

# PM Calls for Change in Middle Income Status

**PRIME MINISTER** the Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller has pressed for changes to be made to the existing classification of some developing countries as "middle income."

She noted that the classification has prevented these countries from accessing greater levels of funding for development and other economic support.

The Prime Minister was addressing a retreat held on June 11 in Brussels, Belgium, as part of the of two-day summit of Heads of State and Government of the European Union (EU) and the 33 countries of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

At the retreat, Prime Minister Simpson Miller spoke about some of the major issues of concern to Jamaica.

These included the need for greater levels of development financing for developing countries within the framework of the Post 2015 Development Agenda, as well as practical on-the-ground programmes to prevent and respond to the effects of climate change.

The Prime Minister, over the course of the summit, which got underway on June 10, also held bilateral meetings with Prime Minister of Spain, Mariano Rajoy Brey; and Prime Minister of Sweden, Stefan Lofven. The meetings reviewed several areas of cooperation between Jamaica and the two EU countries and identified additional areas of cooperation to be pursued.

Areas of technology transfer, agriculture and agro-processing formed a major part of the talks with Spain.



**Prime Minister the Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller (left) discusses issues of mutual concern to Jamaica and Haiti with President of Haiti, Michel Martelly, at the second summit of Heads of State and Government of the European Union and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States held in Belgium.**

Prime Ministers Simpson Miller and Lofven spoke about of the commitment of their governments to prudent macroeconomic management; trade and investment facilitation; employment

creation; gender equality; the protection of children; social programmes for the most vulnerable segments of their populations; and programmes to mitigate the effects of climate change.

## EPOC Expresses Strong Optimism

THE BODY set up to monitor the country's Economic Reform Programme (ERP) is expressing strong optimism that Jamaica's economy will continue its positive performance this fiscal year.

The Economic Programme Oversight Committee (EPOC), co-chaired by Richard Byles, says several critical factors have contributed to this level of optimism about the future of the economy.

Mr. Byles told journalists at the EPOC's monthly press briefing on June 11 that one major confidence boosting factor is a commitment received from Finance and Planning Minister, Dr. the Hon. Peter Phillips, that neither a general election nor the current public sector wage negotiations will be allowed to derail the economic programme.

"He gave us a pledge that he would not vary from his commitment in respect of the four-year International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme and the targets embedded in it," Mr. Byles noted.

Mr. Byles also cited the recent upgrades by international rating agencies,



**Co-Chair of the Economic Programme Oversight Committee (EPOC), Richard Byles**

Standard & Poor's and Moody's, as proof that Jamaica's economy has made "unmistakable progress."

Another major factor for the increased optimism is a four per cent inflation rate recorded by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica for the last fiscal year, which is the lowest for the country in 48 years.

Other notable improvements in the economy, which have contributed to the renewed optimism are: the growth in the tourism industry and improvements in the business confidence and competitiveness indices.

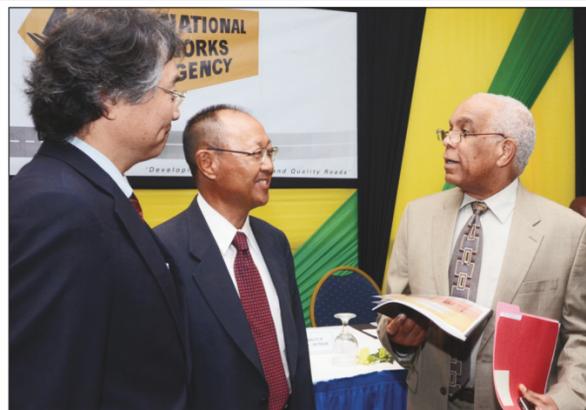
**6TH BIENNIAL DIASPORA CONFERENCE - 2015**  
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## Drainage Infrastructure Guidelines Completed

WORK ON the new drainage infrastructure guidelines for the approval of building and subdivision applications has been completed.

Development of the guidelines was undertaken by the Ministry of Transport, Works and Housing; National Works Agency (NWA); Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM); and the Water Resources Authority (WRA), in partnership with the Embassy of Japan in Jamaica, and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The 40-page document outlines minimum stipulated basic standards pertaining to infrastructure installations deemed imperative to facilitate the channelling of storm water away from developments.



**Transport, Works and Housing Minister, Dr. the Hon. Omar Davies (right), converses with Chargé d'Affaires, Embassy of Japan in Jamaica, Hiromoto Oyama (left); and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Resident Representative in Jamaica, Kenji Tobita, at the launch of the new drainage infrastructure guidelines for buildings and subdivisions, on June 9 at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel.**

Developers will be required to incorporate these details in relevant plans being submitted to local planning authorities for approval,

including the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA), the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation, and Parish Councils.

The document was formally launched by Transport, Works and Housing Minister, Dr. the Hon. Omar Davies, during a ceremony at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel, New Kingston, on June 9.

In his address, the Minister emphasised that the guidelines have been "long in coming."

"We want to ensure that a major goal of building developments is the proper infrastructural design and project planning. This, we expect, will reduce the risk of loss of life from disasters, as well as financial losses," he said.

The guidelines will be distributed to the various local authorities in the coming weeks.

## Residents of Braco, Trelawny Get New Houses



**Christine Jenkins (2<sup>nd</sup> right) of Braco, North Trelawny, proudly shows off the keys to her home, which were presented by Minister without Portfolio (Housing), Ministry of Transport, Works and Housing, Hon. Dr. Morais Guy (2<sup>nd</sup> left), during the handover ceremony in the community on June 4. Ms. Jenkins was one of five beneficiaries of homes developed in Braco, under the Ministry of Transport, Works and Housing/Food for the Poor Collaborative Housing Project. Others sharing in the occasion (from left) are: Attorney General and North Trelawny Member of Parliament, Hon. Patrick Atkinson; Project Director, Jamaica Emergency Employment Programme (JEEP), Carolyn Gardner; and Executive Director, Food for the Poor, David Mair.**

## Islandwide Celebrations to Mark Emancipation and Independence

VENUES ALL across the island are expected to come alive with the celebration of culture as Jamaicans observe Emancipation and Independence activities from July 31 to August 6.

In addition to the usual festivities, there will be some new events such as islandwide festival floats and street parades; and the festival bandwagon, which is a mobile showcase of the

best talents from the parishes in the performing arts.

Minister of Youth and Culture, Hon. Lisa Hanna, is encouraging Jamaicans to "get excited" and embrace their culture by participating in the activities.

She said the activities under the theme: 'Proud and Free... Jamaica 53' will be diverse, appealing and attractive to a wide cross section of the society.

"We are expecting to see town squares and villages, plazas and public parks colourfully decorated," she said as she addressed the launch of the activities at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel on June 10.

Celebrations will start with the National Church Service on July 26 at the St. Jago De La Vega Cathedral at 10:00 a.m. This will be

followed by the Emancipation vigil in all parishes on Friday, July 31.

Saturday, August 1, will mark Jamaica Day with the opening of the Independence Village at the Ranny Williams Entertainment Centre.

The major showcase will be the Grand Gala event on August 6 at the National Stadium.

## European Commission Announces 346 Million Euros in Support for Caribbean

JAMAICA STANDS to benefit from millions in development assistance from the European Commission over the next five years.

The Commission has announced 346 million euros in funding for programmes in the Caribbean up to 2020.

The amount is part of over 800 million euros in support to the Caribbean and Latin American region.

The development support is one of the outcomes of the two-day summit of Heads of State and Government of the 28-member European Union (EU) and

the 33 countries of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) held in Brussels, Belgium, from June 10 to 11.

Prime Minister the Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller led the Jamaican delegation to the summit, which was

jointly hosted by the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk; President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker; and Pro Tempore President of CELAC, President Rafael Correa of Ecuador.



**Dancers perform an item during the Grand Gala held at the National Stadium last year.**

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- COVER ALL CONTAINERS**
- PUNCH HOLES IN TINS**