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National Security Minister, Hon. Robert Montague is welcoming the decision by the US State Department to resume the authorization process for firearm export licenses, considering each case on its merits.

“I am pleased that discussions among personnel from the Ministry, the Firearm Licensing Authority and the US Embassy have resulted in this positive outcome. We anticipate the continued support of the US Embassy on this matter”, said Minister Montague.

The National Security Minister noted that the security forces were never affected by the ban, and there was never a shortage of guns or bullets for legal owners as the United States is not the only source.

In the meantime, during a meeting with US Embassy officials today, Minister Montague again expressed concern about the influx of illegal weapons into Jamaica from the USA.

“A priority for this government is to stem the illegal flow of guns into Jamaica” said Minister Montague. ***“I am again calling on the US to do more to significantly reduce the inflow of illegal weapons and ammunition, as Jamaica does not manufacture guns or ammunition”*** he noted.

During the meeting, Minister Montague said he has consistently pointed out that 81% of crimes in Jamaica are committed with illegal guns, and 53% of those guns are from the USA.

He said the US has agreed to deepen their cooperation in tracing guns found in Jamaica, adding that Jamaican law enforcement personnel have access to the US e-trace firearm database.

The National Security Minister said: ***“Jamaica is committed to correcting and enhancing the processes at the Firearm Licensing Authority. Our FLA system and method of traceability are the best in the Western Hemisphere. We will continue to work with our partners, including the United States to improve the system.”***

Minister Montague said Ministry and the FLA share the concerns of the US, and are moving to destroy old and abandoned weapons at the FLA and at police stations.

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