

PERMANENT SECRETARY'S GREETINGS

PLANNING INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA BEST PRACTICE SYMPOSIUM

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2023

Acknowledgement and Salutations

1. Madam Chairperson, Mrs. Rochelle Whyte
2. Hon. Fayval Williams, Minister, Ministry of Education and Youth
3. Mr. Omar Sweeney, Managing Director, Jamaica Social Investment Fund
4. Mr. Omar Frith, Deputy Executive Director, Social Development Commission
5. Ms. Barbara Scott, Deputy Director General, Planning Institute of Jamaica
6. Karl Hyatt, Acting Chief Technical Director, Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce (MIIC)
7. Dr. Elaine McCarthy, Chairperson, Jamaica Umbrella Group of Churches
8. Colleagues from the Ministry of National Security, PIOJ and other Ministries, Departments and Agencies represented here today
9. Specially invited guests
10. Members of the Media

Good Morning!

My name is Delroy Simpson, Chief Technical Director in the Ministry of National Security and it is a privilege to bring you greetings on behalf of our Permanent Secretary, Ambassador Alison Stone Roofe who could not make it here today, due to a prior engagement.

The Ministry of National Security has been a key partner of the PIOJ in the planning, resourcing and implementation of best practice symposia over the years. That is because we recognize that crime and violence is a multi-faceted challenge requiring a multi-sectoral response. We further recognize that best practice in virtually any sector, will contribute to the creation of a safer society. **It is all inter-connected!**

This Symposium was first introduced in 2016, through the PIOJ's Community Renewal Programme (CRP), in partnership with key governmental and non-governmental agencies, namely the Citizen Security and Justice Programme (CSJP), the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), the National Housing Trust (NHT), the Housing Agency of Jamaica (HAJ), the Social Development Commission (SDC) and the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited (JPS).

This year's Symposium is guided by the theme, "**Transforming Communities through Economic and Psychosocial Best Practice**". As such, among other things, we are to deliberate on the economic and psychosocial issues that may contribute to crime and violence as well as possible responses.

The objective of the Symposium has always been to showcase and document best practices in social and community development and to stimulate and strengthen national dialogue on successful strategies in tackling critical development issues. Additionally, judging from the number of key stakeholders here today, this Symposium clearly offers an excellent opportunity for networking. **Ladies and gentlemen, our view is that if we are to make meaningful progress in crime reduction, the strength of our anti-crime networks must exceed the strength of the criminal networks in our society!** To the extent that this Symposium focuses on community development, we consider it a key anti-crime network, which is therefore fully endorsed by the Ministry of National Security!

Ladies and gentlemen, as Jamaica continues to commit to approaching crime prevention in a holistic way, **we are cognizant that resilient individuals make resilient communities which translates to a resilient and transformed country.** Vulnerability and volatility go hand in hand in many of these communities, and therefore it is critical that we address the underlying issues that drive both. Through an integrated approach to development, the GOJ has committed through the Citizen Security Plan to ensure that lives are truly transformed – thereby improving the socio-economic status of residents within targeted vulnerable communities, which we see as a pivotal step in crime prevention.

The psychosocial factors that contribute to crime are well known but in order to transform our communities, we must first examine the root causes and implement strategies to mitigate such challenges. Admittedly, we are constrained by our fiscal realities, and therefore the Ministry of National Security, in accordance with the joint MNS/MOEY Inter-Ministerial School Support Strategy, has targeted the most vulnerable to violence – our children. Lessons learnt from previous fora such as this, have led our Ministry to commit to the adoption of risk based approaches and the utilization of a case management methodology. Taken together, this allows us to have a more targeted approach to crime prevention at the individual and community levels. In this approach, criminogenic risk factors - which include psychosocial issues are identified through a collaborative effort. Working with psychologists and other professionals, the necessary interventions are subsequently provided.

In order to transform our communities and by extension our beloved country, we need **all hands on deck** to combat the challenges we face as a nation. Data and evidence-based approaches **must form the core** of policy determinations. The best practices continue to recognize this and provide an avenue for stakeholders to share

information and strengthen collaboration. Recognizing that although each challenge **is nuanced**, there is **a commonality** that allows us to learn and improve, therefore providing for not mere intervention but social investments in crime prevention.

In closing, it is my hope that at the end of this Symposium, as we return to our respective offices, we will share the information received and develop strategic plans and policies that will assist us in achieving our mandate – **citizen security for all, a safe and secure Jamaica!**

Do enjoy the rest of the Symposium! Thank you!