development assistance in Eastern Caribbean continues to create a void for malign influence from external actors. Lack of interagency attention and investment of time to resolve longstanding bilateral and regional policy irritants reinforces susceptibility to external actor messaging that the United States is an unreliable or disinterested partner. Limited government capacity restricts Eastern Caribbean countries' ability to formulate and act on policy positions aligning with U.S. interests.

Objective 3.2: Strengthened democratic institutions, civil society, and media capacity for greater constructive democratic participation.

- **Justification:** The United States has a significant national interest in ensuring that the people of the Eastern Caribbean understand and advocate for policies, institutions, people, and democratic principles that support ongoing coordination with the United States. The U.S. government is committed to engaging and strengthening civil society organizations and independent media. With civil society's increased capacity for advocacy and oversight, governments will become more accountable and will be more responsive to their citizens. Close coordination of public diplomacy and strategic communication efforts among U.S. government agencies within the Mission is essential

to ensuring the cohesion of our message and the best use of resources. Media coverage that increases transparency, counters corruption, and fairly and accurately represents U.S. positions is a measure of our success, including coverage of high-level U.S. visitors, speeches, and policy announcements. The United States must develop outreach strategies to inform, inspire, and persuade because greater public understanding of the U.S. government's commitments as a reliable and constructive partner in the hemisphere will provide a favorable climate for introducing new policy initiatives and achieving existing ones. Engagement with the media will be guided by a detailed analysis of the environment in the Eastern Caribbean and understanding of target audiences to shape stories early and to effectively tailor the content of our messages.

- **Linkages:** Links to Interim National Security Strategy Guidance, the State/USAID Joint Strategic Plan, the State WHA JRS, the INL CBSI Regional Implementation Plan, the National Gender Strategy, and the USAID RDCS RDO 2 Community Resilience Strengthened.
- **Risks:** Misinformation, disinformation, and misperceptions of credibility over U.S. domestic policies constrain U.S. influence with foreign audiences and dampen the impact of Mission programs. If we fail to employ outreach inclusively, we risk further marginalizing communities and directly countering the credibility and progress we seek to obtain and model. We counter these risks by ensuring inclusivity in each outreach effort, by challenging disinformation, and by promoting media literacy and the inherent strength of democracy. We will highlight the mutual benefits of balanced engagement between neighbors and hemispheric partners. Small and underfunded independent media outlets have limited opportunities for deepening investigative journalism in individual countries. Small civil society organizations are often allied with political parties, limiting options for Mission collaboration and independent information and analysis.

4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1: Information technology resources and tools are modernized to expand data availability and accessibility, increase collaboration, and improve service delivery.

- **Justification:** Mission Bridgetown understands the importance of state-of-the-art information technology, its impact on day-to-day operations, and its ability for the Mission to efficiently and effectively perform essential tasks to achieve ICS goals. Toward this end, we will continue to aggressively pursue knowledge management improvements that streamline our organization, allow for data-driven analysis to support decision making and provide more flexible and expansive information sharing and message delivery.
- **Linkages:** Links to modernizing American diplomacy and establishing a strong management control environment in the Interim National Security Strategy Guidance, State/USAID Joint Strategic Plan, D-MR Policy Initiatives/Directives and WHA JRS.
- **Risks:** A failure to achieve this objective could lead to workflow disruptions, deliverable delinquency, perceived stagnation, and the Mission's inability to effectively achieve its foreign policy goals. The Mission seeks to mitigate these risks by strengthening and improving its processes and technology to support the efficient delivery of management support and programmatic services, enable evolving work flexibility and mobility, and inform strategic decision making using real time data.

Management Objective 2: Increased commitment evidenced by clear actions to increasing diversity and fostering a culture of inclusion, where people feel welcome, heard, and confident that their contribution to our national security is vital to the Missions success.

- **Justification:** The Mission values diversity as a transformative force and draw strength from the innovation and creativity that it brings to our work and community. We are committed to fostering an environment where individuals are respected and valued for their differences and abilities. We are committed to building and advancing a culture of inclusion, integrity, dignity, and respect across Mission Barbados.
- **Linkages:** Links to modernizing American diplomacy in the Interim National Security Strategy Guidance, State/USAID Joint Strategic Plan, D-MR Policy Initiatives/Directives, WHA JRS, National Gender Strategy.
- **Risks:** A failure to achieve Objective 2 could lead to disenfranchisement, lack of competitiveness in the marketplace, and the Mission's inability to achieve its policy goals and be a vocal leader in the Eastern Caribbean community. The Mission seeks to mitigate these risks by promoting and strengthening a diverse and inclusive workforce; proactively recruiting applicants from underserved or marginalized communities for locally employed staff and other positions; building a culture that empowers employees and values and rewards smart, informed risk taking; and aggressively pursuing staff development and training opportunities.

Management Objective 3: Effectiveness and efficiency improvements leverage data to enhance internal controls, contain costs, and improve customer services across the Mission.

- **Justification:** The Mission understands the value of increased efficiencies and cost reductions to Mission Bridgetown and the Department. Initiatives where cost savings can be realized through internal (regional) and external outsourcing, investment in energy efficient greening projects, and synergizing data, for instance, will be pursued.
- **Linkages:** Links to modernizing American diplomacy and establishing a strong management control environment in the Interim National Security Strategy Guidance, State/USAID Joint Strategic Plan, D-MR policy initiatives/Directives and WHA JRS.
- **Risks:** A failure to achieve this objective could lead to administrative ineffectiveness and inefficiencies, increased costs and potential waste, fraud, and abuse. The Mission seeks to mitigate these risks by placing a high value on performance management and collaboration and the adoption of knowledge management improvements that streamline our organization, allowing for data-driven analysis to support decision making and provide more flexible and expansive information sharing and message delivery. Efforts will be made to ensure traditional stovepipes are dismantled and interagency cooperation increased through strategic workforce planning and enterprise development. Additionally, the Mission will continue to pursue and utilize evaluative tools that assist with identifying inefficiencies and increase cost savings by eliminating redundancies and poor management practices.