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For Immediate Release

National Security Minister meets with Chiefs of Security

National Security Minister, Hon. Robert Montague on Thursday (February 1) met with security representatives from a number of diplomatic missions based in Jamaica to provide them with a national security update.

The representatives were from Britain, Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, Trinidad and Tobago, United States, the United Nations and European Union.

During the meeting held at the Ministry's Oxford Road Head Office, the Minister reiterated that Jamaica is open for business, even with the existing enhanced security measures in St. James.

The meeting comes against the context of increased security warnings for travel to Jamaica on several embassy websites.

The security update which involved Permanent Secretary, Dianne McIntosh, Chief of Defence Staff, Major General Rocky Meade, Acting Commissioner of Police, Clifford Blake, JCF Chaplain Emeritus, ACP Bishop Dr. Gary Welsh, other JDF and Ministry officials highlighted that several gains have been made including the recovery of 12 firearms and the apprehension of several individuals wanted for a range of criminal activities.

Major General Meade said despite the operations in St. James giving the military extraordinary powers, the measures are being undertaken in collaboration with the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF). He said the gains made are as a result of careful planning and that progress continues to be made.

DCP Blake said since the security measures have been implemented, there has been a restoration of public order and fewer complaints from visitors to the island. He said the enhanced security measures have been extended for an additional 90 days to maintain the success of these efforts.

Minister Montague praised the professional conduct of members of the security forces in their interactions with the public. He informed the officials that since the operations began, there has been only one report of human rights being violated.

A Review Tribunal has been established to handle any matters related to human rights. The Tribunal is chaired by Attorney-at-law and former Jamaican Bar Association president, Ian Wilkinson, with Pastor of Swallowfield Chapel, David Henry and Retired Supreme Court Judge, Lloyd Hibbert as the other members.

Minister Montague further highlighted that the gains made last year in the fight against crime included the seizure of 859 illegal weapons; investment in border security to involve two county class vessels and a surveillance aircraft for the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF); increased recruitment for the JDF and Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) and two army bases to be established in the Western section of the island in Westmoreland and St. James.