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Press Release
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Minister of State Lauds Partnership with International Stakeholders in Training of Probation Officers and Juvenile Detainees

The Minister of State in the Ministry of National Security, the Hon. Rudyard Spencer, yesterday lauded an extended training partnership with international stakeholders and the Department of Correctional Services (DCS).

“I express immense gratitude to our unrelenting partners: The Department of Public Security of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (DPS/OAS); the Trust for Americas and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). You continue to be vital partners to the Rehabilitation and Redemption strategy that the Ministry of National Security has been implementing,” Minister Spencer said.

The Minister was speaking at the Opening Ceremony of a four-day workshop under the theme: “Post-Release Services to Jamaican Youth”.

The sessions in the four-day workshop will include several agencies and stakeholders such as the probation aftercare services, Child Development Agency, Ministry of Education and Health, (Housing Opportunity, Production of Employment (HOPE) Programme, HEART Trust/NTA among others, who are responsible for the post-release services of Juvenile detainees in their care.

The training will be carried out by experts of the government of Chile and is an extension of a previous training and exchange programme that included 41 staff of the DCS and Security Ministry.



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It is expected that 50 participants will be certified in the current initiative. They will be exposed to different strategies and successful interventions to provide post-release support including, job opportunities and how to provide psychological mentorship to the Juvenile Detainees.

“Research has shown that it is even harder for incarcerated persons to acquire basic privileges such as jobs, grants/scholarships and loans than the ordinary law-abiding citizen,” the Minister noted.

He continued, **“Therefore, the Ministry has made the call for corporate Jamaica, regional and overseas partners to assist with the successful reintegration of our ex-offenders by giving them a chance.”**

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed by the General Secretariat of the OAS the Trust for Americas, HOPE and the Heart Trust/NTA, through which youth released from the juvenile facilities will access vocational training, apprenticeship and employment opportunities.

Since 2015, through a “New Path: Promoting a Healthy Environment and Productive Alternatives for Juvenile Remandees and Offenders in Jamaica”, over 1900 youth have received intense training and some financial assistance. The project targets our most vulnerable who have found themselves on the wrong side of the law.

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