



# Integrated Country Strategy

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## DUTCH CARIBBEAN

**FOR PUBLIC RELEASE**

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## 1. Chief of Mission Priorities

The U.S. Consulate General (CG) in Curacao is an independent mission, headed by a Chief of Mission (COM). The COM serves as the U.S. representative to the six islands of the Dutch Caribbean, which have varying levels of autonomy within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. While the Kingdom is responsible for foreign affairs, defense, and human rights, the three semi-autonomous governments (Aruba, Curacao, and Sint Maarten) maintain their own international contacts in certain areas as do the three Dutch municipalities (Saba, St. Eustatius, and Bonaire). The socio-economic fallout caused by the collapse of the Venezuelan economy on the southern islands and the risk of hurricanes in the northern tier are ongoing challenges, as is the impact of COVID-19 on the tourism-dependent island economies. The Consulate General's small State Department team supports a DEA, Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and DOD presence. It also coordinates closely with a U.S. Air Force Forward Operating Location (FOL) on Curacao.

Constraints exist. CG Curacao has one officer and two local staff covering all political, economic, and public diplomacy work, and one consular officer and two staff for an area that (pre-pandemic) hosted millions of U.S. visitors each year. In the past two years, the islands' economies were severely affected by health costs, a dramatic decline in tourism, and a surge of Venezuelan migrants. Record unemployment, government deficits, and crime surged during the pandemic, and corruption remains an issue. All the islands are multi-ethnic societies dealing with the legacy of slavery and the need to enhance political, economic, and social inclusion. To address the overcrowded and obsolete consulate facilities, a major construction project will begin in 2022, straining the already stretched management platform. Southern Command's financial constraints have delayed establishment of a permanent and much-needed Military Liaison Office (MLO), even as our security engagement has broadened and deepened. Similarly, the CBP preclearance operation in Aruba is growing even as our GSO section has found it hard to fill administrative support positions in Aruba.

Nevertheless, we see a time of great opportunity as well. As the pandemic retreats, visitors are returning throughout the islands. The Dutch Navy is a reliable and integrated U.S. partner on counternarcotics and security and is complemented by strong cooperation by local law

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enforcement and professionalism in the judicial system. Curacao's geographic position makes it a natural hub for increased staging of hurricane relief, U.S. Coast Guard logistics and supply, and much more. Faced with some of the highest utility costs in the hemisphere, the island governments are keenly interested in cost-effective and renewable alternatives.

The U.S. Consulate General will focus on three clusters of policy objectives: (1) strengthen multinational, joint, and interagency cooperation to combat transnational criminal networks, fight corruption, and protect human rights; (2) promote U.S. business interests, including in energy and sustainability, and further cooperative climate action; (3) increase people-to-people connections based on our values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, and enhance positive attitudes towards the United States and the U.S. government presence, as well as support for U.S. policies.

On security and law enforcement, we seek to build on the excellent cooperation we have with each of the islands and the Kingdom of the Netherlands armed forces to interdict drug traffickers in small boats and planes coming out of Venezuela and Colombia. We will require increased interagency support, including a permanent MLO, to manage the expected increase in volume of U.S Coast Guard cutters, U.S. Navy ships, British, Canadian, French, and Dutch maritime surface assets and a ramping up of airborne detection and monitoring activities at the FOL. Completion of the long-discussed cooperative radar data sharing agreement will expand our information sharing capabilities for these activities. Negotiation of a new CBP preclearance agreement with Aruba will make CBP's operations more sustainable. Training of our local law enforcement partners will make them increasingly helpful in dismantling trafficking networks. Finally, we seek to strengthen civil society efforts to promote and protect human rights and enhance government effectiveness in addressing undocumented populations, including supporting independent media and civil society defending human rights and combating corruption.

On the economic front, we will continue to promote sustainable energy initiatives, particularly renewable or lower carbon energy, sustainable tourism by U.S. companies, and further cooperative climate action. The Mission will support efforts to help the Dutch Caribbean switch

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from diesel electricity generation to a combination of LNG, wind, and solar. We will use our PD resources to spur entrepreneurship, especially in businesses that support our climate agenda. All of this will take some flexibility and innovation from Washington offices to understand that modest funding is necessary. The islands are part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and considered high-income thereby precluding access to concessional finance. Their small size makes attracting foreign investment a challenge.

We will expand our people-to-people engagement, increasing awareness of and support for the U.S. presence in the Dutch Caribbean and our regional and global policy priorities, building networks of allies through alumni programs, enhancing English language activities, and conducting programs to help the local community understand the value of the FOL, all informed by the need to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. This requires the establishment of a permanent PD section with a corresponding budget to support local programming and grants. With only one consular officer, it is difficult to regularly visit the northern islands of the Dutch Caribbean, over 500 miles away. We will therefore seek to enhance our warden system and develop additional POCs to serve American citizens in Sint Maarten, Saba, and St. Eustatius. We will also seek to expand NIV services to support our people-to-people and economic engagement priorities.

Our management goals and objectives are just as important. The post has come a long way with a very small management platform and a can-do attitude, but it is a challenge to meet all State Department standards and to support the explosion of engagement that is on the near horizon, including the extraordinary needs of the soon to be initiated New Consulate Compound construction project. The management section needs a GSO and a beefing up of other capabilities, while all staff would benefit from greater opportunities for professional development.

## 2. Mission Strategic Framework

**Mission Goal 1:** Strengthen multinational, joint, and interagency cooperation to combat transnational criminal threat networks with a primary focus on narcotics, human, and weapons trafficking, and protection of human rights. These are some of the mission's highest priorities as they directly affect the health, safety, and welfare of U.S. citizens as well as those of our partner nations.

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Increase local law enforcement's capability to combat transnational and local criminal organizations; counter narcotics and weapons smuggling and human trafficking; complete renegotiation of the CBP pre-clearance treaty with the Government of Aruba (GoA) and the Radar Sharing Agreement with the Government of Curacao (GoC).
- **Mission Objective 1.2:** Strengthen civil society efforts to promote human rights and combat corruption and increase coordination with host governments to humanely address undocumented populations.

**Mission Goal 2:** Promote U.S. business interests, including in energy and sustainability, and further cooperative climate action.

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Secure opportunities for U.S. businesses to partner with the governments in the Dutch Caribbean on existing energy infrastructure and new renewable energy projects leading to the achievement of sustainable energy security and promotion of best practices throughout the Caribbean.
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Identify opportunities to support post-pandemic economic recovery efforts and increase linkages between the public and private sector to further economic prosperity and address climate change.

**Mission Goal 3:** Increase people-to-people connections and enhance positive attitudes towards the U.S. presence in the Dutch Caribbean and support for U.S. regional and global policies.

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Strengthen alumni networks and increase public recognition of alumni programs
- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Integrate SOUTHCOM and component activities with public diplomacy efforts to better tell the story of the U.S. - Dutch Caribbean partnership
- **Mission Objective 3.3:** Promote American values through increased engagement with emerging and underserved communities, including young people, women, minority groups, people with disabilities, and at-risk youth.
- **Mission Objective 3.4:** Increase consular outreach services, particularly to Americans living in Sint Maarten, Aruba, and Bonaire.

**Management Objective 1:** Construct a New Consulate Compound (NCC).

**Management Objective 2:** Maintain and expand workforce capability according to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) principles, securing approval for USDH GSO and MLO (DoD) positions, recruiting additional LE Staff, and providing opportunities for professional development.

### 3. Mission Goals and Objectives

**Mission Goal 1** | Strengthen multinational, joint, and interagency cooperation to combat transnational criminal threat networks, with a primary focus on narcotics, human, and weapons trafficking, and protection of human rights. These are some of the mission's highest priorities as they directly affect the health, safety, and welfare of U.S. citizens as well as those of our partner nations.

**Description** | Partner with local governments and the Kingdom of the Netherlands (KoN) to counter transnational criminal organizations, strengthen U.S. border security, enhance local law enforcement capabilities, combat internal corruption, and humanely address migration.

**Objective 1.1** | Increase local law enforcement's capability to combat transnational and local criminal organizations; counter narcotics and weapons smuggling and human trafficking; complete renegotiation of the CBP pre-clearance treaty with the Government of Aruba (GoA) and the Radar Sharing Agreement with the Government of Curacao (GoC).

- **Justification** | Local law enforcement agencies continually demonstrate a strong willingness to collaborate with U.S. law enforcement but lack the advanced investigative techniques required to effectively dismantle transnational criminal enterprises. Enhancing their investigative capabilities would enable disruption of increasingly complex criminal activities, increased seizures of illicit goods bound for the United States, and serve a force multiplier by degrading criminal and state-sponsored financial threat networks.
- **Linkages** | JSP Goal 1, JRS Goals 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 3.1, 3.4, & 4.1, Executive Order 13773 Enforcing Federal Law with Respect to Transnational Criminal Organizations and Preventing International Trafficking, The Biden-Harris Administration's Statement of Drug Policy Priorities for Year One, the 2020 National Drug Control Strategy, and the White House's National Plan to Combat Human Trafficking.
- **Risks** | Failing to intercept illicit goods closer to their points of origin allows



shipments to disperse as they move northward and enter the United States across a wider geographic area. Shipments seized at the U.S. border are oftentimes more difficult to investigate due to an elongated chain of suspects and greater elapsed time.

**Objective 1.2 |** Strengthen civil society efforts to promote human rights, combat corruption, and increase coordination with host governments to humanely address undocumented populations.

- **Justification |** Vulnerable migrant populations in Aruba, Curacao, and Sint Maarten lack legal protections and are frequently exploited by human trafficking networks. Additionally, inadequate protection and social services combined with deteriorating conditions in detention centers threaten the human rights of undocumented people.
- **Linkages |** JSP Goals 1 & 3, JRS Goals 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, & 3.1, Interim NSS, Biden Administration commitment to human rights being at the center of our foreign policy; the White House June 3, 2021, Memorandum on Establishing the Fight Against Corruption as a Core U.S. National Security interest.
- **Risks |** Greater vulnerability of migrant populations would contribute to increased insecurity, economic stress, and regional instability.

**Mission Goal 2 |** Promote U.S. Business Interests, including in Energy and Sustainability, and Further Cooperative Climate Action.

**Description |** The United States is the top trade partner in the Dutch Caribbean, and American businesses are active in the tourism, energy, and import/export sectors. Fostering connections between U.S. businesses and governments in the Dutch Caribbean will highlight the United States as the Caribbean's preferred partner for clean energy transitions. Partnering with American entrepreneurs will increase local capacity to further climate action and diversify the economy while decreasing brain drain and encouraging economic growth.

**Objective 2.1** | Secure opportunities for U.S. businesses to partner with Dutch Caribbean governments on energy projects that significantly lower emissions and transition toward renewables, leading to the achievement of sustainable energy security and promotion of best practices throughout the Caribbean.

- **Justification** | The countries of the Dutch Caribbean have high energy costs and unstable energy grids reliant on heavy fuel oil (HFO) and are aggressively seeking projects that assist in their clean energy transition to more renewable sources of fuel. U.S. companies are eager to partner in both the energy and waste sectors to help the islands address environmental challenges and increase energy security.
- **Linkages** | JSP Goals 2 & 1, JRS Goals 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, & 5.3, E.O. on tackling the climate crisis at home and abroad; COP26 Glasgow commitment; Interim NSS priority of expanding economic prosperity and opportunity, including by promoting U.S. businesses
- **Risks** | Failure to lead in this space will create a vacuum for other state actors to advance their own energy interests in the region; the impact of climate change disproportionately impacts small island states.

**Objective 2.2** | Identify opportunities to support post-pandemic economic recovery efforts and increase linkages between the public and private sector to further economic prosperity and address climate change.

- **Justification** | Climate change will have a devastating impact on the Dutch Caribbean. However, the economic impact of the global pandemic combined with decades of brain drain and a weak civil society discourage action. Supporting local efforts to do well while doing good increases economic opportunity while fostering sustainable climate action and economic diversification.
- **Linkages** | JSP Goals 2 & 1, JRS Goals 1.1, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, & 5.3, E.O. on tackling the climate crisis at home and abroad; COP26 Glasgow commitment; Interim NSS priority of expanding economic prosperity and opportunity, including by promoting U.S. businesses

- **Risks** | The climate crisis poses an existential threat to the future of the islands of the Dutch Caribbean. Failure to address the crisis will result in greater economic displacement, irregular migration, and insecurity. Additionally, failing to create economic opportunities for young islanders will result in continued brain drain and increased instability.

**Mission Goal 3** | Increase people-to-people connections and enhance positive attitudes towards the U.S. presence in the Dutch Caribbean and support for U.S. regional and global policies.

**Description** | Although the populations in the Dutch Caribbean generally view the United States favorably, there has never been a sustained campaign to explain our presence and the corresponding benefits to local communities. The crisis in Venezuela increased suspicions of the U.S. FOL and the population is unaware of the importance of detection, monitoring, and interdiction missions in combating transnational threat networks and corruption. Additionally, many ambitious young people go to the Netherlands to study and do not return, decreasing capacity for good governance and economic growth.

**Objective 3.1** | Strengthen alumni networks and increase public recognition of alumni programs

- **Justification** | Although a small program, our incredible alumni represent the future of the Dutch Caribbean and best illustrate the advantages of partnering with the United States. Despite having a cadre of engaged alumni, the public seems unaware of educational exchange opportunities the United States provides to future leaders of the Dutch Caribbean.
- **Linkages** | JSP Goals 3 & 2, JRS Goals 2.1, 4.1, 4.3, 6.1, & 6.3, Interim NSS – promotion of the liberal international order and American democratic values, E.O. Increasing economic prosperity and opportunity, enhancing regional stability

- **Risks** | By not engaging fully with alumni, the United States will not get a return on exchange program investment and will cede influence to other state actors eager to pull youth away from the United States.

**Objective 3.2** | Integrate SOUTHCOM and component activities with public diplomacy efforts to better tell the story of the U.S.- Dutch Caribbean partnership

- **Justification** | Engaging in a continued campaign to show what goes on “behind the walls” offers a unique opportunity to engage with local communities and discuss how and why the United States believes in the future of the Dutch Caribbean thereby ensuring continued government and public support for security activities.
- **Linkages** | JSP Goals 2 & 1, JRS 1.2, 1.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 6.1 & 6.3, Interim NSS – promotion of the liberal international order and American democratic values, E.O. Increasing economic prosperity and opportunity, enhancing regional stability
- **Risks** | Misunderstanding of the U.S. FOL, interdiction efforts, and a lack of awareness of the mission’s role and involvement reduces our ability to further policy goals and strengthen ties and creates a vulnerability for misinformation.

**Objective 3.3** | Promote American values through increased engagement with emerging voices such as young people, women, minority groups, persons with disabilities, and at-risk youth.

- **Justification** | Encouraging diversity, equity, inclusion, and access is imperative to advance democratic norms, security, and economic prosperity. It is particularly important in the Dutch Caribbean where the long history of slavery has left a legacy of bias and marginalization and a civil society that is underdeveloped. Giving young people, particularly those in underserved or disadvantaged communities, greater access to economic opportunities and the skills to become change agents is integral to a safer and more secure Dutch Caribbean.
- **Linkages** | JSP Goals 3 & 2, JRS Goals 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4.3, 4.4, 6.1, & 6.3, WHA prioritizes racial and gender equity and social inclusion in the conduct of foreign policy [21 STATE 111310](#); the Biden Administration’s policy (E.O. 13985) that the

Federal Government pursue a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all, including people of color and others historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality.

- **Risks** | The lack of diverse perspectives and participation results in slow economic growth, weak governance, and increased insecurity.

**Objective 3.4** | Increase delivery of quality Consular Section services throughout the region.

- **Justification** | Creating efficiencies, expanding visa services, responding to the needs of American citizens in accordance with FAM guidance is a challenge for a small post with only a single dedicated consular office in a consular district that is spread over 6 islands, and where the largest collection of U.S. Citizens is located more than 500 miles away in Sint Maarten. The Consular Section needs to increase its outreach services (passports, CRBAs, voter registration) and Citizen Liaison Volunteer (CLV) program to meet the needs of all U.S. citizens in the region. Expanding the types of visas that post offers and the type of applicants that are accepted will directly improve post's ability to expand people-to-people connections.
- **Linkages** | JRS Goals 3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 6.1, and 6.3, Consular Affairs mission statement includes the facilitation of legitimate travel and issuance of passport to U.S. citizens as two of its primary goals
- **Risks** | U.S. Citizen minors whose families cannot afford the travel to the United States may be under documented. Failure to expand visa services fails to leverage an important opportunity for business promotion in the United States and in the Dutch Caribbean.

## 4. Management Objectives

### Management Objective 1 | Construct a New Consulate Compound (NCC).

- **Justification** | Facilities on the current compound (an assortment of purpose-built and repurposed structures) are woefully undersized, aging, and many do not meet current OBO and DS standards. The seat of the Mission to the Dutch Caribbean requires proper facilities for both its own employees (currently, two tenant agencies in addition to DOS), as well as to support consular, public diplomacy, and other functions appropriately. The NCC is designed to meet security standards, integrate the local environment, and be efficient and climate-conscious, with a target to meet or exceed LEED Silver certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.
- **Linkages** | JSP Goal 4; JRS Goal 5 & Cross-Cutting Management Objective 1.
- **Risks** | Failing to provide sufficient space and modern facilities will result in continued infrastructure and security issues and severely limit the ability to support ICS Mission Goals across the board.

### Management Objective 2 | Maintain and expand workforce capability according to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) principles, securing approval for USDH GSO and MLO (DoD) positions, recruiting additional LE Staff, and providing opportunities for professional development.

- **Justification** | As an independent mission with an area of responsibility covering six-islands (three of which are semi-autonomous), and a combined total 43 USDH under COM authority on two islands, the mission remains acutely understaffed (STATE complement is only six USDH out of 43). The 2021 OIG inspection of the mission justified the need for an additional USDH management position and additional LE Staff positions. Post's Public Diplomacy portfolio, currently handled by a USDH Pol/Econ/PD Officer and one LE Staff member, warrants an additional USDH PD Officer. DoD presence is similarly insufficient, as the sole interagency position for the DoD element,

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the MLO Chief is not permanently billeted but filled by a successive temporary duty (TAD/TDY) personnel, subject to intermittent funding and uncertain length of tours. Coordination of multinational, joint, interagency communications, and cooperation initiatives for United States and KoN Armed forces among three autonomous islands (and three KoN territories) will continue to be severely constrained without a permanent change of station MLO Chief.

- **Linkages** | E.O. 13985, 13988; JSP Goal 4: JRS Goal 2.
- **Risks** | Should the required additions to both USDH and LE Staff not be achieved, performance of management controls, military cooperation, reporting, and public outreach will be inconsistent and opportunities to meet mission objectives will no doubt be missed.