

**Charge by the Honourable Minister of State, Juliet Cuthbert-Flynn to the
BOV Members at the Boards of Visitors Orientation Session 2023**

September 14, 2023

Acting Commissioner of Corrections, Dr. Marc Thomas,

Chief Technical Director, Ms. Shauna Trowers

Members of the Board of Visitors,

Distinguished colleagues,

Members of the media,

Ladies and Gentlemen. Good morning!

We have gathered here to welcome and charge our new and returning BOV members with a responsibility that carries immense importance for our society.

Our correctional system plays a pivotal role in maintaining the fabric of justice and each one of you is now entrusted with the task of upholding these principles with unwavering dedication and fearlessness.

I need not remind you that your mission is a calling that demands moral courage and an unyielding commitment to justice.

You must have the courage to confront the truth and to question the status quo when necessary. The pursuit of justice demands that you venture into the darkest corners, armed with the light of accountability. Your duty is to be the voice of the voiceless, to shine a light on any injustice or wrongdoing that might be found to be present in the shadows of our correctional facilities.

In the performance of your duties, I urge you to remain unbiased and impartial. Let the scales of justice be your guide, and let your actions reflect the values of integrity and equity. Approach your responsibilities with an open mind, a discerning eye, and a compassionate heart.

Remember that those who have been incarcerated are still human beings, deserving of respect and the opportunity for rehabilitation, and reintegration.

It is also important that you recognize that you are not alone on this mission. You are part of a larger team committed to reform and improvement. Collaborate with

your fellow BOV members, engage with experts in various fields, and share your insights with those on the ground and also with us, the policymakers and the political directorate.

Importantly, your work has the power to shape policies that can transform lives, reduce recidivism, and create a safer Jamaica for all.

As you go forth to carry out your duties, always keep in mind that your actions have a ripple effect. Your diligence can inspire change, your fearlessness can break down barriers, and your commitment can restore hope.

Do not shy away from difficult conversations or tough recommendations. Embrace them, for sure they are the crucibles that forge positive transformation.

In conclusion, I want to express my utmost confidence in each of you. I am certain that with your determination, your compassion, your professionalism, and your fearlessness, you will rise to the occasion. Your work, as BOV members, is vital to the betterment of our society and our beloved Jamaica.

Every good wish as you go forth with courage, for you are the vanguards of justice and your efforts will leave an indelible mark on the path to a more just and equitable Jamaica.

I thank you.