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**INTER-AMERICAN DRUG ABUSE
CONTROL COMMISSION
CICAD**

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**THE LINK BETWEEN ILLICIT ARMS TRAFFICKING AND DRUG TRAFFICKING
BY ORGANISED CRIME IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**



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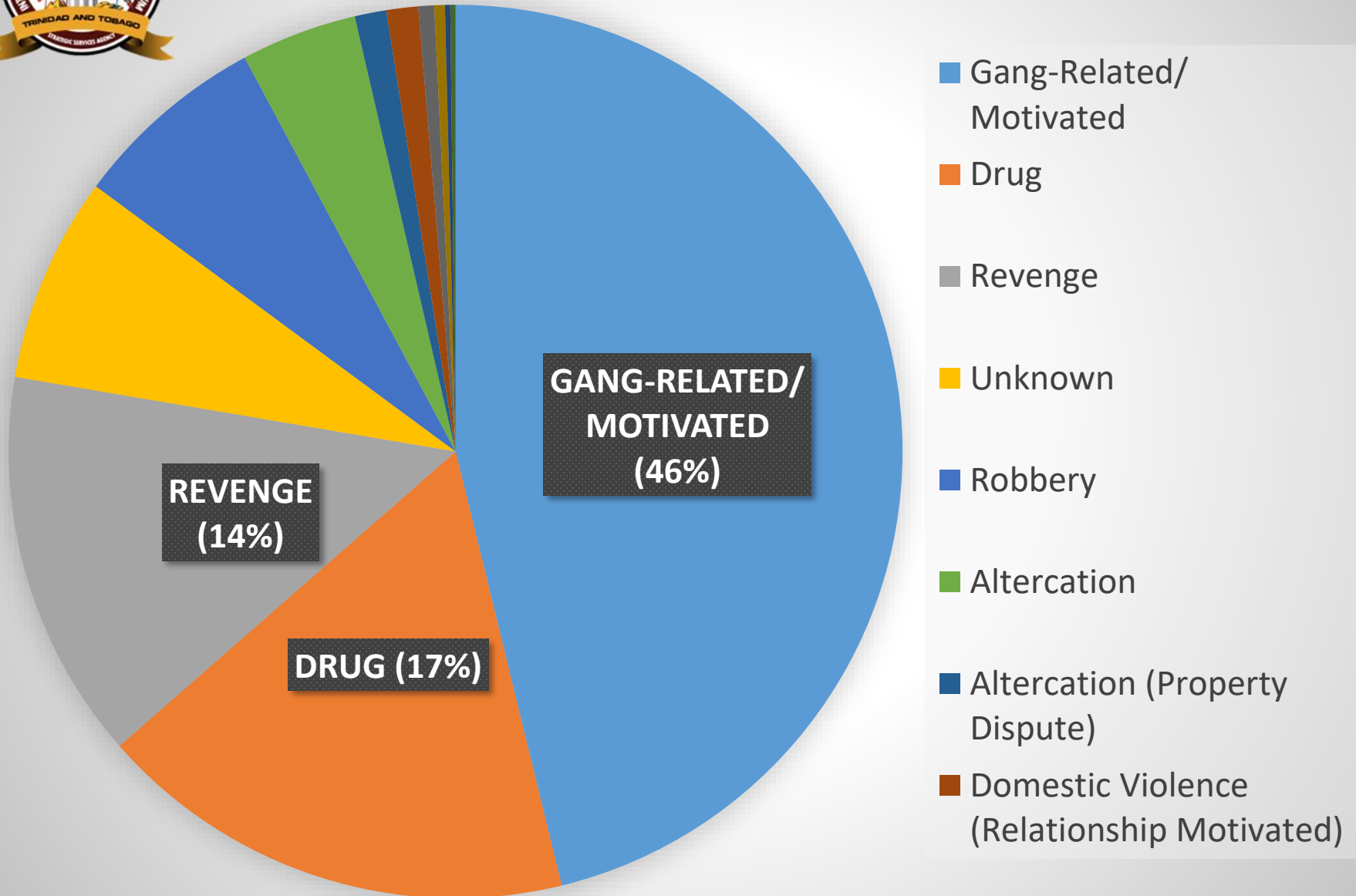


LOCAL IMPACT OF FIREARMS

- In 2022, 27% of all serious crimes reported involved the use of firearms.
- 98% of those firearm-related crimes were against the person e.g. robbery, murder and wounding & shooting offences.
- The country grappled with its highest murder toll since independence; 605 persons.
 - Roughly 2 people were murdered everyday, in a population of 1.4M persons
 - 40% were gang-related/motivated.
- Statistics suggest that T&T is a violent society, with availability of firearms enabling persons, whatever their motive, to ultimately kill or wound others.
- Further, incarceration of offenders is not a deterrent.
 - Prisoners (largely gang members), in possession of mobile devices, are networking with one another to plan and direct criminal acts which are executed by compliant non-incarcerated associates and gang members.



FIREARM-ENABLED MURDERS (BY MOTIVE)





GANGS & FIREARMS

- For gangs, their motive for firearms use is straightforward; the **pursuit of income and power.**
- The offences of robbery, murder and wounding & shooting, as well as, the unlawful sale of firearms are staples of local criminal gang activity.
 - Robberies, contract killings and illegal firearm sales **provide income.**
 - Murders, wounding & shootings *inter alia*, represent instances of gangs **fighting for territory, punishing rivals** and **settling internal disputes.**
- Gangs continue to equip themselves with high-powered automatic weapons to increase lethality.
 - These weapons also have a greater intimidatory effect on rivals.



Facebook Post of an incarcerated Gang Leader to his members (July 2023)

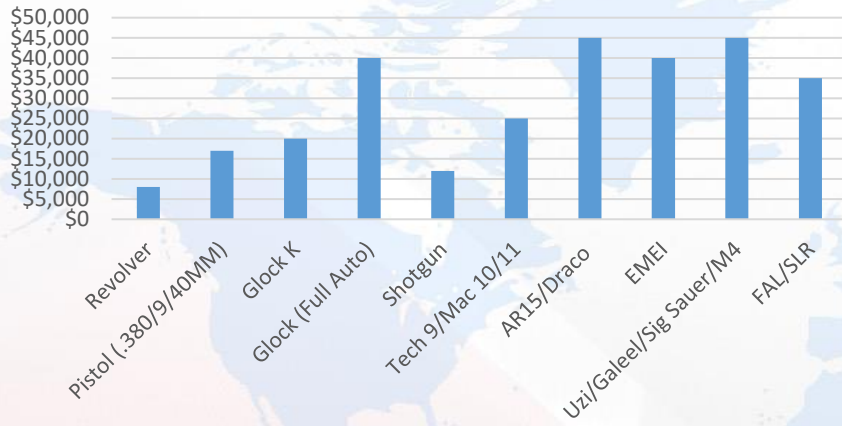


GANGS & FIREARMS

- Increased gang occupation/rivalries result in higher homicide rates, indiscriminate shootings and multiple murder events in Caribbean territories.
- Amalgamation of intra-regional gangs result in challenges to law enforcement capacity.
- Attacks on law enforcement personnel.
- ‘Trinibad’ Music Genre is likely used as a gang consolidation strategy between local gangs and their counterparts within the region.
- There is an increase in economically motivated crimes due to successful collaborative efforts between regional and external security partners. Increased home invasions and armed robberies targeting tourists are reported.



PRICES OF BLACK MARKET FIREARMS



Data as of 1st Quarter 2022

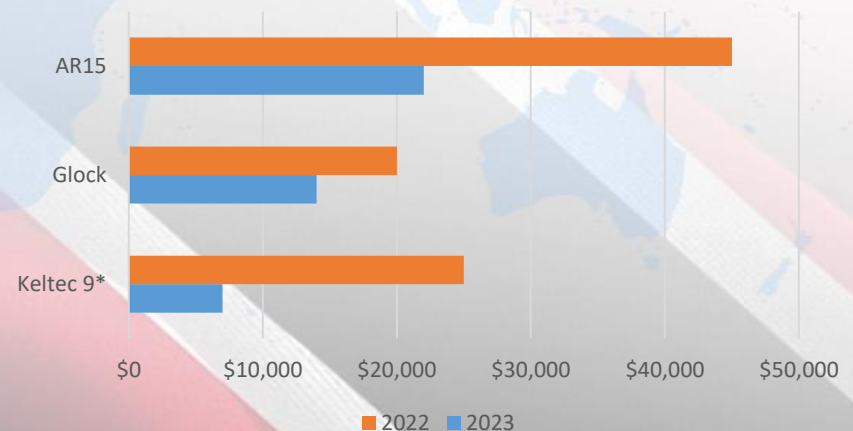
HIGHLIGHTS:

- High local demand is reflected, *in part*, by high prices.
- Of handguns, Glocks are favoured.
- Military assault type weapons are also highly desired.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Supply may have surpassed demand for popular weapons.
- The 703 firearms seized by law enforcement in 2022 therefore, may have had little effect on illegal gun availability.

DECLINING PRICES OF SELECTED WEAPONS (2022- July 2023)





FIREARM TRAFFICKING OPERATIONS – STORE TO STREET

WHAT

- Assault Rifles
- Pistols
- Revolvers
- Assorted ammunition
- Components
- Accessories

WHO

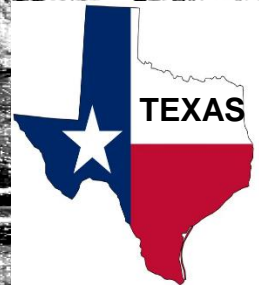
USA BASED OPERATORS

- T&T/Caribbean diaspora residing in the USA
 - Familial links
 - Direct associations
- Persons with military background

T&T BENEFICIARIES

- Gang members and close associates in T&T
- Primary firearms traffickers
- Corrupt law enforcement and border control agents facilitate the entry of firearms

WHERE: GUN SHOWS AND GUN SHOPS





FIREARM TRAFFICKING OPERATIONS – STORE TO STREET

HOW

MODE OF TRANSPORT

- US-based traffickers utilize “straw purchasers” to buy firearms
- Firearms are concealed among legitimate cargo
- T&T based targets use “dummy consignees” to clear the cargo
- Corrupt officials assist with clearing cargo and bypassing the system



**AIR
FREIGHT**



**SEA
FREIGHT**

CONCEALMENT METHODS



**HOUSEHOLD
APPLIANCES**



**SHIPPING
BARRELS**



FIREARM TRAFFICKING – REGIONAL

- Increasing quantity of military grade weapons into the region concealed in consumer products, electronic equipment and freighters.
- Increased trafficking of illegal firearms through logistics/shipping companies and commercial airlines into the Caribbean.
- Upsurge in ghost and registered firearms diverted into the Caribbean Basin from US stockpiles especially in Florida, Texas and Georgia.
- Trafficking networks comprise small scale trafficking operators, foreign nationals with diasporic connections and complicit law enforcement/border management officials.



NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING

- Global demand for cocaine in post pandemic is a main driver for increased cocaine production in neighbouring Latin American countries. This has resulted in larger shipments of cocaine trafficked through legitimate ports in the Caribbean destined for Europe, Canada and US.
- The regional demand for hybrid Marijuana has resulted in the north-south and intra-regional flow of the drug.
- Increased demand for synthetic drugs in the region resulting in diverse methods of concealment and trafficking into Caribbean countries – air postal services, wooden crates, food packaging.
- Expansion of networks and trafficking routes with more illicit drugs leaving the Caribbean destined for South-east Asia.



FLOW OF NARCOTICS

SEA-BASED ROUTE

CANADA
USA

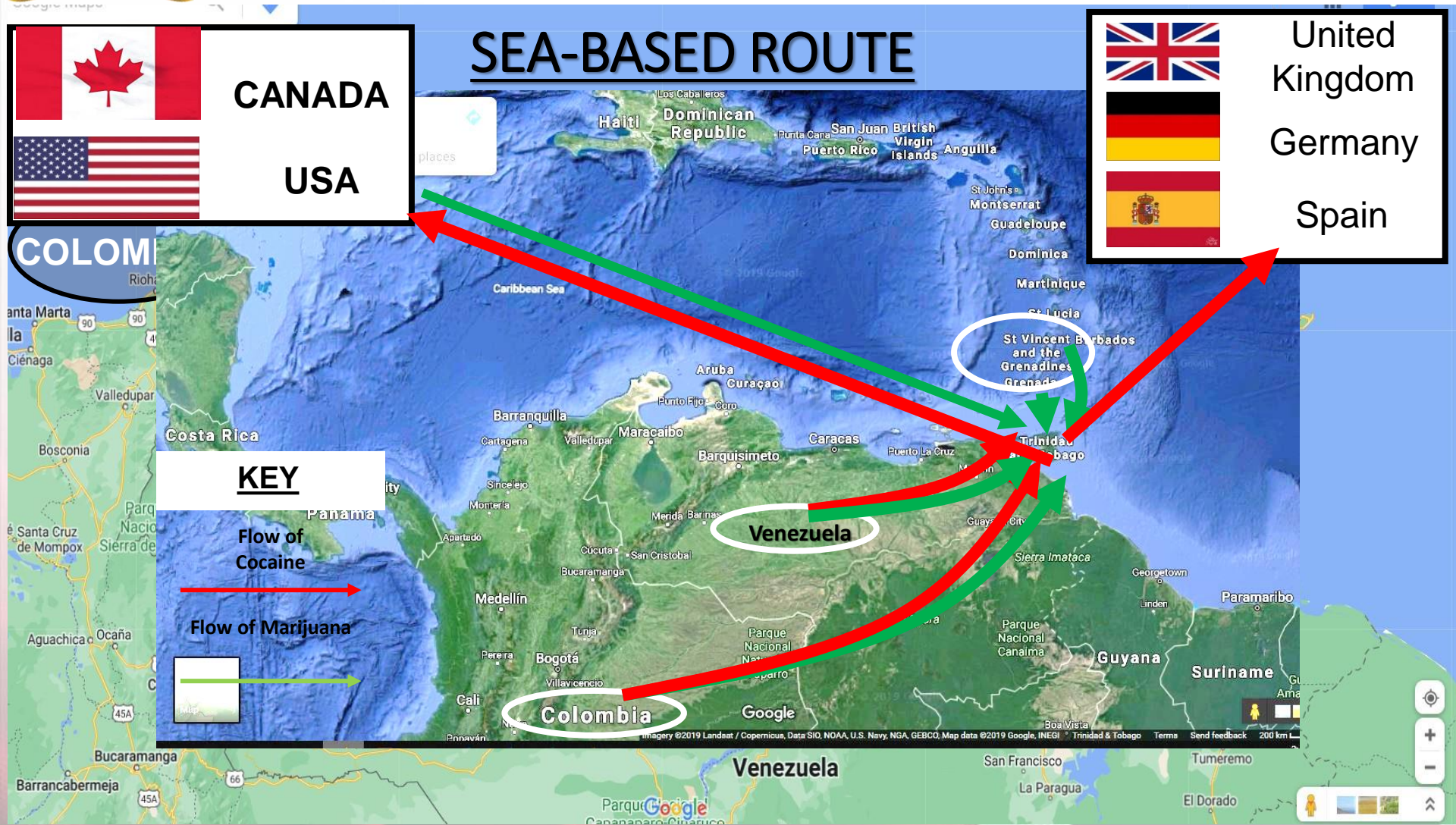
United Kingdom
Germany
Spain

COLOMBIA

KEY

Flow of Cocaine

Flow of Marijuana





PROPOSED STRATEGIES

- **Enhanced Border Security**
- **Improved Maritime Surveillance**
- **International Cooperation**
- **Build Law Enforcement Capacity**
- **Legislative Reforms**
- **Community Engagement**
- **Targeted Interdiction Operations**
- **Technological Solutions**



THANK YOU

Questions
Comments
Concerns