

Maritime-Port Security in the Caribbean: Challenges and Opportunities

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Why Maritime-Port Security Matters



Maritime & port sectors are fundamental to:

- Trade and regional connectivity
- Tourism and economic growth
- Food and energy security



Criminal networks increasingly exploit:

- Maritime trade
- Containerized cargo systems
- Port infrastructure
- Gaps in inspection and monitoring capacities

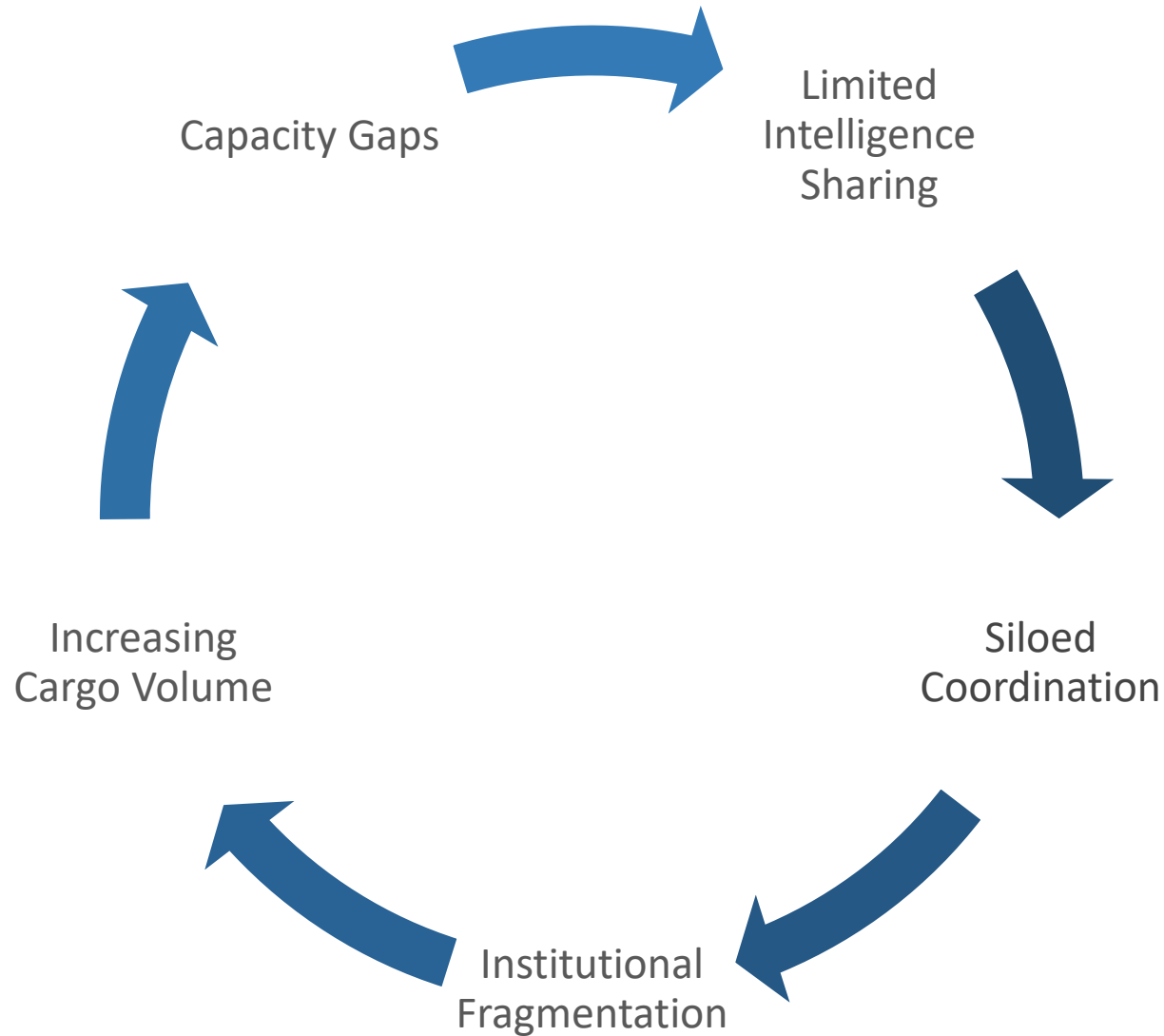


SIDS face vulnerabilities due to:

- Limited operational resources
- Capacity constraints
- Heavy dependence on maritime commerce

Strengthening Maritime-Port Security Drives Regional Development

Challenges for Effective Maritime-Port Security



➤ Effective maritime-port security requires **coordinated collaboration** among **multiple stakeholders**:

- Maritime Authorities
- Port Authorities
- Customs Agencies
- Law Enforcement
- Private Sector
- Tourism Authorities

Maritime-Port Security Threats

Border control

- Lack of equipment to screen cargo and containers
- Limited use of police intelligence to counter diversion points
- Personnel and institutional capacity gaps

Interagency coordination

- Gaps in regulatory framework for transactions (transit and transshipment)
- Absence of effective systems to share data with police forces
- Lack of SOPs



Ports as Entry Points

Ports and maritime routes are primary vectors for the illicit trafficking of firearms, ammunition, and explosives.



Containerized Smuggling

Criminal networks exploit containerized cargo systems and gaps in inspection capacity to conceal and move illicit weapons across borders with minimal detection risk.

Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Maritime-Port Security

- Challenges are transnational; responses must be regional
- **Regional cooperation** strengthens maritime-port security by:
 - **Harmonizing** implementation of the ISPS Code;
 - **Capacity building and training** to meet ISPS requirements;
 - Regional support mechanisms to improve compliance (e.g., USCG International Port Security Program; Mexico International ISPS Network, RSS, CARICOM IMPACS).
- Regional cooperation may lead to:
 - More **consistent ISPS compliance**;
 - **Earlier identification** of high-risk vessels and cargo;
 - Better use of limited resources.



CIP-OAS & PATT Regional Table-Top Exercise, Port of Spain 2024

➤ *Regional Cooperation is essential for maritime-port security.*

CIP Port Security Initiatives

How CIP-OAS Supports Regional Coordination for Maritime-Port Security:



CIP-OAS 8th Regional Port Security Management Workshop, Saint Kitts and Nevis, May 2025

1. Regional Dialogue

- Brings together National Port Authorities, industry, and maritime-port security stakeholders to align efforts ([PFSO database](#))

2. Knowledge Exchange & Best Practices

- Facilitates exchange of information and lessons learned through biannual [Technical Hemispheric Port Security Conferences](#) and monthly [Webinars](#)

3. Capacity Building & Training

- Holds annual [Port Security Management Workshops](#) for CARICOM Port Authorities (> 400 PFSOs in the Caribbean trained)

4. Public–Private Engagement

- Connects National Port Authorities with [port security industry leaders](#) for enhanced collaboration

Final Considerations

- Strengthen port, cargo, and container security
 - Enhance **regional cooperation**, coordination, and information-sharing mechanisms
 - Promote integrated **National Maritime Security Frameworks**
 - Expand technical assistance, joint training, and **capacity-building** for Member States
 - Promote **public-private partnerships and engagement with regional organizations**
 - Support comprehensive approaches that **recognize maritime-port security as a global public good**
- *Integrating maritime-port security effectively into existing national and/or regional security frameworks strengthens their impact.*



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Thank you!

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