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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Photo Caption: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang opens the debate on The Firearms (Prohibition, Restriction and Regulation) Act 2022 in Parliament on Tuesday, September 6, 2022. Under the provisions of the Act, the Minister of National Security will no longer have a role in the appeal process.

Security Minister will not have a role in gun license appeal process – Minister Chang

Provisioned under the **Firearms (Prohibition, Restriction and Regulation) Act, 2022**, the Minister of National Security will no longer have a role in the appeals process for gun licenses when the Act is passed into law.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr Horace Chang made the disclosure during his presentation in Parliament on Tuesday (September 6, 2022).

“This means the letters (requesting a review) can now stop coming, as we have established in this new-look Bill a review panel that will take all appeals out of the hand of a single individual,” said Minister Chang, while opening the Parliamentary Debates on the Bill, more commonly known as the new Firearms Act. This is intended to make the appeal process more transparent.

Procedures for appeals are set out in the Bill, which fully establishes the Appeals Review Panel. The Review Panel replaces the old Review Board in the principal Act.

Minister Chang also noted under subsection 86(1) of the Bill, an appeal may be made to the Review Panel within the prescribed time and manner by a person aggrieved by a decision taken by the Board. The Bill also provides that once an Appeal is received and heard, the Review Panel either confirms the Board's decision or refers the matter back to the Board for a new decision.

Additionally, Minister Chang stated his intention to utilize this provision provided in the new Bill to establish a gun amnesty to **“get rid of the illegal weapons off our streets”**.

The new Bill gives the Minister the power to declare firearms amnesty. Through this provision, the Minister may declare a firearms amnesty by order subject to affirmative resolution.

The amnesty would allow persons who may be in possession of illegal firearms the opportunity to surrender these weapons to the State without the fear of prosecution. The amnesty may be declared upon the Minister being satisfied that it may result in the reduction in the number of illegally possessed firearms or ammunition in the country.