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Chambers

*Director of Public Prosecutions,
P.O. Box 1031,
Georgetown,
Guyana*

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DPP's CHAMBERS PRESS RELEASE – Guyana's DPP participates in an International Seminar On the Fight Against Drug Trafficking and Addictions in the Caribbean and Guianas' Shield.

Guyana's Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), Mrs. Shalimar Ali-Hack, SC, during the week of December 9 to 12, 2024, attended an International Seminar on the Fight Against Drug Trafficking and Treating Addictions in the Caribbean and Guianas' Shield in Martinique.

The main focus of the 3-day event was to discuss regional cooperation amongst the territories in the Guianas' Shield. Emphasis was placed on Threat Assessment, the Conventional Network and New Perspectives of Cooperation. Drug addiction and treatment was also addressed, including the role of the drug treatment court.

Held under the theme, "***Never has Drugs Been Produced so much in the world, Never has it been so Distributed,***" the Meeting recognized that the Caribbean Basin and Guiana Shield have been faced with an increased drug trafficking scourge destined for markets in the USA and Europe.

Mr. Joel Sollier, Prosecutor General at the Court of Appeal of Cayenne, French Guiana, stated that "it is becoming essential for an effective fight and to protect our overseas territories, to strengthen judicial cooperation, not only at the level of the islands of the Region, but also with the United States and nearby American States, such as Venezuela and Colombia and those particularly affected and carrying security challenges such as Ecuador and Brazil."

He further noted that the drugs phenomenon is often accompanied by an increase in violent and related crimes, and has a strong societal impact on populations health wise. "Drugs kill and Addiction can be a never-ending struggle for users."

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in 2021, specified that 39.5 million people worldwide suffered from illicit substance abuse disorders, an increase of 45% in ten years.

Presentations and Round-Table discussions were made by respective judicial delegations looking at the threat and the necessary cooperation and action required to address it. Guyana's DPP Shalimar Ali-Hack, SC, did a presentation on Guyana's cooperation with its regional and international counterparts in the fight against the illicit trade.

Guyana's DPP agreed that there is a need for regional network and collaboration with the security forces. The idea, she expounded, is for the respective agencies in all the countries to cooperate in the fight. We have to build on the cooperation already existing in the region.

There were presentations on the effects that drugs are having on the economies and the people. There are persons suffering from addiction and this poses a problem for our human resources and ultimately affects our economies. Drug treatment courts are seen as one of the means of tackling this scourge which is plaguing our societies. Guyana has joined other jurisdictions and now has a Drug Treatment Court.

Other CARICOM States, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, Jamaica and Suriname also attended the seminar organized by the Ministry of Justice of Martinique. The Meeting also included non-CARICOM countries, France, Quebec Canada, Ecuador, Brazil, Dominican Republic, the United States of America, Saint Maarten and Panama.