

**MESSAGE FROM THE OPPOSITION SPOKESMAN ON
NATIONAL SECURITY
FOR
THE SPECIAL CONSTABULARY FORCE ASSOCIATION
CONFERENCE 2009**

This publication comes at a very important juncture to mark the 25th Anniversary of the formation of the Special Constabulary Force Association under the theme "*Honouring the Past, Preparing for the Future.*" It comes at a time when there is an atmosphere of declining morale and negative publicity as the struggle for better working conditions and remuneration continues.

It is within this context that we appreciate the professionalism displayed by the Association in its approach to a resolution of the industrial dispute with the government without causing undue disruption and dislocation. Your journey from a part-time service to permanent employment in 1984, to pensionable status in 1998, is indicative of the successes you have enjoyed in your effort to improve the conditions of work for your membership.

No society can develop without respect for the rule of law and the protection of its citizens through the maintenance of public order. In this regard, the Island Special Constabulary Force (ISCF) has played a very important role in the enforcement of public order in our townships, transport centres and public spaces. Enough credit and recognition have not been conferred on you for the effort devoted to the maintenance of peace and stability throughout our nation.

There is no denying the progress that has been made especially over the last decade in reforming the ISCF and creating an environment for its professional development. The range of training modules now available locally and the continuing collaboration with tertiary institutions are producing satisfactory results. We would like to encourage you to make your members avail themselves for these career advancing opportunities with the Force.

The celebration of the Association's 25th Anniversary comes at time when we are reaping the benefits of improved cooperation between the police and community. Every effort must be made to maintain this dialogue and build the trust between those who enforce the law and citizens whom the law protects.

The police, by its conduct and professional behaviour, can also provide examples for our young people to emulate so that we may build the kind of social cohesion which will allow us to settle any dispute without resorting to violence.

Peter Bunting, M.P.