

**PRESS RELEASE**



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**EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
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**General John Kelly's Visit to Trinidad and Tobago, Feb. 5, 2013**

U.S. Marine Corps General John Kelly, Commander of U.S. Southern Command, who was in Port of Spain yesterday said he was delighted to have met with Government and Defense leaders on his first Caribbean visit.

General Kelly met with Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Minister of National Security Jack Warner, Minister of Foreign Affairs Winston Dookeran and members of the Trinidad and Tobago Defense Force led by Chief of Defense Staff, Maj. Gen. Kenrick Maharaj.

In summing up the visit, General Kelly said "our discussions on various topics, chief among them regional security challenges, shared goals, and the important partnership between our countries were very good."

General Kelly noted that both the U.S. and Trinidad and Tobago have very close ties and felt honored to have had the U.S. Navy ship, USS Underwood join in celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of Trinidad and Tobago's independence last year.

"Security challenges have also changed and today we need to confront or counter threats ranging from stateless actors engaged in illicit trafficking of drugs, arms, money and people, to natural disasters."

He stressed that such threats are not confined by territorial boundaries but are regional, and therefore required a regional approach of which SouthCom is an integral part.

He vowed that SouthCom “will continue working with equal and trusted partners, like Trinidad and Tobago, to strengthen regional cooperation, improve key capabilities, and develop effective strategies that support our security goals.”

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