

# Ministry of Public Security

Lot 6 Brickdam, Georgetown, Guyana



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**For Immediate Release**

## **NIS Inspectors and Managers Receives Trafficking in Persons Victim Identification and Referral Training**

**Georgetown Guyana-** Chairman of the Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons, Minister of Home Affairs, Honourable Robeson Benn, on Wednesday September 30, 2020 addressed Inspectors and Managers of the National Insurance Scheme (NIS), at the opening of a two-day virtual Trafficking in Persons Victim Identification and Referral Training. The Minister in his feature address noted that the primary objective of the training, is to equip inspectors and compliance officers from the National Insurance Scheme who are actively involved in the area of monitoring and compliance, both in the private and public sectors, with the requisite knowledge and skills to prevent, respond and report potential acts of human trafficking.

Marking reference to trafficking in persons statistics, Minister Benn stated that from January to August 2020, the Guyana Police Force investigated nineteen suspected cases of trafficking in persons inclusive of seventy (70) alleged victims and twenty-seven (27) suspects. These reported cases he noted, came from regions 3,4,7 and 9, with 59 of the alleged victims being females and 11 males. Forty-five (45) of the alleged victims were Venezuelan nationals, 10 Haitians and 11 Guyanese, with the primary purpose of these cases mainly for sexual and labour exploitation.

Minister Benn further noted that the current data gathered by the Guyana Police Force may not be true reflection of what is on the ground, and this maybe as a result of the difficulties and complexities of identifying the crime of Trafficking in persons especially in the interior locations of Guyana. He was however thankful for the visit made by US Secretary of State Michael Pompeo and their contribution of 5 million US Dollars that will help the Government of Guyana to assist Venezuelan refugees, one of the most vulnerable groups that currently records the highest number

of alleged victims in trafficking in persons in Guyana. The Minister added that it is because of the complexities of the crime human trafficking, he would like the officers who are being trained from the various administrative Regions, to be more vigilant when visiting various business establishments both in the Urban and Rural Areas. He told participants that the training is part of Government efforts to address one of the outlined recommendations from the 2020 US State Department Trafficking in Persons Report, and that will provide them with some of the indicators that will aid them in identifying instances of human trafficking, which will further complement the Ministry's efforts to get a true reflection on the ground as it relates to Trafficking in Persons in Guyana.

Also giving brief remarks at the opening of the training was General Manager of the National Insurance Scheme Ms. Holly Greaves, who stated that trafficking in persons is illegal, inhumane, and morally degrading. She emphasized that this global phenomenon, affects men, women and children, and everyone has a role to play and an obligation to act. She further noted the value of partnerships, information sharing and coordination in Trafficking in persons, which she believes the training programme provides. The training she said is an opportunity to better understand the problem human trafficking, and to develop strong legal, policy and law enforcement response. She urged all participants to fully engage themselves in the training.

The training was fully attended by participants from NIS offices in Central Georgetown, Essquibo, Pouteroyen, Lethem, Mabaruma, Corriverton, Linden, Lenora, Mahaicony and Port Mourant.

Participants were exposed to the following areas of training:

- Application of Local TIP Legislation
- Victim Identification, Screening and the Response of the Guyana Police Force TIP Unit,
- Labour Trafficking- Gender and Migrants and the role and services offered by the International Organization for Migration(IOM),
- Understanding the Crime of Trafficking in Persons and Victim Assistance, Care, and Referral in Guyana
- Purpose and Function of the Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and TIP Statistics in Guyana.

Presentations were delivered by: Mr. Daniel Griffith, Coordinator (ag) Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons, Ministry of Home Affairs, Mrs. Diana O'Brien Assistant Director of Public Prosecutions, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), Sergeant McBean, Guyana Police Force, Trafficking in Persons Unit, Ms. Kaiesha Perry, Senior Programme Assistant Counter- Trafficking in Persons, International Organization for Migration (IOM), and Mrs. Tanisha Williams- Corbin Counter- Trafficking in Persons Unit, Ministry of Human Services and Social Security.

The training programme concluded on October 1, 2020.

**End**