



Ministry of National Security

Sectoral Debate 2019/2020



Honourable Dr. Horace Chang, MP.

Minister of National Security

Gordon House, April 16, 2019

Theme: Securing Our Peace

It is my privilege to open the Sectoral Debate for the Financial Year 2019/2020 on behalf of the Government of Jamaica. This is indicative of the government's commitment to national security and the high priority that this administration gives to ensuring a safe and secure environment for all Jamaicans. This platform gives us an opportunity to highlight the strategic objectives of the Government, the policies and programmes that will be pursued, as well as the outputs and outcomes we expect. Under this government, Jamaicans will begin to "Liv Gud".

Mr. Speaker, the country will appreciate that creating an enabling environment to facilitate peace and prosperity is key to reaping sustainable economic development, and give us the greatest returns on our public sector investments.

Before I begin to outline our strategic investments in security, I wish to indicate that this is my fourth term in the great constituency of North Western St. James. I therefore must thank my constituents for supporting me in the last four elections and the entire team that serves as an inspiration for the work I do. That team includes four councillors: Senator Charles Sinclair, Deputy Mayor Leroy Williams, Mr. Joshua Cummings and Mr. David Brown, who, with a strong management team, lead the political operations in the constituency. They, along with the many party workers, indoor agents, advisors, supporters, non-governmental organisations and the many citizens' associations that we have had the pleasure of working with in this constituency, ensure there is continued development and opportunities for the people of North West St. James. I express my sincere thanks to the various departments and agencies of the government in my constituency whose programmes continue to impact the lives of the people.

To the Most Honourable Prime Minister, thank you for the confidence you have shown in entrusting me with this sensitive ministry, and allowing me to be a part of your distinguished Cabinet. To my colleagues in the House, on both sides of the aisle, with whom I have worked with over these past years, I thank you. Despite our differences, we have indeed had good innings, and the proof is that Jamaica is a vibrant democracy of fifty-six not out! We are all here with one major objective – that of representing the people of Jamaica.

I thank my Permanent Secretary, Ms Dianne McIntosh, Heads of Agencies and Departments, Senior Management team, officers of the security forces and staff of the Ministry, for leading the change required to ensure that Jamaica will be a safe and secure place. I would like to reassure Jamaicans that change is here. The Ministry itself is being transformed to provide greater policy, legislative and other related support to the security services.

Thanks to my Minister of State, Rudyard Spencer for the critical role he plays in ensuring that the strategic priorities of the Department of Correctional Services (DCS), and the Jamaica Combined Cadet Force (JCCF), are realised. In his presentation, he will discuss the responsibility of the DCS to ensure the safety of inmates, the programmes that provide opportunities for rehabilitation and successful reintegration into society, thereby reducing the rate of reoffending.

Finally, thanks to my family, who has always stood by me and given me the emotional support to continue in the field of politics and public life for some forty-plus years, 27 of which, I have been in this Honourable House. With my constituency being in the far west, I spend much time on the

highway. So to Paulette, my wife and my children Melissa and Martin, thank you for giving me this time away to serve. I must say thanks to God, who has protected me over these many years on this journey.

Now, **Mr. Speaker**, I want to especially welcome members of my constituency, and particularly students from the Flanker Community Assisted Training Programme, and the Glendevon Centre of Excellence collaborating with HEART Trust. These are institutions that work tirelessly to help youth to realise their dreams. I will speak more to their work later on in my presentation.

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Speaker, according to research entitled Peace and Economic Growth for Developing Countries, as far back as 2004, researchers established that a peaceful environment impacts economic growth potential positively. Of the 70 developing states measured in this study, the results showed convincingly, that peace and security had a more proximate impact on sustainable growth than other strictly economic determinants.

Peace, rather than an effect of economic growth, is a strong determinant for such growth and has been firmly incorporated into the growth agenda of this administration.

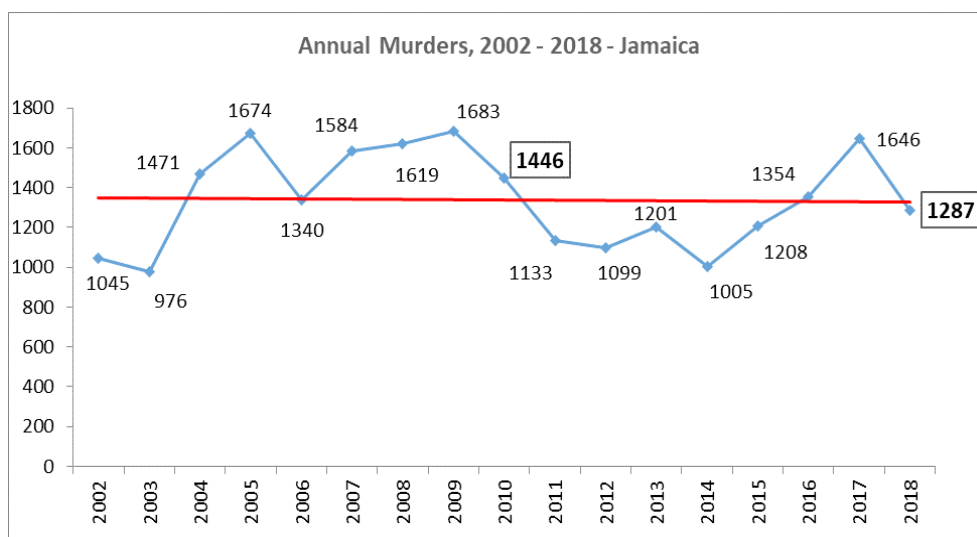
Mr. Speaker, it is against this thinking that we will make unprecedented investments in our security forces and the overall security architecture in this financial year. Public safety, good order and peace create the environment in which we can truly have progressive socio-economic development and build a solid foundation for prosperity.

Indeed, **Mr. Speaker**, any nation identified by these characteristics will have good public service, strong economic growth and citizens who actualise and optimise their individual creative capacities and capabilities.

Mr. Speaker, we have had a challenging year. We had to take some strong decisions, and there is clear indication, from the results we have seen, that decisive action has a part to play to get us to where we need to be.

Mr. Speaker, after the imposition of limited States of Emergency (SOE) in 2010 and 2018, murders declined significantly. As seen in the Graph overleaf, there were declines in the murder rate of **14%** and **22%** respectively, following both SOEs.

Santhirasegaram, S. (2008). Peace and Economic Growth in Developing Countries: Pooled Data Cross -Country Empirical Study. International Conference on Applied Economics - ICOAE 200 Volume 1

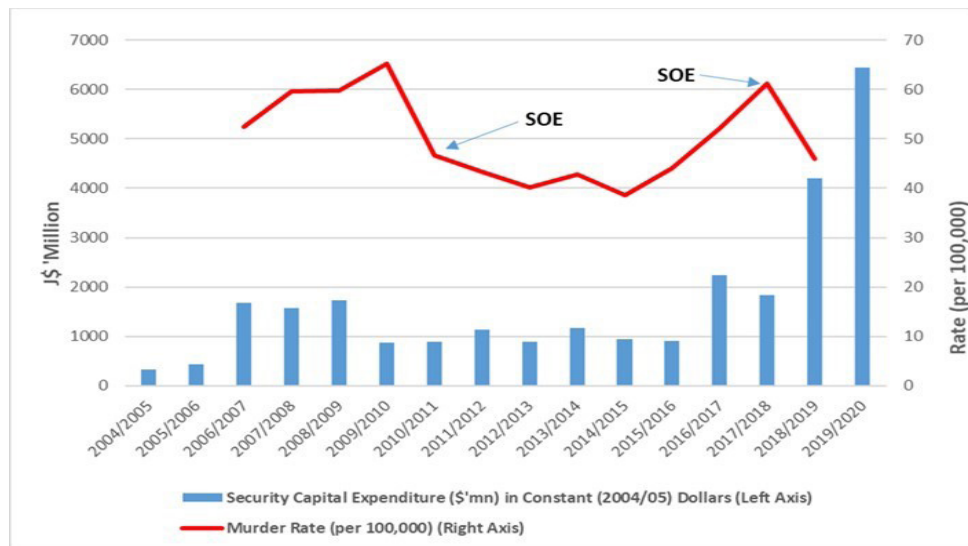


Annual Murders in Jamaica 2002 - 2018

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate for me to recount where we are now. The working conditions of our police officers in the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), have never been given the consistent priority focus required. I daresay, it is not an exciting area of expenditure, but this administration is keen on making the necessary investments to change that rhetoric. Our hard working officers who serve and protect, risking their lives on a daily basis, are deserving of a more appropriate work environment.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the working conditions will affect the morale of the officers. It is most unfortunate, that security only gains attention when it fails. There was not enough investment in our security infrastructure, and little consideration given to equipping the security forces with the adequate tools to meet the emerging criminal activities of this new era.

Mr. Speaker, there is a clear relationship between the underinvestment in the security architecture and the high murder rate. When investments are made in the security architecture a lag time of 3-4 years can be expected. Low levels of capital investment prior to FY 2006-2007, resulted in an increase in the murder rate. The graph overleaf shows that since the FY 2016-2017 there has been a steady outlay of capital investments in the security apparatus, which is expected to pay dividends in coming years.



Security Capital Expenditure (J\$ Million) in Constant Dollars (FY 2004/05) and Murder Rate (per 100,000)

Mr. Speaker, despite these challenges, the team continues to display a high level of commitment in meeting the ongoing challenges presented by criminal organisations, gangs, dons and other emerging threats to national security.

The more recent addition of the Major Organised Crime and Anti-Corruption Agency (MOCA); increased focus on the anti-gang strategy by the JCF's Counter Terrorism and Organised Crime Branch (C-TOC); and the continued support of the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) have established a strong basis on which we can build a security framework to ensure public safety and a peaceful environment.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

I will now outline our strategic development programme. This programme is designed to reverse and amend years of underinvestment in our security system and to ensure that our security forces, the Jamaica Constabulary Force in particular, are prepared and equipped to deal with public order, public safety, gangs, criminal organizations and emerging criminal activities.

Public disorder, corruption and rampant lawlessness create an environment in which criminality thrives. Gangs and criminal organisations are the sources of our violent crime. These areas are major causes for concern, and must be dealt with.

JAMAICA CONSTABULARY FORCE (JCF)

Total Capital Budget of \$5,198,300,000

Mr. Speaker, in order to better combat the problem of crime, and propel the Jamaica Constabulary to be the best Police Force in the Region, our investment of over \$5 billion in the JCF will be focused on the following areas:

- Rebuilding and Retrofitting of Police Stations into Modern Citizen-Friendly Spaces;
- Upgrading of Police Communication Systems;
- Introducing Technology as Force Multiplier;
- Improving Police Mobility; and
- Internal Restructuring and Expanded Training.

REBUILDING AND RETROFITTING OF POLICE STATIONS INTO MODERN CITIZEN-FRIENDLY SPACES

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry will drive a process of physical improvements throughout the Police Force, while the Commissioner and his team continue to increase the rate of training and drive the internal reorganisation to ensure our police force is ready to deal with all aspects of criminal activities and disorder in the society. **Mr. Speaker**, all our police stations will be brought up to minimum standards. Over the last two years, some 100 stations were renovated and repaired. Sixty (60), stations island wide will undergo major renovation for FY 2019/2020 at a cost of over \$443 million.

Mr. Speaker, in order to achieve the overall objective, the government will not only utilise funds from the Ministry's Capital Budget, but will partner with other entities who are involved in ensuring the safety of our communities.

The existing memorandum of understanding (**Mou**) between the Ministry of National Security and the National Housing Trust (**NHT**), demonstrates the value of partnership in creating the foundation for safe and secure communities. The NHT will commit approximately \$2 Billion to improve police facilities in the communities they operate. In FY 2018/2019, the NHT rebuilt the Shady Grove Police Station in St. Catherine and commenced the refurbishment of a dormitory block at the Mobile Reserve. The following ten police stations will be constructed during this financial year:

- Spanish Town Police Station
- Savanna-la-Mar Police Station
- Port Antonio Police Station
- Buff Bay Police Station
- Port Maria Police Station
- Frome Police Station
- Anchovy Police Station
- Lacovia Police Station
- Stony Hill Police Station
- Olympic Gardens Police Station

Mr. Speaker, the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (**JSIF**), will be rebuilding and renovating the following seven police stations at a cost of approximately \$1 Billion:

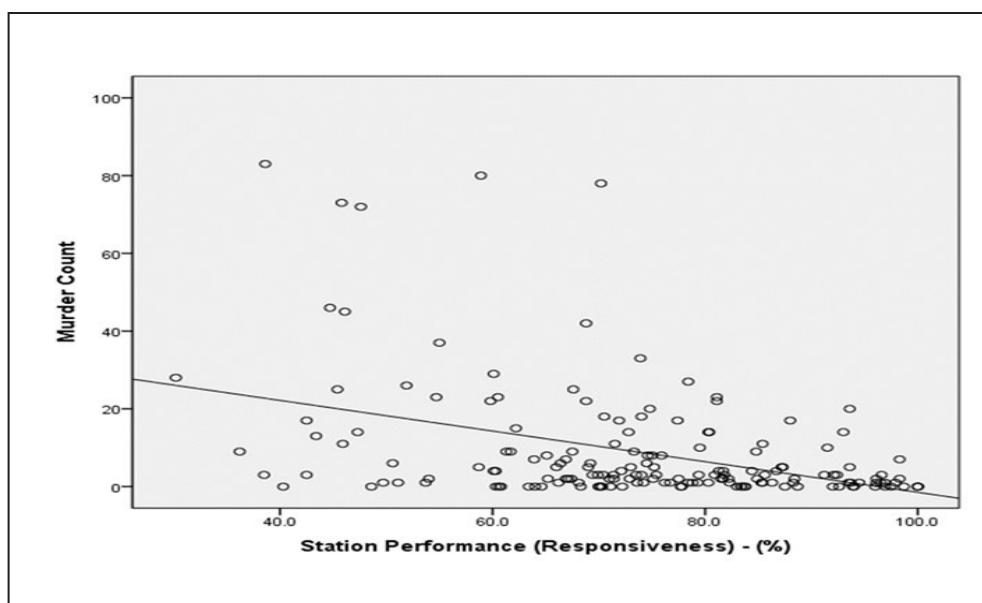
- Bog Walk Police Station
- Denham Town Police Station
- Mount Salem Police Station
- Adelphi Police Station
- Lionel Town Police Station
- Four Paths Police Station
- Franklyn Town Police Station



Mr. Speaker, not only are we rebuilding and retrofitting particular police stations, but all stations will be redesigned to look like modern office spaces. Police stations will be equipped with appropriate reception areas for all persons who need to access police services through this medium. Interview rooms will be specially designed to ensure privacy of the officers recording statements and the citizens who come in to file sensitive complaints – especially persons who come to make reports concerning intimate partner violence, domestic violence and sexual abuse. Too often, such victims are reluctant to come forward because of intimidation and the lack of an appropriate environment. Reports of violent conduct are often only made when it is too late.

Mr. Speaker, all persons seeking the assistance of the police are clients of the government and we must treat them with the dignity they deserve. Our officers will be enlisted in the requisite public engagement training programmes; as good customer service is as essential as proper infrastructure. All instances to the contrary are unacceptable and we will correct them in this financial year.

Mr. Speaker, there is empirical evidence to suggest that a correlation exists between the performance of police stations and murder outcome in their station areas. The graph below shows that as the station performance improves, the murder count in the particular locale decreases.



The Correlation between the performance of Police Stations and Murder Count in Jamaica (2017)

UPGRADING OF POLICE COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

Capital Budget Allocation of \$624,000,000

Mr. Speaker, efficient and modern telecommunications is the next significant investment that will be made in the JCF. At one point, the JCF had the best telecommunications system in the country. Sadly, it has been allowed to deteriorate and become totally degraded, to the point where divisions are hardly able to communicate with each other.

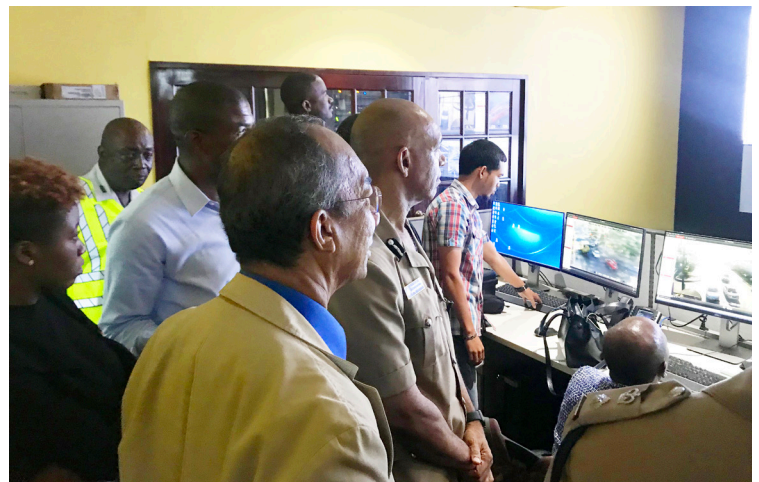
Mr. Speaker, we have included in this budget, over \$600 million to begin the retooling of the telecommunications system of the entire Police Force. We will cover the island to ensure that our police officers have good quality communications, both mobile and fixed.

INTRODUCING TECHNOLOGY AS FORCE MULTIPLIER

Capital Approved Budget of \$530,000,000

In addition to the investments in communications, an investment of over \$500 million in technology will be used to increase the overall capacity of the force. The JamaicaEye Programme will become fully active by September across the Corporate Area, Spanish Town, Ocho Rios, Negril and Montego Bay, with approximately 1,000 camera feeds being monitored. It will have the requisite monitoring systems to collect and store high-quality footage that can be used as evidence in our courts. We will further ensure that private citizens with cameras facing public spaces, are able to provide camera feeds to JamaicaEye, creating a comprehensive digital 'third eye' to observe much of our island's public spaces. This will enable faster, specialized responses and enhance the surveillance capacity of select areas, thus increasing the safety of our people.

This investment in JamaicaEye will give the police the appropriate counter-strategy to intercept and curtail the movements of criminal gang members, the dons and their facilitators.



Minister Chang visiting the JamaicaEye Monitoring Centre.

Electronic Station Records Management System (ESRMS)

In addition to JamaicaEye, the entire JCF is committed to enhancing efficiency, accountability and optimal performance through the institutionalisation of a technology governance structure. This year, there will be significant updates to the enterprise resource management system. This will see improvements in several internal business processes to include records management, fleet management, facilities management and case management. The implementation of the Electronic Station Records Management System (ESRMS) will replace the “Big Book” – Station Diary.

IMPROVING POLICE MOBILITY

Capital Budget of \$1,000,000,000

The next prong of strategic investment in the police force is in the area of mobility. **Mr. Speaker**, \$1 billion will be invested in this area as we recognise that mobility is critical to the efficient functioning of any police force. The total demand required to adequately serve citizens and communities is 1,600 operational vehicles. Last year, the JCF received 260 new motor vehicles and over 100 motor bikes. This year, we are proceeding to expand by adding another 400 motor vehicles into the fleet and 60 bikes, this will ensure that the Public Safety and Traffic Enforcement Branch (PSTEB), will have satisfactory mobility, and that the entire force will have adequate mobile capacity to, among other things, challenge the criminal gangs and dons anywhere, any time.

Mr. Speaker, we will not just be adding more vehicles to the fleet in a vacuum, the plan is to implement an efficient fleet management system to optimise use and ensure accountability. Vehicles will be outfitted with vehicle tracking for effective and efficient deployment.



Members of the Public Safety and Traffic Enforcement Branch (JCF)

Mr. Speaker, we will not allow the new vehicles acquired to rundown. We will be examining further with the Ministry of Finance and Public Service a depreciation policy to auction vehicles that have exceeded its efficiency threshold and life span.

Mr. Speaker, as I speak of mobility, I must briefly address the used-car issue. This matter is not yet resolved, but we have made significant steps in bringing this issue to a close. I would like to take this opportunity to remind this Honourable House that proper procurement procedures were followed. We will ensure that the Government recovers its money in full. Going forward, all suppliers to the Ministry of National Security will be assessed for financial viability before contracts are approved.

INTERNAL RESTRUCTURING AND EXPANDED TRAINING

Mr. Speaker, this year we will invest in the proper outfitting of our officers with the requisite uniform, tools and equipment. Too often their only tool is a sidearm, or in some cases, an old baton. In an environment wherein there are over 2,000 shootings per year and over 1,000 murders perpetrated by heavily-armed gunmen, our policemen have to be properly and adequately equipped to secure our peace and ensure public order.

We will ensure that police personnel will be provided with a selection of less lethal kits which will include: batons, tasers, handcuffs, flashlights and pepper sprays – particularly those officers operating in highly dense public spaces that often come in contact with aggressive crowds. In that regard, special attention will be given to the individual police officers from the PSTEB and Mobile Reserve.

Mr. Speaker, funds have been made available to ensure that the Police have the requisite equipment to meet the demands of their tasks, in that, proper helmets for those who require them, up-to-date ballistic vests and body cameras owned by the JCF, which will be used not only to monitor the work of the police, but to provide support and insight concerning police behaviour in high-pressure situations to ensure that best practices are adopted over time.



A professional review of the 19 territorial police divisions suggests that an additional 4,000 members are required to ensure adequate staffing. The Commissioner and his team will be training additional police officers. We expect to reach up to 1,000 new officers this year, and by next year, 1,500. While these numbers are being expanded we will reorganise and re-mission the Inspectorate of Constabulary (IOC), Mobile Reserve and the Counter Terrorism and Organised Crime Investigation Branch (C-TOC).

Mr. Speaker, I want to end this section concerning our investment in the JCF, by announcing two additional significant infrastructural investments, in the West and East. It is unfortunate that our major cities, Montego Bay and Kingston have become the hubs for criminal organisations. This government undertakes these significant projects as an investment to secure the peace and safety of future generations. We will get rid of the gangs, dons and their facilitators, that continue to wreak havoc in the communities and our public spaces.

MOBILE WEST

Mobile West will be constructed, in Montego Bay, St. James to provide quality residence for 400 police professionals with state-of-the-art equipment and appropriate furnishings in the space to enhance the capacity of the police.

POLICE HEADQUARTERS

Mr. Speaker, we will create in the heart of downtown Kingston, in the 40 acres known as ‘No Man’s Land’, the first built-for-purpose Police Headquarters. This facility will host over 2,500 police officers. It will house all non-geographic formations of the specialised units such as Narcotics, National Intelligence Bureau (NIB) and C-TOC, among others. This multi-faceted Headquarters will have customer-friendly reception areas and green spaces to ensure a strong community interface. This will represent the transformative approach the government is taking to build the new Jamaica. The locating of this facility in the heart of downtown Kingston will complement the government’s overall plan to revive and reposition Kingston City as a leading business district that is safe and orderly. **Mr. Speaker,** ‘No Man’s Land’ will be a beacon of hope in our city and will elevate the space to represent hope, peace and prosperity.

Let me take this opportunity to assure the public that we do not intend to dislocate residents. Through the National Housing Trust (NHT), provisions will be made for all socio-economic groups to be adequately accommodated. Indeed, as downtown Kingston returns to its primacy, we will see all segments of the population – attendants, cleaners, lawyers, doctors and business leaders, being able to live together around a shared, peaceful urban space. This will be a signature activity and a seminal mark of our commitment to bringing the vision of a new Jamaica to pass. While we will cater to all socio-economic groupings, we will ensure that the culture and energy of ‘Trench Town Rock’ is preserved. It will be a vibrant and healthy community, as the police will continue to ensure peace and safety for all.



Aerial View of No Man's Land. Proposed site of new Police Headquarters.

I am pleased to announce that the Commissioner of Police will engage in a process of expanding training opportunities and a transparent process of promotion and the extension of the officer corps. No longer will upward mobility be seen as a scarce benefit offered only to a select few. Promotions will be done in an objective and orderly basis, and discretion will be extremely limited. It will be a matrix of an exam, performance evaluation, length of service, and, of course the integrity of the officer. This is being done to ensure that we have the appropriate depth of leadership going forward.

Mr. Speaker, we have decided to face the broad reality, that unless the police force has strong, adequate internal controls and oversight that ensures professional standards and accountability, we will never have a strong professional Police Force.

Mr. Speaker, we are serious about putting resources into this area to hold the police to a high standard and restore public trust in the force. The professional standards and accountability of a police force cannot be driven by an external body. Such bodies should be brought to bear only when internal operations fail. I am confident that the appointment of Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Hay to the restructured Inspectorate of Constabulary (IOC), will send a strong signal concerning the new strategic direction of this unit. The police must develop their own professional standards, monitor them, and apply strong sanctions when they are breached.

INSTITUTE OF FORENSIC SCIENCE AND LEGAL MEDICINE (IFSMLM)

Capital Allocation of \$200,000,000

Mr. Speaker, our team of scientists at the Institute of Forensic Science and Legal Medicine (IFSMLM), is led by Dr. Judith Mowatt. The Forensic Lab, as it is commonly known, will continue to play a highly-valuable role in our crime-fighting efforts. We have increased the number of pathologists at our Lab from 1 to 6 Jamaican trained pathologists, which reduces the wait-time for a pathology report. Today, I assure the team, of the full support of this government as we create the leading forensic laboratory of its kind in the region.

Mr. Speaker, in these modern times, Science has become as important as first person affidavits. Forensic science will not only assist us to lock away hardened criminals, but will protect witnesses from the 'informer fi dead' culture. With the investment of \$200 million into this agency, we will see the increased use of DNA and biological evidence, ballistics and a full suite of scientific protocols in our fight against crime. With the addition of the long-awaited Autopsy Suite, there will be a significant increase in the Lab's capacity to conduct autopsies and provide evidence in criminal matters at a much faster rate.



Minister Chang visiting Institute of Forensic Science and Legal Medicine (IFSMLM)

JAMAICA DEFENCE FORCE (JDF)

Mr. Speaker, it is, at this time, important to remind the country of the critical role of the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF). Unfortunately, the JDF is often seen as supplementary to the police. They provide support for the police in crisis situations – especially as we seek to curtail the high levels of violence and murder. Notwithstanding, **Mr. Speaker,** the JDF has multiple missions that are critical to the country's security and development. There are 10 primary missions of the JDF and, for the benefit of the public, I list them here:

1. Defend against External Aggressors;
2. Internal Security Operations;
3. Support to other Government Agencies and Departments;
4. Disaster Relief;
5. Monitoring and Control of Airspace and Maritime Areas of Jurisdiction;
6. Search and Rescue;
7. Counter Terrorism;
8. Peace Support;
9. State Ceremonial Duties; and
10. Regional Cooperation.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to highlight two strategic initiatives within the JDF – recruitment through the Jamaica National Service Corps (JNSC), and the monitoring and control of our airspace and maritime domain. The JDF has undertaken an extremely important youth-engagement programme in the form of the Jamaica National Service Corps (JNSC). This has seen the engagement of a large number of our young people who have finished secondary school and were previously unengaged. By enlisting youth in para-military drills and skills training, we starve the gangs of these bright minds and reroute our young people to a productive, noble and honourable path. As of December 2018, over 1,500 Jamaicans have enlisted in the JNSC. The programme will be expanded this year. At the end of the programme, youth can be recruited to the JDF, JCF and other uniform groups in the government service as well as the private sector.



Graduation Ceremony for Jamaica National Service Corps (JNSC) Recruits

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. Speaker, border security must be priority in any mission to secure Jamaica. Since no guns are made here, they must cross our borders to get here. The protection of our maritime domain, as we keep out unwanted weapons is crucial, as well as protect our blue economy as a Small Island Developing State (SIDS). The second area of emphasis is therefore the Maritime Air and Cyber Command. This new brigade is commanded by our highest-ranking female in the history of the army, Commodore Wemyss-Gorman, a sterling officer in the finest traditions of the JDF. This government is taking steps to ensure that this brigade is appropriately equipped, despite the high cost of the tools utilised. To strengthen the Force's capability within Jamaica's Maritime Zones, a Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) was recently procured and an integrated hanger constructed. The JDF acquired additional helicopters to enhance its current fleet which is critical to disaster relief, search and rescue and interception on the high seas.



MAJOR ORGANIZED CRIME AND ANTI-CORRUPTION AGENCY (MOCA)

This Government has demonstrated its commitment in tackling corruption through the passing of the Integrity Commission Act in 2018. **Mr. Speaker**, we take credit for the establishment of the Major Organised Crime and Anti-Corruption Agency (MOCA) as an independent statutory law enforcement agency. MOCA will be made fully operational with the passing of the Regulations, which will be tabled in this Honourable House by the end of this month to give effect to the provisions of the Act. MOCA will therefore be able to function autonomously.

MOCA will bring new energy and will receive the fiscal and legislative support from this government to dismantle the criminal gangs that utilise all sectors of business, public and private resources, to undermine our social institutions and profit from the gains of illicit activity.

Mr. Speaker, we are going there. Without fear or favour, we will be aggressively pursuing ruthless crimes as we seek to disrupt organised criminal networks that corrupt our institutions. MOCA will ensure that corruption has no place in the new Jamaica. This is our FBI.

Mr. Speaker, there are other key agencies under the Ministry that are mandated to ensure public safety. The Ministry must spare time to highlight the role of the Passport Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICA), and the Firearms Licensing Authority (FLA).

PASSPORT IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP AGENCY (PICA)

PICA's role extends beyond passport and citizenship services as they play a vital role in our border security network with its work in immigration services whether at PICA Headquarters or at our borders. PICA is our eyes and ears at our borders. They have established relationships with INTERPOL and regional police bodies, and have fully utilised the Advanced Passenger Information System (APIS), and other international connection to ensure that undesirable personnel are kept out while welcoming our visitors. With that being said, **Mr. Speaker**, the proliferation of new technology in the travel industry and management of identity are changing how passengers are being processed.

PICA continues to invest in self-service kiosks at both the Norman Manley International Airport (NMIA) in Kingston; and the Sangster International Airport in Montego Bay to meet these emerging trends.

Mr Speaker, this year, we will be procuring a new Border Management System to improve the processing of passengers, as well as to provide critical information for the national security architecture.



Self-service Kiosks at the Norman Manley International Airport (NMIA) in Kingston

FIREARM LICENSING AUTHORITY (FLA)

Mr. Speaker, the other agency that must be highlighted is the Firearm Licensing Authority. The board has been mandated to manage an efficient and transparent organisation, good executive management and provide quality service delivery to the firearms industry.

Mr. Speaker, I say industry here, because it is indeed an industry. There is an increasing sporting fraternity, which presents positive economic prospects to the country's resort sector. Firearms Licensing Authority (FLA), must ensure that we have the regulations and management systems in place to take advantage of this growing opportunity. We must ensure that those who are not fit and proper to manage a lethal weapon, do not receive firearms.

There must be effective screening for both mental fitness and physical acuity. At the same time, those businesses for whom firearms are chief tools of trade must be properly monitored to ensure that there is no unauthorised movement of weapons or ammunition into illegal activities. All action to prevent this must be in place. The FLA continues to play a critical role with the police to ensure that these activities remain strictly within the law.

LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT

Mr. Speaker, all law enforcement efforts must have a strong suite of legislation that is effectively implemented. Along with the MOCA Regulations mentioned earlier, the following laws will be tabled this parliamentary year: The amendments to the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA), the Firearms Act, Immigration Restriction (Commonwealth Citizens) Act, Aliens Act and, by the end of the year, the long spoken-of JCF Act will come to the House. The review of the Criminal Justice (Suppression of Criminal Organisations) Act, more popularly referred to as “the Anti-Gang Legislation” is underway and will continue with urgency.

This year, we will merge the Police Civilian Oversight Authority (PCOA), and the Police Service Commission (PSC), to create one oversight body, mandated to monitor and evaluate the operations of the police. The creation of this single entity will assist in modernizing the police force, through the adoption of international standards and best practices.

Mr. Speaker, I have demonstrated quite clearly our commitment to strategic investment in our security architecture. I believe it was necessary to show the country the strategic allocation of the large capital investments that we will undertake this year, especially the expenditure to bring our police force up to the required standard to ensure we can have an efficient Force. We will not allow systems, processes and facilities to deteriorate like before.

CRIME REDUCTION THROUGH SOCIAL INTERVENTION

Mr. Speaker, all governments have undertaken substantial social intervention programmes in vulnerable communities; this has been a consistent area of investment.

This year, we continue to strengthen our security architecture, capabilities and responses, so too shall we continue to strengthen our efforts of crime prevention through social intervention and social development. It is through this medium, that we, along with other Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and community groups will further identify risks associated with violence.

Mr. Speaker, this approach will only succeed if there is a foundation of safety and security in our communities. The evidence in theory and practice has taught us that only a well-coordinated and integrated approach can successfully tackle the contributing socio-economic risks associated with violence at the individual, family, community and broader society levels. Let us not forget that the sustainability of social intervention rests heavily on our ability as a Government, supported by the people, to effect positive changes through employment and professional development.

Mr. Speaker, the Zones of Special Operations (ZOSOs), reflect this approach. It places security at the core from which to build out social interventions. In several vulnerable communities where ZOSOs were operationalised, as a result of the enhanced security measures, social intervention programmes were successfully executed in a peaceful environment, conducive to community development and continued prosperity.



Mr. Speaker, when we think of intervention, we must think and look at the entire social infrastructure in this country. All sectors of society must recognize the value of this approach to correcting social ills. For example, a successful school with clear and positive leadership in a vulnerable community that facilitates an appropriate instructional approach for learning, is one of the most valuable investments in a vulnerable community. The investment in education is how we create a brighter future for our youth; that is how we starve the gangs.

Mr. Speaker, I have seen it in the community of Glendevon, which at one time, was one of the toughest communities in my constituency, and a locale of gang violence. We invested heavily in the primary school and ensured that the community was engaged, while providing the children with proper nutrition, uniforms and resources within the school. Through the use of Music, Sports and Technology (MST) we received community buy-in. Not only did we see 100% literacy at the Grade 4 level, but all our boys matriculated to the high school of their choice. The Glendevon Primary School now boasts a vibrant school culture. I commend the teachers and entire staff of the school for being examples that all communities can follow.

Another example of our commitment to meaningful social intervention, is the recent launch of the simulation equipment for heavy-duty machine operations at the Caribbean Maritime University (CMU). This partnership seeks to change the outlook for inner city men by redirecting them to training in areas of heavy duty equipment handling, industrial maintenance, mechatronics and principles of food preparation.

These life-changing skills will steer youth away from being prey to gangs and into meaningful careers. An additional simulator will be made available to youth in western Jamaica, as we recognise the value of technology in criminal mitigation and meaningful engagement.



As a Ministry, we will collaborate with the HOPE programme and other agencies to better coordinate and integrate responses towards ensuring optimum results in all of our most vulnerable communities.

Mr. Speaker, those who constantly call for social intervention do not pay attention to the issues and challenges in these communities except when there is failure. Many times, opinion leaders and some members of the business community, only call for social intervention when violence directly affects them and their businesses.

Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate, all governments, over the years, have made significant and extensive investments in our vulnerable communities. The Citizen Security and Justice Programme (CSJP), Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), Peace Management Initiative (PMI), other agencies and our international partners have worked extensively in these communities. These initiatives include but are not limited to consultations, training, physical improvements to roads, upgraded social services, proper titling of homes, erection of community and homework centres, the facilitation of cultural and sporting talent and case management to improve the lives of the people of these communities.

As we continue, to work through the HOPE programme, the work of these agencies will not be initiated and designed in silos, but will be implemented more strategically. The resources allocated must meet the residents at their place of need.

Mr. Speaker, what we are now doing is ensuring, through the use of ZOSOs, a strong foundation of security and peace to ensure that the billions of dollars spent on infrastructure and social intervention, will have impact by changing the lives of the people in our vulnerable communities.

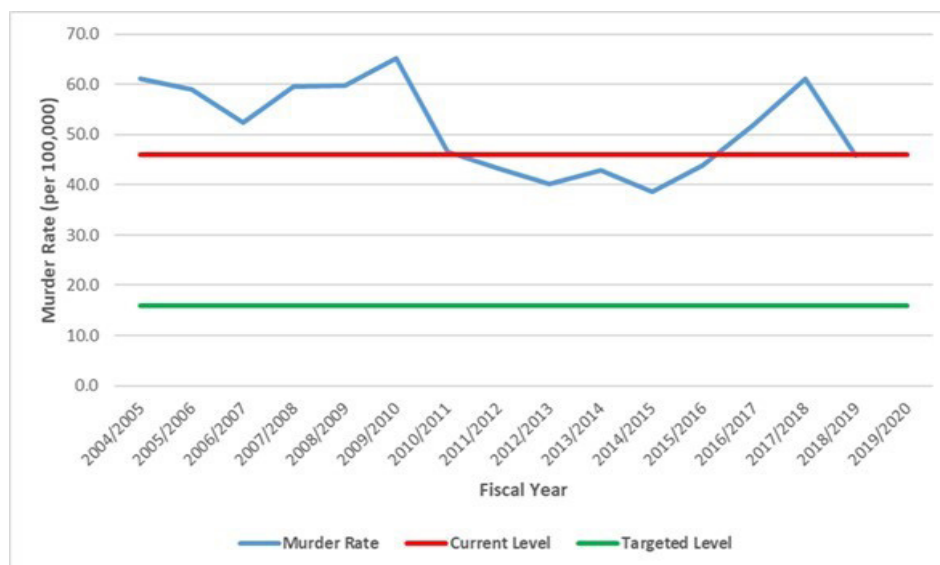
We will not invest in having meaningless conversations with gangsters, or paying social intervention monies over to hoodlums in exchange for peace. We will continue the work of investing in who and what matters the most, our people, as we work towards the greater good of this country.

Mr. Speaker, before concluding I must speak to the States of Public Emergency. We had a State of Emergency (SOE) in St. James, St. Catherine North Police Division and areas within the Kingston Metropolitan Region (KMR). Unfortunately, there was some disagreement on the interpretation of the need for the SOE with our colleagues on the other side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, the government will not discard this most valuable and effective tool. I would like to indicate that we have come a far way concerning the conduct of our security forces during these periods of increased security powers. It is important to note, that at the end of the State of Emergency, there were no claims of extra-judicial killings.

Mr. Speaker, let me point out here, that it was the JLP government that amended the Emergency Powers Act to ensure that the opposition had the right to veto. We have no interest in creating a system of authoritarian activity that denies our citizens of their rights and, in particular, the disrespect of our young men. I feel very strongly about this and have indicated prior, that providing young men with alternatives and a path to personal development, through the relevant curricula, are critical to reducing violence in this country.

Mr. Speaker, we have a homicide rate of 47 per 100,000 of the population. That is a national crisis way beyond the capacity of normal policing! The graph below shows the murder rate for Jamaica, from FY 2004-2005, to FY 2018-2019. The red line depicts the current murder rate for FY 2018-2019 and the green line depicts the average homicide rate for Latin America and the Caribbean (16 per 100,000 of population).



Murder Rate (per 100,000) for Jamaica for FY 2004-2005 to FY 2018-2019

The figures explain it all, **Mr. Speaker**. This situation required special measures and I believe the entire country agreed with that position. It is well-established that investments in security have a lag time of 3-4 years. We are convinced that the investments that we are now making in our security architecture, will take some time but we will succeed. For this reason, we must continue suppressive measures in order to save Jamaican lives as we reap the benefits of our investments to restore normalcy and peace. We must separate the killers from communities. We must disrupt the gangs. We must take the guns off the streets.

Mr. Speaker, this country has endured too many years, caught in a vicious cycle of crime and violence, that eats away at our economic potential. Mr. Speaker, change has come. We will move from this vicious cycle of crime and violence to a Virtuous Cycle of Peace and Prosperity.

Mr. Speaker, the government's national strategy for peace and prosperity is a three-pronged approach to reduce the levels of crime and violence, in a synergistic manner. **Plan Secure Jamaica will be operationalised using this tripartite approach, coming together to bear down on the monster of crime. Over time, with this all-of-Government approach, the need for strong suppression activity will decrease and we will arrive at a virtuous cycle of peace and prosperity dedicated to sustainable growth and the development of all Jamaicans.**

Mr. Speaker, securing our peace and safety is the objective of the Ministry of National Security, under the government of The Most Honourable Prime Minister, Andrew Michael Holness. We will secure and defend the peace of our people and play our part in creating the foundation of sustainable development for the new Jamaica. This country, as stated in the Vision 2030 Plan, will indeed be the place where all Jamaicans will want to live, work, raise their families and do business in peace and safety.

May God bless you all and may God bless Jamaica, land we love.

Thank you.

Notes