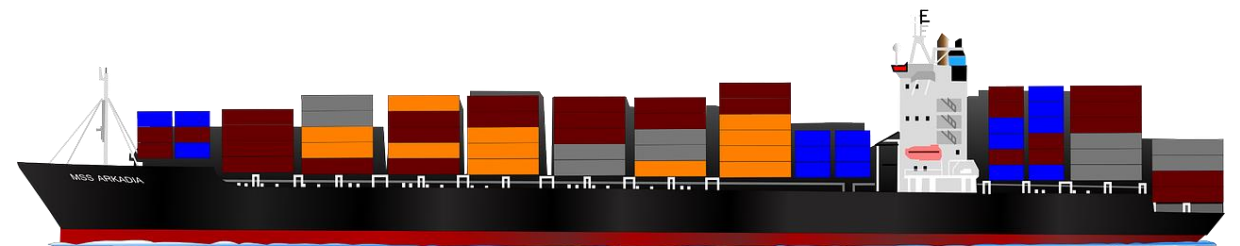


# **Strategies to Strengthen Maritime Security in the Caribbean**

**Presented by: Francisco Inoa Pichardo**

# Challenges

The issue of maritime security in the Caribbean does not only concern the Dominican Republic, but the entire region, which faces significant challenges to protect its waters and prevent illicit activities. In this regard, Customs Enforcement plays a key role in the implementation of strategies that seek to strengthen maritime security, and, at the same time, promote licit trade in the Dominican Republic and its neighbors.



# The Caribbean's Strategic Value

Due to its strategic value, the Caribbean is an important area for regional security, given that it possesses maritime routes through which mineral and agricultural resources, as well as raw materials, are transported to more industrialized countries, mainly, the United States.

The subregion, however, has been the target of all types of illicit activity, primarily those linked to drug trafficking, due to socioeconomic and political factors such as high unemployment rates and weakening institutions.

# Drug Trafficking

Drug trafficking is a national security threat to the countries of the region. The situation in the Caribbean is critical; for instance, a large amount of cocaine has been seized in the Dominican Republic. Throughout 2023, Dominican authorities have retained more than 10 tons of different drugs in various parts of the country.



# Increase of drug trafficking

Drug trafficking has increased not only in the Dominican Republic, but it is a phenomenon that affects various countries of the region, underscoring the importance of implementing strategies to strengthen maritime security.

**This, in addition to the importance of the Caribbean region, have caused the Caribbean seas to face challenges such as:**

- Drug trafficking.
- Organized crime.
- Arms trafficking.
- Piracy.
- Environmental deterioration.



# Strategic navigation points in the Caribbean:

- ❑ The Panama Canal
- ❑ Florida Strait (connecting the U.S. and Cuba)
- ❑ Yucatán Channel (connecting México and Cuba)
- ❑ Winward Passage (connecting Cuba and Haiti)
- ❑ Mona Passage (connecting the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico)
- ❑ Virgin's Passage (connecting Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands)



# Strategies

- ❑ Compile and update available projects
- ❑ Increase cooperation among countries.
- ❑ Evaluate and analyze the nature of the region's ports.



# Compile and update available projects

It is necessary to compile, review, study and update existing projects in order to strengthen regional integration on maritime security, and thus increase the efficiency of the public sector, as well as encourage the participation of the private sector.





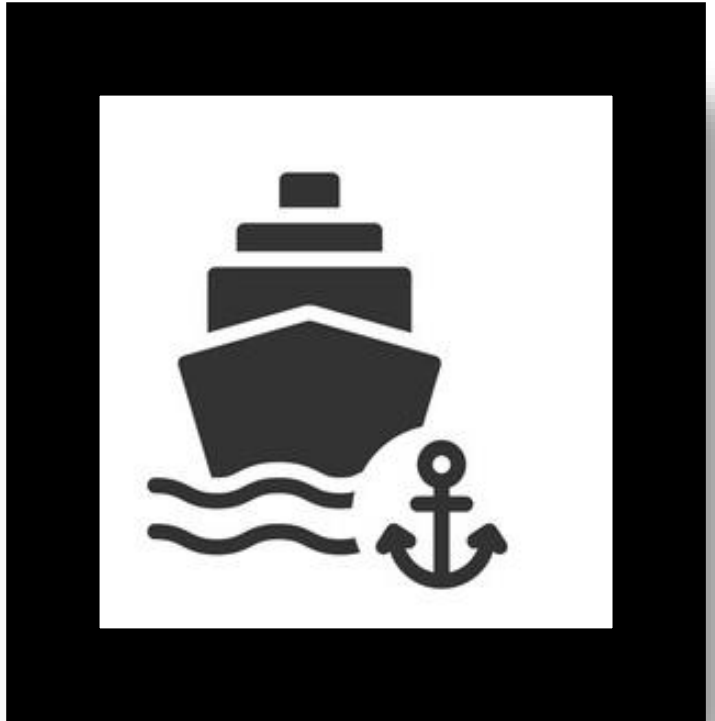
# Increase cooperation among Caribbean maritime authorities

- ❑ Share information and resources
- ❑ Provide specialized training to maritime security forces in order to improve their skills on threat detection, crisis management , and maritime law enforcement.
- ❑ Invest in technology to improve maritime surveillance, such as detection, follow-up and communication systems



# Evaluation and analysis of the region's port conditions

Evaluate and analyze the nature of the Caribbean ports, identifying their strengths and liabilities. It is crucial to know the specific needs of each port, and work collaboratively to strengthen the ports' security and operations.



**Thank you!**