



# St Kitts and Nevis Customs and Excise Department

*"To Protect and Collect"*

## PRESS RELEASE

### **CUSTOMS WEEK 2017 OFF TO WONDERFUL START**

BASSETERRE, ST. KITTS, JANUARY 22, 2017 (Customs PRO) - Customs Week 2017 is off to a wonderful start. Over one hundred and fifty Customs officers of the St. Kitts Division of the St. Kitts and Nevis Customs and Excise Department and guests joined the priests and worshippers of the Co-Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in prayer and praise today.

It has become the tradition of the department to begin Customs Week celebration by attending church as a uniformed body. This year the department was happy to have been graced with the presence of the Governor-General of the Federation, Sir S. W. Tapley Seaton.

Other special guests at the service of celebration included Prime Minister, Dr. Hon. Timothy Harris; Senator, Mrs. Akilah Byron-Nisbett; Financial Secretary, Mrs. Hilary Hazel; Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Mr. Alistair Edwards; Director of Information Technology, Ms. Amicia Mussenden; as well as former Comptrollers of Customs, Mr. Rodney Harris, Mr. Norman Williams and Mr. Donald Cable.

Junior Customs Officer, Mr. Shacquille Edwards ably read the New Testament lesson which was taken from 1 Corinthians 1: 10-13, 17.

Parish Priests, Father George Agger and Father Manuel Antao, led the Eucharistic celebration, there extolling the work of the officers as courteous and pleasant. The mass included special prayers for the Comptroller and all officer of the department, "that they may recognise and embrace the very important role they play in our Federation and administer their offices with justice, fairness and respect for all."

Prime Minister Harris, in his distinguished capacity as Minister of Finance, declared the week open in an address to the department and to the nation. Dr. Harris outlined the importance of data generated by the department as a source of critical information to guide government decisions on sustainable use of government infrastructure.

Dr. Harris announced that the hard work of Customs was instrumental for the country's latest ranking of 72<sup>nd</sup> in the world in the World Bank's Doing Business Report - Trading Across Borders. This ranking translates to 7<sup>th</sup> in all of Latin America and the Caribbean and first in all of CARICOM.

"By the light of the preponderance of local and international testimony to the great work being delivered at Customs and Excise, I must here, today, salute each and every Customs officer and here too, I must earnestly admonish every one of you to keep up the great job

---

you have been doing,” PM Harris to the officers and the nation in the presence of the worshippers.

The week’s celebration is being held under the theme, “Data Analysis for Effective Border Management” and runs from Sunday, January 22 to Saturday, January 28, 2017.

-30-

