



# SECTORAL DEBATE 2021



## PLAN SECURE JAMAICA... TOWARDS SAFER COMMUNITIES

The Honourable  
**Dr. Horace Chang**, CD, MP.  
Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of National Security



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**SECTORAL PRESENTATION 2021**

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**GORDON HOUSE: May 25, 2021**



# Introduction

**Madam Speaker,**

This is my first sectoral presentation as Minister of National Security for the new term of office. It comes in the middle of the COVID-19 public health pandemic, which, when added to the chronic epidemic of violence in our society, signals that the country is going through two major crises at this time. This novel coronavirus has derailed a number of critical aspects of our Government's plans. However, we remain resolute in ensuring violence reduction, increased public safety, and good order in our country.



I wish to acknowledge and thank the Prime Minister for his continued confidence in allowing me to serve in this capacity. My appointment to the position of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security speaks to the level of responsibility with which I have been entrusted. I wish to assure him and his Cabinet that his mission and charge will be carried out successfully.

I wish to express my appreciation to my Cabinet colleagues and to remind them that it is our responsibility with this renewed mandate to maintain and further develop the social, economic, and national security imperatives of the country. Given the impact of COVID-19, we must continue to be innovative in our approach to all aspects of nation building.



To my fellow Parliamentarians, on both sides of the aisle, the general elections of September 3rd ushered in a new term in our Parliament, and the beginning of a new era having now, the largest number of female members of Parliament since Independence. We have a significant pool of young, first-term members, and a good showing of experienced veterans. This is the will of the people. It is an opportunity for us to deliver strong legislation, relevant to our times and in keeping with the needs of Jamaica. They have given us the personnel, and they have given us the majority. We cannot fail. The people of Jamaica are counting on us!

To my constituents in North West St. James, my deepest appreciation for entrusting me with representing you for a 5th consecutive term. I will continue to serve you with sincerity and commitment. North West St. James has long been the political axis for the parish of St. James, and for the Western region. As a matter of interest, North West St. James elected Jamaica's first female Member of Parliament in 1944, Ms. Iris Collins. MP Collins was a woman before her time, and has set the stage for today's historic showing of a strong contingent of women in Parliament.

Over the years, much work has been done to improve the human, social, and infrastructural development of the constituency. Over the last forty years, Montego Bay has been the centre of Jamaica's vital and rich tourism industry, and the mecca of innovation and enterprise. We are now leaders in the Business Process Outsourcing sector, and services associated with the resort industry.

I must commend the efforts of my constituency team - the finest political team in the island. Senator Charles Sinclair, Mayor Leroy Williams, Councillors Joshua Cummings and David Brown. The management team and its Chairman, Mr. Norman Brown, party workers, civil society groups, community groups, and church leaders, who have all played a critical role in the development of North West St. James. I wish to express my profound thanks and appreciation.



**Courtney Williams - Permanent Secretary**

To the staff of the Ministry and our agencies, led by our Permanent Secretary Courtney Williams and the senior management team; my team of consultants, administrators and Close Protection Officers assigned to me. These professionals work assiduously to ensure that national security policies, legislation, programmes, and critically - the budget, are advanced and remain on track. Permanent Secretary Williams joined the team in October last year.

Coming from the Ministry of Finance, he assumed direction of the Ministry at an opportune time given the onset of COVID-19. Thank you all for your tireless efforts in advancing the national security imperatives.

Special mention to my colleague Minister without Portfolio, Senator Matthew Samuda who continues to approach his work with tremendous commitment and energy. This makes MNS the only Ministry outside of the Office of the Prime Minister that has two Cabinet Ministers. It reflects the priority given to the work of the Ministry of National Security by this government, recognizing the magnitude of the work and the challenges faced by the Ministry and its agencies.



**Senator the Hon. Matthew Samuda**  
Minister without Portfolio

Minister Samuda has brought a necessary and renewed focus to the Department of Correctional Services (DCS), and the appropriate review and ministerial oversight to the Private Security Regulations Authority (PSRA).

Minister Samuda has provided invaluable support to the controlled re-entry programme in relation to Jamaica's COVID-19 response. In addition, his coordination of the E-Commerce National Delivery System (ENDS) has ensured that economic activities conducted during curfew hours are seamless and safe. This Government, and the Ministry of National Security in particular, continues to demonstrate tremendous adaptability so that the people of Jamaica can live and earn, safely, despite COVID-19.

To my wife Paulette, and my children Melissa and Martin, words cannot express the measure of my gratitude for your constant and unwavering support over the years. Every Member of Parliament knows that the demands of our representational responsibilities can come at a very high cost to our families. I count myself blessed for having this strong support from my family, who has

stayed by me through this remarkable journey.



## ROBUST NATIONAL SECURITY ARCHITECTURE... *Towards a Safer Jamaica*

The Ministry of National Security is designed to ensure the effective management of our borders, provide public safety and good order in our society, and to safeguard the lives and livelihoods of our people. The central Ministry staff coordinates national security policy, legislation, project implementation, and the budget. The Ministry also provides administrative support to the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF). The work of the Ministry is executed through nine (9) agencies. These include:



**1. The Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF)** – is not only our principal law enforcement agency, but critically, it is the face of security in our country. The success or failure of the Jamaica Constabulary Force is largely what provides the yardstick for measuring the success or failure of national security in Jamaica.

Notwithstanding, it is the integrated and coordinated work of all nine agencies that will guarantee sustainable violence prevention and crime reduction in our society.



**2. The Major Organized Crime and Anti-Corruption Agency (MOCA)** – is the newest of our law-enforcement institutions, and treats with corruption and cybercrimes in a very targeted and strategic way. Its anti-corruption mandate has resulted in several landmark cases being brought to court. MOCA also plays a critical role in cyber-defence, ensuring that our networks and systems are protected, and hackers identified and intercepted.

Our MOCA officers continue to execute their duties in a highly proficient and professional manner. They don't make a lot of noise but they get the job done.

MOCA'S Appointed Date Notice was April 1, 2021. The oversight committee has been established and institutional arrangements are being settled.



**3. The Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICA)** – which is well known for its high-quality service, continues to play a pivotal role in the management and control of our borders. PICA has direct responsibility for monitoring movement of citizens and non-citizens through our ports, which is crucial to ensuring that we can interrupt transnational crimes. PICA works seamlessly with the police, the Maritime Air and Cyber-Command Battalion of the Jamaica Defence Force, and the Jamaica Customs Agency, to ensure that our borders, are not breached by persons who may wish to cause harm to our people.



The agency received International Organization of Standardization (ISO 9001:2015) certification last year, for its passport services. Furthermore, PICA's introduction and expansion of the Automated Border Crossing Kiosks facilitated the controlled re-entry of our nationals following the COVID-19 outbreak.

PICA rolled-out its mobile passport offices, online passport application, and adult passport renewal application systems last year. By moving the process online in the heights of the public health pandemic, PICA guaranteed continuity of service, and access to one of the most critical forms of identification, the passport.

Through partnership with the UK Government, PICA now has a Document Forensic Laboratory – the first of its kind in the region. This is a crucial activity for enhancing the level of safety and security at our borders. The Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency will continue to provide high-quality services to facilitate the identity and travel needs of our people.



**4. The Firearm Licensing Authority (FLA)** – has the responsibility of standardizing and streamlining all the attendant processes of granting, renewal and revocation of a firearm licence. An online application tracking system and the acquisition of two (2) new laser engraving machines last year, are some of the cutting-edge technology that will improve the management of legal firearms.



**5. The Institute of Forensic Science and Legal Medicine (IFSMLM)** – plays a critical role in law enforcement. **The Institute has been upgraded and modernized by this government.** Despite the skepticism, we will break ground for the autopsy suite later this year. Upon completion, it will give us a forensic pathology unit that is comparable to any in the globe.



Last year, the Institute upgraded and increased its DNA and ballistics analytical capabilities to include the operationalization of the National DNA Database. With these enhanced efficiencies and skills, the institute is poised to make an even greater contribution to the administration of justice in Jamaica.

Of note, **Madam Speaker**, for the set of trials that were scheduled in the Home Circuit Court for the 2021 Easter term, the Institute had already completed its work, and issued the ballistics certificates for 99% of the cases ahead of receiving the request. This tells us that the Institute of Forensic Science and Legal Medicine is **responding in real time** to the needs of

its stakeholders. Furthermore, their work has been crucial to the reactivation and solving of several cold cases. We now fight crime with irrefutable science.

**Madam Speaker**, the Institute of Forensic Science and Legal Medicine recently launched its website. I invite all Jamaicans to learn more about the groundbreaking work that is being done at the Institute, by visiting: **[www.ifslmja.gov.jm](http://www.ifslmja.gov.jm). Forensic science is the new frontier of law enforcement, towards swift and sure justice!**



**6. Madam Speaker, The Department of Correctional Services (DCS)** manages the various centres of incarceration and correctional facilities, and plays a critical role in crime prevention. While our rate of incarceration is low, the recidivism rate is high. We are working to overcome this. Further details on the work being done to strengthen the Department of Correctional Services will be addressed by the Minister without Portfolio during his State of the Nation Debate in the Senate.

**Madam Speaker**, the other three agencies within the national security architecture are not always prominent, but they have their weight in importance. These include:





**7. The Private Security Regulations Authority (PSRA)** – has been growing in importance and regulates an industry of over thirty thousand private security personnel.



**8. The Caribbean Regional Drug Law Enforcement Training Centre (REDTRAC)** – is not one of high profile, but is certainly important to the training and development of security personnel in specialized areas.



**9. The Jamaica Combined Cadet Force (JCCF)** – is important for youth engagement alongside the Jamaica National Youth Service Corps. It is operated through the Jamaica Defence Force.

**Madam Speaker, a common feature that the public will observe across all the agencies of national security, is the incorporation and utilization of technology to strengthen their processes.** Across the entire national security architecture our agencies have ramped up their modernization efforts and have adopted more innovative approaches to their service delivery. The integrated and coordinated work of these nine agencies is the backbone of Jamaica's security and public safety. Their programmes and initiatives secure our borders, our cyber and telecommunication networks, our businesses, communities, and our families. As I noted earlier, **the overall success of national security is contingent on the collective and coordinated effort of the entire national security architecture.**

## **MODERNIZATION OF THE JAMAICA CONSTABULARY FORCE - *Towards a Safer Society***

**M**adam Speaker, under Plan Secure Jamaica, the Government's policy has been to reduce criminal violence, improve public safety, and strengthen the institutional and operational efficiency of the Jamaica Constabulary Force. Violent crimes remain the primary focus of the public, and for good reason. **The loss of life or injury to any Jamaican citizen is a trauma to all Jamaicans, whether domestic, criminal, or otherwise.** We will continue to provide the necessary legislative, policy and programme directives, and budget support, to bring about sustainable reduction in criminal violence.

**Madam Speaker,** I wish to recall the wise words of the Most Honorable Hugh Lawson Shearer who, in 1967, urged police officers to **"proceed without reservation and without restriction to tackle the problem of violence and bring wrong-doers to justice in whatever way can be done".**

On that same occasion, former Prime Minister Shearer underscored that **"when it comes to handling crime in this country, I do not expect any policeman when he tackles a criminal to recite any beatitude to him ..... the police cannot tackle a wrong-doer and talk about 'blessed are the meek'".**

**Madam Speaker,** for far too long, successive administrations and the people of Jamaica, have contended with the deeply entrenched culture of criminal violence in our society. While we must persist with the no-nonsense approach as espoused by Mr. Shearer, **it is critical that we adopt a holistic, modern and integrated strategy to combating criminal violence.**

The drive towards sustainable reduction in criminal violence demanded the aggressive reorganization and modernization of the Jamaica Constabulary Force. While it is the role of the police to save lives, sustainable reduction of criminal violence must be a whole-of-government, all-of-society approach. We must facilitate a

process of behaviour change among our people, in order to reduce the pervading culture of violence that underpins much of the criminal activities in our country.

In my presentation today, I will provide an update on the modernization of the Jamaica Constabulary Force; the Ministry's legislative agenda; and our whole-of-government approach to social investment.

## IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE – PROJECT R.O.C



**Madam Speaker,** Project - Rebuild, Overhaul & Construct (Project R.O.C.) was initiated by the Ministry to transform all police facilities into professional work spaces that are user-friendly to external clients and the officers.

In order to determine the scope of the repairs and to prioritize the needs, **the Ministry commissioned an engineering survey of all 186 police facilities.** Based on that report, a programme of work was created.

**Madam Speaker,** all of the facilities needed work, but all could not be fixed at the same time. Rehabilitation work continues, however,

where emergencies arise, such as those involving sewage and leaks, etc. we respond promptly.

Under Project R.O.C **we have renovated one hundred and one (101) police facilities,** and constructed five (5). The National Housing Trust (NHT) is projected to construct / renovate twelve (12) facilities, and the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF) will construct / renovate eight (8) facilities. The Ministry will be rebuilding three (3) additional facilities, to include the autopsy suite. A further fourteen (14) police facilities are projected to be renovated / constructed under Project R.O.C. during this financial year. **Madam Speaker,** the men and women of the Jamaica Constabulary Force are now working in better conditions, Built by Labour!

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTERVENTION CENTRES

**Madam Speaker, we have established Domestic Violence Intervention Centres at designated Police Stations.** Four (4) of these centres are already operational and another six (6) will be opened later this year. **Over 300 police officers are already sensitized and trained to support the work of the Domestic Violence Intervention Centres.** In the coming months, we will have an entire cadre of police officers who are sensitized and attuned to all forms of intimate partner and family violence, and who are adequately prepared to take mitigating steps. In the long run, the Jamaica Constabulary Force will move to institutionalize domestic violence sensitization of police officers, starting with a train-the-trainer programme that will be rolled out in the coming weeks. Justices of the Peace and volunteer chaplains are being trained to provide intervention support alongside the police.





**Madam Speaker**, going hand in hand with the high-quality physical working conditions, is the suite of cutting-edge technology available to our police officers. We are taking the necessary steps to modernize our Police Force and are aggressively bringing it into the 21st century with the requisite tools to ensure impact and sustainability.

The Commissioner of Police has set out a systematic process of expansion and enhancement of the technology infrastructure. The Technology Branch was established in 2019, with a mandate to coordinate as well as to develop and assume responsibility for all the technologies adopted by the JCF.

Patrol cars are now equipped with the JCF Smart Check system, which provides officers with real-time access to various databases. This has allowed police officers to ascertain details on drivers and vehicles on our roads and to check on persons of interest, stolen motor vehicles, traffic ticket warrants and outstanding traffic tickets. With this capability, officers can act quickly and decisively, even while on a regular patrol.

**Madam Speaker**, the operations at police stations rely on the use of approximately 15 hardcover books referred to as registers or diaries, with the main one being the Station Diary or the “Big Book” that everybody knows about. In addition to these diaries, there are over 27 hard copy forms, which are completed manually by police officers. This practice is a most inefficient use of valuable police time. **Madam Speaker, under this Government and the policies advocated by this Prime Minister, these will be things of the past, as we introduce a new suite of automated Station Management Systems this year.** These include: a Station Records Management System, a Case Management System, and an Asset Management System. **These systems will result in improved efficiency of the internal business processes and customer service of the Jamaica Constabulary Force.** The Technology Branch will ensure that these systems are properly maintained and enhanced.

Additionally, **Madam Speaker**, we are procuring an **Electronic Jail Management System** to digitize custodial management operations. The procurement process is advanced. We intend to begin the implementation phase during this financial year.

**Madam Speaker**, the long-awaited **electronic Traffic Ticketing Management System (TTMS)** will be launched in June of this year.





**JamaicaEye**, which is our national CCTV surveillance programme, is a critical part of our technology thrust, and a crucial Force multiplier. The development and expansion of this programme is ongoing, with a significant number of cameras being deployed in downtown Kingston, Black River and Santa Cruz.

**Madam Speaker, the use of CCTV surveillance in conjunction with the improved police communications and mobility has contributed to the increased agility, efficiency and effectiveness of police operations.** I am confident that the public has come to appreciate its tremendous value to our crime control and crime prevention efforts.



## COMMUNICATION

The ability of the police to communicate efficiently both by voice and data over several communications media, is very critical to effective policing. The JCF Microwave Network has been upgraded and expanded; more than tripling its capacity and adding about 90 new links. This will facilitate adequate internet connectivity across the Force so that data can be easily sent from one station to the next. The Radio Network has been expanded with the addition of new P25 sites to provide wider radio coverage across the island. Interestingly, **Madam Speaker, the telecommunications infrastructure of the Jamaica Constabulary Force is built to public safety standards and with greater rigor than commercial standards.** The Police telecommunications infrastructure is more resilient and better able to withstand even hurricane force winds. Our communications system is among the best in the country.

**Madam Speaker,** the 119 Police Emergency Communication System has been upgraded to a new platform in order to handle calls from the public more reliably and efficiently.

## MOBILITY



**Madam Speaker,** reliable mobility and quality communications are fundamental to effective policing. Between FY2016/2017 and FY2019/2020, one thousand and ninety-two (1,092) motor vehicles were purchased for the Jamaica Constabulary Force. This figure included cars, pick-ups, SUVs, buses, trucks and bikes. Comparatively, in FY2014/2015, only three (3) cars were purchased for the police. **The process of strengthening police mobility continues!**

**Madam Speaker,** over the past few weeks, the Jamaican public would have had a first-hand showing of the improved response and agility of the police. Central to this level of operational effectiveness, is having the benefit

of a fleet of fit-for-purpose vehicles. When this improved mobility is combined with quality communications



system across police divisions, a properly staffed and equipped Police Emergency Communication Centre (PECC), cutting-edge technology, and highly skilled and competent law enforcement officers, we will increasingly see the police's quick apprehension of criminals after committing their acts. Importantly, **Madam Speaker**, the fact that one of these recent incidents took place within the Corporate Area at peak hours, without injury to bystanders, further highlights the highly skilled professionals that we have operating within the Police Force.



## RECRUITMENT & TRAINING



**Madam Speaker**, we have expanded the capacity of the Police Force to train up to 1500 new recruits per year. We acquired the Tranquility Bay facility in St. Elizabeth; we refurbished the Harman Barracks facility; and carried out significant improvement work at the National Police College of Jamaica (NPCJ) at Twickenham Park.

However, recruit training was significantly affected by the COVID-19 requirements for distancing, as it impacted the recruitment intake by approximately fifty percent (50%). We intend to get to the one thousand (1000) mark this year, and the full capacity of fifteen hundred (1500) next year.

**Madam Speaker**, it is very important that our training facilities are in good physical conditions, as it conveys a positive message to the young, bright, and ambitious Jamaicans seeking to serve in the Police Force. In addition to fixing the facilities, we have ensured that all the instructors are trained in the modern way of policing before they are placed in the training facilities. That was one of the priorities of the Commissioner, and a necessary priority.

## ORGANIZATIONAL RESTRUCTURING

**Madam Speaker**, as the Commissioner of Police and his team continue the deliberate and strategic transformation of the JCF, the reorganization process has extended to a number of formations:

- The National Intelligence Bureau (NIB) has been strengthened in several ways, such as the use of drone technology, to enhance its intelligence-gathering capacity and capability.
- The Counter-Terrorism and Organized Crime Investigation Branch (C-TOC) has been strengthened to focus on high value criminal targets and gangs.

- The Public Safety and Traffic Enforcement Branch (PSTEB) has expanded with the addition of Metro Quick Response teams to handle critical incidents and Public Order teams to address disorder in public spaces.

**Madam Speaker**, another cohort of Quick Response officers will be trained in short order to strengthen the Unit. We believe their continued development and expansion is crucial to the sustainable reduction of crimes, especially in our urban centres. Of note, **Madam Speaker**, the Quick Response teams were first introduced in the St. James Police Division. Their presence has resulted in a dramatic reduction in homicides in the business district of Montego Bay.

**Madam Speaker, the restructured Inspectorate and Professional Standards Oversight Bureau (IPROB) continues to ensure that the ethical and professional standards of the Force are maintained.** Within a short period of time, the highly proficient team of IPROB officers has demonstrated that they are more than capable of providing the required internal oversight to ensure improved accountability within the Force.

**Madam Speaker**, as part of its transformation thrust, **the Jamaica Constabulary Force is pursuing ISO 9001 Quality Management certification.** In this first phase, the Matilda's Corner and Duhaney Park Police Stations, as well as the Police Emergency Communication Centre (PECC), will be the entities involved in the programme, which is geared towards the standardization of operations and consistency in quality service delivery.

## IMPROVED OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

**Madam Speaker**, over the last 50 years the criminals have moved ahead. They have moved into a number of sophisticated activities, earning significant proceeds from these enterprises. These include: advanced credit fraud, traditional drug trafficking, gun-running, extortion, trafficking in persons. They have even started to use cryptocurrency to finance their criminal activities, this, even before we establish our digital currency.

Nevertheless, **Madam Speaker, the Jamaica Constabulary Force is being equipped to deal with all aspects of the criminal underworld.**

**Madam Speaker**, the investigative processes of the police increasingly rely on DNA evidence, ballistics and forensic analyses, and the incorporation of other technologies. This has strengthened the operational efficiency of the police, resulting in more convictions, more guilty pleas, and more confessions. When confronted with irrefutable scientific evidence, perpetrators have no choice but to 'throw in the towel' at the earliest opportunity. **This increased reliance on forensic science is impacting on the 'informa fi dead' culture**, as there is less need for first-person affidavits to secure convictions.

## THE NEW LOOK, EFFICIENT & AGILE JCF

**Madam Speaker**, the Jamaican people are now becoming accustomed to the new look, improved efficiency, and professionalism of the Jamaica Constabulary Force. Having provided the police with the requisite Force multipliers over the last four (4) years, **we are now seeing significant improvement in policing capacity and response, as well as the crime trends.**

**Madam Speaker, over the last five years, Serious Crimes, which include murder, shooting, rape, robbery, and break-ins, have declined by an average of 5% per annum.** In fact, **between 2015 and 2020, total serious crimes declined by approximately 24%**, moving from 6,667 in 2015 to 5,086 in 2020. **This is the lowest recording of serious crimes in over 20 years.**

**Madam Speaker**, there is a renewed confidence and heightened reassurance that this modern, more agile and efficient police force is transmitting to the public, and rightly so. The citizens of the country can take comfort



and be confident that the reequipped and restructured Jamaica Constabulary Force is impacting on the level of criminal violence in our society.

Reliable mobility, quality communications, effective surveillance, and efficient record-keeping and case management, are critical elements of a 21st century Police Force, that can deal with modern criminals. Much has been executed, and much more will be executed during the course of this year.

## RELEVANT & ROBUST LEGISLATION... *For Strengthened Law Enforcement*

**Madam Speaker**, in addition to the improved capacity of the police force, the Ministry is pursuing an aggressive legislative agenda. This is necessary in order to provide the security forces with a strong, relevant legal framework for combatting criminal violence.

**Madam Speaker**, legislation creates the environment for law enforcement to be able to arrest criminal activities, bring perpetrators to justice, and ensure that the penalties that are associated with criminal activities are commensurate with their egregious nature. In the coming weeks, I will be bringing to the House, three critical pieces of legislation that are part of the Ministry's legislative priorities for this year. These Bills are far advanced in the drafting and bill review stages, and include:

### **ANTI-GANG BILL,** WILL PROVIDE LAW ENFORCEMENT AND THE JUDICIARY WITH THE NECESSARY FRAMEWORK TO APPROPRIATELY **AJUDICATE GANG MEMBERS**

#### a) ANTI-GANG BILL

**Madam Speaker**, the Criminal Justice (Suppression of Criminal Organizations) (Amendment) Bill 2021, also known as the "Anti-gang Bill", was tabled on April 27, 2021 and will be debated during tomorrow's sitting of the House.

#### b) FIREARMS ACT

**Madam Speaker**, the Firearms Act is a repeal and replace Bill. It is now at the final stages of the Bill review process. Critically, **Madam Speaker**, we are increasing the penalties throughout the legislation, and we are introducing some new provisions to treat with trafficking of arms and other similar offences that were not captured in the principal Act. In addition, we are improving the provisions to treat with the regulation of the industry, and capturing some of our international obligations that are not in the principal Act.

#### c) THE MAJOR ORGANIZED CRIME AND ANTI-CORRUPTION AGENCY (MOCA) (INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION) REGULATIONS

**Madam Speaker**, we have a settled draft for the Major Organized Crime and Anti-Corruption Agency (MOCA) (Investigation and Prosecution) Regulations. It is now being reviewed by the Attorney General's Chambers.

#### d) TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS (TIP) ACT

**Madam Speaker**, the Trafficking in Persons Act is being amended to replace the option of fines with custodial sentences. Cabinet has given approval for drafting instructions to be issued for these amendments.



**Madam Speaker,** I wish to place on record that Trafficking in Persons is high on the agenda of the Government, and the Ministry of National Security. This government recognizes our obligation to put the requisite measures in place to eliminate or minimize incidence of human trafficking within our country. We are fully aware of the severe and adverse impact of human trafficking within and beyond our borders, and we do not take lightly our responsibility to assist and protect rescued victims.

Given the level of importance that we have attributed to this issue of human trafficking, the Chairmanship of the National Taskforce Against Trafficking in Persons (NATFATIP) has been returned to the Ministry of National Security. The taskforce is now chaired by Permanent Secretary Williams. Additionally, a policy on Trafficking in Persons is now being prepared by the Ministry. This is a first for Jamaica. The Trafficking in Persons policy will be completed by the second quarter of this financial year.

#### **e) CORRECTIONS ACT**

**Madam Speaker,** the Corrections Act is being amended to address the movement of contraband into the facilities. We are increasing the penalties to treat with the offence of trafficking of contraband. These amendments to the Corrections Act will be tabled in the coming weeks.

#### **f) IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION (COMMONWEALTH CITIZENS) & ALIEN ACT**

**Madam Speaker,** amendments to the Immigration Restriction (Commonwealth Citizens) & Alien Acts have been completed. These Bills are now at the final stages of the Bill-drafting process.

#### **g) VISA POLICY**

**Madam Speaker,** the Ministry has developed a visa policy that will streamline the issuance of visas, modernize the process, and introduce technology and biometric identification for all travellers. We will be introducing a travel authorization process that will make the movement of frequent travelers seamless, and reduce their contact time within the immigration hall.

**Madam Speaker,** the Ministry of National Security is developing policies that are relevant to the times and technology supported, while providing security to our people.

### **OTHER LEGISLATION**

Other critical pieces of legislation that are in-train for the medium term, include: the Proceeds of Crime Act, to include the concept of unexplained wealth orders; amendments to the Interception of Communications Act; Intelligence Act, comprehensive amendments to the Corrections Act, and the Jamaica Constabulary Force Act.

**Madam Speaker, the process of developing complex legislation, can be very challenging. The process is complex, and iterative, resulting in a level of institutional demand that strangles the government legal system.**

Given the increased demand on the services of the institutional drivers of this process, it is time for us to make provisions for the strengthening, reinforcing, and repositioning of these offices. And here, I speak of the Office of the Chief Parliamentary Counsel (CPC), The Legal Reform Department (LRD), and the Attorney General's Chambers (AGC). The heads of these agencies are highly proficient, experienced, and well-intentioned, professionals. Undoubtedly, some of the best legal minds in the region. Their best efforts are, however, constrained by having a less than ideal staff complement, and a demanding legislative agenda. If we are to have legislation done professionally and efficiently we have to revisit their posts, and the stature we ascribe to them. In making these



recommendations, I am not seeking to encroach on the role of the Minister of Justice. However, **the current law-making process is an impairment to law enforcement.** We must look at the system holistically, and interrogate the issues comprehensively, to make the necessary changes.

Similarly, **Madam Speaker**, Jamaica needs a jurisprudence that is relevant to our context and that affirms the boundaries of legal reasoning to our specific national, socio-cultural and criminal justice context. **Jamaica needs a legal system that is genuinely and authentically Jamaican; one that factors in the real-life implications and consequences of its decisions.**

We must remember that, to varied degrees, the jurisprudence of our three critical bilateral security partners – The United States, The United Kingdom, and Canada, is different from Jamaica's. **Madam Speaker**, the realities of Jamaica's criminal justice landscape are different from those of our key partner countries. Our laws need to reflect and address Jamaica's reality. As far as possible, **our laws need to be inherently Jamaican, informed by our realities and sensibilities.**

**Madam Speaker**, increased police efficiency is influencing the number of murder cases that are sent for prosecution each year. For the period 2016 to 2020, for example, a total of **2,584** murder case files were prepared for prosecution. Of that number, **604** were disposed of, and **1,954** were carried forward. At this rate, **Madam Speaker**, there is a real risk of the system becoming back-logged, resulting in inordinate delays in achieving the swift and sure justice we desire. We cannot afford for this to happen. I am mindful of the logistical, infrastructural, security and other factors that inform the trial process. However, **it may be time for us to consider adopting, where appropriate, measures to increase the disposal rate of murder cases.**

**Madam Speaker**, in a society like ours, where the "informa fi dead" culture is still very pervasive, we must revisit and adapt the Bail Act, for example, to adequately respond to the challenges that are associated with the socio-cultural context of crime in Jamaica. Having witnesses in protective custody for prolonged periods is another consequence of our current criminal justice system that must be addressed.

**Madam Speaker**, our stakeholders within the criminal justice system are critical partners to the work of law enforcement. I am aware, and proud of the fact that we have a Charter of Rights that forms the overarching framework for all legislation. However, **we must now give more thought to having robust and relevant legislation that will protect and preserve the rights of citizens, while addressing the nuances of our criminal violence landscape.**

## STRATEGIC SOCIAL INVESTMENT STRUCTURE... *Towards Safer Communities*

**Madam Speaker**, it is said that "crime prevention is a long-term goal, but crime reduction is an immediate need". I posit, **Madam Speaker**, that in order to achieve the sustainable crime reduction that we need, we must, as a matter of priority, reconsider and reposition our crime-prevention efforts. We must learn from our past experience and do better as we move forward.

**Madam Speaker**, the Government has issued a policy directive to reposition social investments, and to rethink crime-prevention programmes. The reason for this was simple – social intervention projects were not providing long-term impact on the lives of the people or the communities. It was for this reason that **the Government developed a comprehensive, all-of-government structure for social investment under Plan Secure Jamaica.**

You will note, **Madam Speaker**, that I do not speak here of social interventions, but of social investments. We are investing in the social development of the people, with the understanding that **improved human capacity will result in strong human capital.** The study that was recently published, indicating that \$380 billion had been

spent on social intervention over the period of a decade, without there being adequate monitoring or definition of outcomes, corroborates the policy change that has been adopted by the Government.

## THE BUSINESS ADVISORY GROUP

**Madam Speaker**, one of the most critical components of the new structure for social investment is the Business Advisory Group. This group comprises all Permanent Secretaries, and the heads of relevant agencies of government. It is chaired by the Prime Minister. This high-level group is responsible for inter-Ministerial coordination and collaboration around social investment for community transformation. The Business Advisory Group ensures that the identified social and infrastructural needs within the communities are captured in the respective Ministry's budget, and efficiently addressed through their line agencies.

Given that the members, (the Permanent Secretaries) are accountable to the Prime Minister, and to the people of Jamaica, the establishment of the **Business Advisory Group guarantees continuity and transparency of social investment activities.**

As a matter of priority, the provision of core social services, namely: education, public health, and access to the social safety net; must be reorganized and improved to reach all those who are in genuine need. The Business Advisory Group ensures that quality public service, and essential public good, are provided in a sustainable manner to the communities that have long been identified as vulnerable.

## EVIDENCE-BASED MEASUREABLE APPROACH TO SOCIAL INVESTMENT

**Madam Speaker, we are institutionalizing social investment.** We are conducting the necessary baseline assessments and gathering the requisite empirical data that will inform the social investment programme. We are ensuring that our desired outcomes are clearly defined and measureable. This will all be captured within a monitoring, evaluation and learning framework. The Citizen Security Secretariat, which reports to the Business Advisory Group, has been charged with overseeing this monitoring, evaluation and learning component of our new approach to social investment.

Through this approach, **Madam Speaker**, social investment for meaningful community transformation, is for the first time, being treated as an all-of-government issue. **Social investment is an all-of government priority.**

This is why we are confident, **Madam Speaker**, that the approach of this government will be impactful and successful. Prior to this, social intervention operated as independent projects with very little data. Through this evidence-based approach, based on empirical data, with a strong monitoring, evaluation and learning framework, we will bring meaningful transformation to these communities.

## RELEVANT SOCIAL-DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

**Madam Speaker**, social development activities must be relevant in order for social investment to impact on crime. Research confirms that on average, 50.2% of all murders in Jamaica are of young men, aged 15 to 34. These are young men in their prime productive years who are being gunned down, slaughtered by each other.

Additionally, **Madam Speaker**, the Baseline Study of 17 Vulnerable and Volatile Communities that was compiled by the Planning Institute of Jamaica, further confirmed that over 50% of individuals in these communities completed some level of secondary education, but less than 5% were employed, or were employable.



Though faced with this unfortunate reality, **Madam Speaker**, the Social Development Commission reports significant infrastructural asset overlay within these communities. These can provide a good foundation for meaningful community transformation. Take the communities of Jones Town and Allman Town for example. The Social Development Commission reports that there are nine (9) schools and eight (8) churches within the Jones Town community; and sixteen (16) schools and eleven (11) churches in Allman Town.

Critical to this process, however, **Madam Speaker**, are the types of social development initiatives and activities that we introduce. They must be relevant to the target population. They must make sense. Research confirms that the school drop-out rate among inner city boys can be as high as 70%. When social anthropologists speak of the 'recruit-ability' of young men into gangs – these are the boys to whom they are referring. We must, therefore, intercept the lives of these boys from an early age. **We must provide support to the struggling single mother, and develop relevant curriculum for the boys from infancy to high school.**

Hence, **Madam Speaker**, the Ministry of National Security is working closely with the relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Government to ensure that there is a safe environment within which to develop and operate this new eco-system for social change. These include, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information; the Ministry of Health and Wellness; the Ministry of Labour and Social Security; the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development; and the agencies that fall within the purview of the Office of the Prime Minister in terms of training – HEART Trust NSTA, Jamaica National Service Corps, and the Housing, Opportunity, Production and Employment (H.O.P.E) programme.

**Madam Speaker**, we would all agree that music and sports are the heartbeat of Jamaican society. Every young boy can identify with music and sports. It is for this reason that the Ministry launched its **Music, Sports and Technology Programme**, for transformative youth behaviour and attitudinal change. Two flagship initiatives within the programme are the **Articulated Truck Driving Programme (ATD)** and the **Musical Intervention Programme (MIP)**.



Articulated Truck Driving Programme (ATD)



Dupont Primary & Infant School, (Music, Sports and Technology Programme)

Working in collaboration with our key partners, the Ministry continues to expand these initiatives that are geared towards reducing youth violence, mindful that these in-demand life skills will provide a gateway to legitimate employment locally and internationally.



**Madam Speaker**, ontological security is defined as the sense of a future that a person possesses. Social anthropologists posit that ontological security is crucial to the sustainable reduction in criminal violence. **Madam Speaker**, the key indicators of ontological security are: food; sense of safety; support; and education. However, it has been unequivocally established that education, is the single, most powerful ontological factor.

**Madam Speaker**, it is said that “if a country does not make its young men feel there is a secured future, they will destroy themselves and the country”.

The Government’s strategic and mainstreamed approach to social investment prioritizes the introduction of relevant socio-educational programmes, the development of appropriate curriculum in schools, and providing opportunities for self-improvement. The objective, **Madam Speaker**, is to restore a sense of hope and self-worth to our young males, so that they can reclaim their stake in society and no longer seek empowerment in the trigger of a gun but through the strength of their minds.

At this juncture, **Madam Speaker**, I wish to acknowledge and thank my colleague Minister Fayval Williams and her team from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information. They have been working closely with the Crime Prevention Unit of the Ministry in conducting the necessary systems review and developing the framework for the implementation of this new approach. Minister Williams, I appreciate your collaboration, commitment and partnership in bringing ontological security, through education, to our boys.

## CLOSING

**Madam Speaker**, there can be no order without hope, no peace without justice, and no security without self-esteem, self-respect- ontological security. That is the priority of the Ministry of National Security going into this new term of government – to create a safe environment within which to restore hope, self-worth, dignity and a sense of purpose to our young men and all the residents in the challenged communities.

**Madam Speaker**, as I close, I would like for two of our most esteemed Jamaican poets to speak on behalf of our socially isolated families in the inner-cities. One usually writes of the wretchedness to which the colonial past has reduced our people but even in that wretchedness, he demonstrated that they could not destroy the true character of our people. The other has, in his own way, torn away the wretchedness and shown us a way to achieve our true potential.



I will read **Jamaican Fisherman** by Sir Phillip Sherlock over the rhythm of Robert Nesta Marley's Redemption Song.

## **JAMAICAN FISHERMAN**

Across the sand I saw a black man stride  
To fetch his fishing gear and broken things,  
And silently that splendid body cried  
Its proud descent from ancient chiefs and kings.  
Across the sand I saw him stride:  
Sang his black body in the sun's white light  
The velvet coolness of dark forest wide,  
The blackness of the jungle's starless night.  
He stood beside the old canoe which lay  
Upon the beach; swept up within his arms  
The broken nets and careless lounged away  
Towards his wretched hut beneath the palms,  
Nor knew how fiercely spoke his body then  
Of ancient wealth and freeborn regal men.

**Madam Speaker, may the Almighty continue to bless Jamaica, land we love.**

**I Thank You!**



This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. In the top-left corner, there is a decorative graphic consisting of overlapping translucent shapes in shades of blue, green, and yellow, creating a modern, geometric design. The rest of the page is plain white.



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