

# South Dakota National Guard

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January 29, 2016

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## **SD Guard, Suriname military conduct strategic planning**

PARAMARIBO, Suriname – Three members of the South Dakota National Guard visited the Republic of Suriname, South Dakota’s State Partnership Program nation, in the capital city of Paramaribo to participate in a strategic planning exchange with Suriname military personnel, Jan. 13-15.

The purpose of the event was to build upon a previous exchange on strategic planning conducted last July and facilitate discussions on strategic planning models used by the SDNG and the Suriname Defense Force.

“The goal of the exchange was to share best practices to help each other achieve our organizational visions through the establishment of goals and objectives,” said Lt. Col. Orson Ward, State Partnership Program director for the SDNG and a participant in the exchange.

The SDNG Soldiers met with more than a dozen Suriname senior military leaders from the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Military Police, as well as several personnel from the U.S. Military Liaison Office. Other agency participants included the National Coordination Center for Disaster Relief and members from the Suriname Ministry of Defense.

The exchange allowed Suriname and South Dakota officials to discuss an extended-year strategic plan using a structured planning process. Discussions focused on strategic planning concepts, doctrine requirements, analysis and goal setting.

The SDNG and Suriname conducted 12 military-to-military exchanges last year and are scheduled to complete 16 exchanges in fiscal year 2016. The strategic planning event is a key step to ensure future exchanges meet the intent of both organizations.

“Last year was a highly successful year for both our organizations and this exchange helps ensure we have another successful year for upcoming events planned for 2016 and beyond,” said Ward.

Ward said another significant aspect of the event was to witness the development of the Suriname Defense Force’s strategic plan that addresses regional threats to Suriname’s economy and illegal trafficking that may affect the security of our partner nation and its citizens.

“Planning focused on increasing public safety and security, reducing illicit trafficking, and promoting social justice were themes discussed throughout the exchange,” said Ward.

Another key highlight of the exchange was the level of trust demonstrated between the senior leaders of the Suriname Defense Force and the members of the SDNG.

“All were very open with the strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities each organization had to consider when developing the plan,” said Ward. “Additionally, the level of hospitality and cooperation displayed by members of the Suriname Ministry of Defense and the Suriname Defense Force is always humbling for our South Dakota National Guardsmen to experience.”

During the conference, exchange participants also had the opportunity to meet with Ambassador Edwin Nolan, the recently assigned U.S. ambassador to Suriname.

“We shared with him an overview of the State Partnership Program, how it aligns with his priorities in promoting the U.S. commitment to its relationship with Suriname,” said Ward. “Additionally, we passed on our adjutant general’s invitation for him to come to South Dakota to celebrate with us this June the 10th anniversary of the South Dakota National Guard and Suriname partnership.”

Since 2006, South Dakota and Suriname, in coordination with U.S. Southern Command, have established a successful security cooperation relationship the National Guard Bureau’s State Partnership Program. Since then, numerous exchanges have taken place between the SDNG and Suriname’s Defense Forces to share experiences and best practices in a variety of military training and topics.

Ward said the ambassador commented that he had heard of the positive relationship the South Dakota National Guard has established over the past several years prior to his arrival in Suriname.

“I think what was significant about the ambassador’s comments was it demonstrated he recognizes the value our program and relationships have in the overall contribution to regional security within the Caribbean,” said Ward. “I think he was noticeably proud of our accomplishment in developing such positive relationships and that he is thankful we are part of his team.”

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High resolution photos are available at [www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard](http://www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard)



**160114-Z-ZZ999-002:** U.S. Army Lt. Col. Orson Ward, left, State Partnership Program director for the South Dakota National Guard, meets with Suriname Defense Force personnel during a strategic planning exchange in Paramaribo, Suriname, Jan. 14, 2016. The purpose of the event was to facilitate discussions on strategic planning models used by the SDNG and the Suriname Defense Force and achieve organizational vision and establishment of priority goals and objectives. (U.S. Army National Guard photo/Released)



**160114-Z-ZZ999-004:** Members of the South Dakota National Guard and Suriname Defense Force discuss organizational vision and establishment of priority goals and objectives during a strategic planning exchange in Paramaribo, Suriname, Jan. 14, 2016. The purpose of the event was to facilitate discussions on strategic planning models used by the SDNG and the Suriname Defense Force. (U.S. Army National Guard photo/Released)



**160114-Z-ZZ999-005:** U.S. Army Sgt. First Class Chad Brooks, left, from the South Dakota National Guard, meets with Suriname Defense Force personnel during a strategic planning exchange in Paramaribo, Suriname, Jan. 14, 2016. The purpose of the event was to facilitate discussions on strategic planning models used by the SDNG and the Suriname Defense Force and achieve organizational vision and establishment of priority goals and objectives. (U.S. Army National Guard photo/Released)



**160114-Z-ZZ999-009:** Members of the South Dakota National Guard and Suriname Defense Force discuss organizational vision and establishment of priority goals and objectives during a strategic planning exchange in Paramaribo, Suriname, Jan. 14, 2016. The purpose of the event was to facilitate discussions on strategic planning models used by the SDNG and the Suriname Defense Force. (U.S. Army National Guard photo/Released)



**160114-Z-ZZ999-007:** Members of the South Dakota National Guard meet with Ambassador Edwin Nolan, second from left, the recently assigned U.S. ambassador to Suriname during a strategic planning exchange in Paramaribo, Suriname, Jan. 14, 2016. The purpose of the event was to facilitate discussions on strategic planning models used by the SDNG and the Suriname Defense Force and achieve organizational vision and establishment of priority goals and objectives. Pictured from left: Capt. Waylon Skelton, Lt. Col. Orson Ward, Ambassador Edwin Nolan, Maj. Quenten Johnson, Sgt. 1st Class Chad Brooks and Cmdr. Paolo Carcavallo (U.S. Army National Guard photo/Released)

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