



Matters of mutual interest between Jamaica and the Washington, D.C. National Guard were high on the agenda, during a visit to the Jamaican Embassy on January 10 by the Commanding General of the National Guard, Major General Errol Schwartz.

In the discussion with Ambassador to the United States, His Excellency Stephen Vasciannie, Major General Schwartz and his team outlined some of the existing areas of co-operation between the National Guard and Jamaica.

Ambassador Vasciannie thanked the Commanding General for the National Guard's contributions to the Jamaican military and to the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM).

Representatives from the National Guard and the Jamaican Embassy also touched on possible areas for future cooperation.

Collaboration with the National Guard is co-ordinated in Jamaica through the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF). There are annual high level consultations and a number of events involving structured visits by military officers on both sides. The National Guard has also assisted with training and has provided technical assistance in emergency relief, security and medical evacuation exercises.

Following the meeting, Ambassador Vasciannie noted that, "this type of technical co-operation certainly redounds to the benefit of Jamaica. We are heartened by the assistance received from the National Guard and note that the JDF, with its high degree of professionalism, is able to reciprocate in some areas."

The 257<sup>th</sup> Army Band, a National Guard unit, participated in the Jamaica Military Tattoo last year, which lasted from June 28 to July 1, as part of the country's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary

of independence celebrations.