



Broadcast To The Nation
Senator The Hon. Dwight Nelson
Minister Of National Security

Broadcast
By
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Opening Remarks

Fellow Jamaicans... Good evening... Let me first of all wish all the mothers across Jamaica, Happy Mother's Day and hope that you were able to enjoy the good company and blessings of your families in recognition of your many years of caring, nurturing and support. It is significant that I am speaking to you on this special day when we honour the important role of our mothers in the building of our nation. Just three weeks ago, Prime Minister Bruce Golding, assigned to me one of the most challenging portfolios in the Cabinet - that of National Security. Central to this assignment is the responsibility to effectively manage crime and restore public order so as to protect the right of every law abiding Jamaican to go about their legitimate business free from fear. **I AM PREPARED TO FACE THE CHALLENGES THIS ASSIGNMENT POSES.** Like every law abiding Jamaican, I want to live in a peaceful and prosperous country. I want to live in a country where we can all exist in a secure and stable environment. I am determined to ensure that Jamaicans can live free from abuse, violence or threats of violence. I am determined to ensure that our children grow up in a safe and secure environment. I am determined to ensure that our criminal justice system becomes more vigilant to make sure that criminals are not easily returned to the streets to continue to commit crimes against decent people. Achieving these goals remains a formidable challenge to the nation.

BUT AS INTIMIDATING AS THIS CHALLENGE MIGHT SEEM, SUCCEED WE MUST AND SUCCEED WE WILL.

Analysis Of Present Crime Situation

The most recent data confirms that murders and shootings remain the major concerns for citizens, although the statistics do show a marginal decline in the first four months of this year compared to the corresponding period last year. There are a number of areas which are of particular concern to us - Western Jamaica because we have seen unprecedented vicious crimes in various communities in St. James. The parishes of Manchester, St. Elizabeth, Clarendon, as well as sections of the Kingston Metropolitan Area are also high on the radar. It is within the community that we are now witnessing the most vicious attacks against women and children. It is at the level of the community that we began losing the war against crime. As we survey the range of criminal activities it is clear that we are not simply dealing with ordinary criminals, but a most serious and sustained threat to the authority of the state and the sovereignty of the nation. In the communities at least 120 of the most dangerous criminal networks are established. The intelligence is that these gangs are responsible for some eighty percent (80%) of all major crimes. It is also a fact that these gangs are directly connected to a global criminal network, which not only controls the trade in illicit drugs and guns, but

also the growing dehumanizing trade of human trafficking. These gangs also have tentacles in the extortion rackets which have spread to most of our urban centres. The intensification of activities by these organized criminal networks in at least ten parishes must be crushed. The leaders and supporters of these networks must be removed from the communities within which they operate. **A direct assault on them must be launched.** We will build on the successes of Kingfish and the Major Investigation Taskforce and with anti-gang legislation dismantle these highly sophisticated criminal groups We will continue our offensive on the guns for drugs trade. We must stem the supply of guns coming into Jamaica. I will continue discussions with our regional and international partners in pursuance of making our borders more secure as well as our ports of entry. As Minister of National Security I will continue to focus my attention on the seizure of criminal assets. I will collaborate with the Ministry of Justice and the Attorney General's office for the aggressive and expeditious enforcement of the Proceeds of Crime Act. Of the twenty two (22) money laundering cases being dealt with by the authorities, there have been three convictions. The outcome of the remaining nineteen is pending. Associated with the three convictions, we have forfeited funds in excess of ten million Jamaican dollars, over six hundred and eighty thousand in foreign currency (US dollars and UK pound sterling); as well as forfeiture of up-market properties and high-end motor vehicles. We have to

make the criminals pay for the pain they have inflicted on the society. We cannot allow them to parade a lifestyle of opulence with their ill-gotten gains. Our clear objective is to invest the proceeds from crime in the interest of law-abiding citizens by acquiring those goods and services required for immediate improvement to the national security environment.

Over The Past Five Years

OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS.... A number of initiatives have been implemented in recent years which have led to varying degrees of success. For example:

1. Operation Kingfish which was established in 2004 has had exceptional success in the continuing fight against crime, seizing among other things, illegal weapons, ammunition, and drugs;
2. The joint military/task force targeting hotspot communities had led to a reduction in violence in these areas;
3. The acquisition of new and modern technologies, including the Automated Palm and Fingerprint Identification System, and the Integrated Ballistics System;

4. The complete upgrading of the JCF Wireless Telecommunication Network;
5. The implementation of Close Circuit Television;
6. The formation of the Major Investigation Task Force.

As we move forward, our strategies are going to be guided by our modernization which has been developed from some 124 specific recommendations of an international panel which conducted a **Strategic Review** of the Jamaica Constabulary Force. These recommendations were discussed and adopted for systematic implementation. It is now my responsibility to ensure that this implementation takes place in a timely manner. High on the list of strategic objectives which I will uphold is the continuing acquisition and deployment of the modern and sophisticated technology available for crime fighting. This is the only way for the police to stay ahead of the criminals. I will explore the strategy to allow for sworn testimony of witnesses via remote video link. It is imperative that we make witnesses far more confident to provide testimony and cooperate with law enforcement agencies in the investigation of crimes. We will continue to take all measures required to ensure the safety of our witnesses particularly through the witness protection program. We have already installed equipment which will facilitate the electronic

monitoring of the movements of known and habitual offenders.

The Critical Role Of The JDF

The JDF has and will continue to play a critical role in the nation's security by bringing operational intelligence and other special skills to the security operations carried out in partnership with the police, as well as, in the response to any increased level of threat to national security from any quarter. I am happy to note that the JDF will celebrate a significant milestone in its history with the training of its One Hundredth Recruit intake of men since its formation in 1962. The Passing Out parade later this week will see the One hundred and Twenty Five (125) men who successfully completed training.

What New Do I Bring To The Table ?

If we are to provide Jamaica with a modern and efficient national security apparatus there are some critical deliverables that cannot be postponed any longer. These will be the immediate focus of my tenure. Our ratio of one police officer to every 274 citizens is the lowest in the Caribbean and one of the lowest in the world. It is imperative that we increase the numerical strength of JCF. The recruitment procedures are being put in place and the facilities completed to achieve this objective in planned increments over the next five years. The Prime Minister has spoken to the decision to employ civilians in a range of administrative functions which will allow trained officers to become available for core operational duties.

This I will certainly focus on. In another few weeks, 78 more constables will graduate from the Jamaica Police Academy, further boosting the establishment. I will also explore the establishment of a Police Reserve comprised of private citizens to support our present policing complement in maintaining public order.

Training and Capacity Building

The centre piece of the modernisation programme for the police force is a network of training facilities which offer the training courses required for their professional development and adherence to internationally accepted best practices. The curriculum, delivered by a competent teaching staff, will emphasize the philosophy, mission and leadership style of a modern community oriented police service. In addition, the JCF is considering the acquisition of Tranquillity Bay property in St. Elizabeth with a view to using it for the training of an additional 200 recruits annually. It is on the basis of this training and recruitment programme that we will be able to deploy the police force in sufficient numbers to ensure the visibility and effectiveness required for public order. The ruthlessness and resourcefulness of the criminal gangs operating in Jamaica require a level of administrative, operational and technical capacity that is not present in sufficient quantity within the ranks. I will certainly ensure that the incentives are put in place for police officers to take

advantage of all the specialized training and educational advancement available at tertiary institutions. The Ministry of National Security will strengthen the accountability mechanism to properly monitor performance of law enforcement agencies and hold civil servants to account for the use of public resources. The MNS will work with the JCF in identifying key measures of performance and monitor their progress towards stated targets. The improved **mobility** of the police force is another of my immediate concerns. In the last financial year, some Eight Hundred Million Dollars (\$800,000,000) was spent to acquire Two hundred (200) new vehicles. For this year, we have committed another Six Hundred and Thirty Million Dollars (\$630,000,000) to purchase 160 additional vehicles. The objective must be to ensure that police actions are not hindered by immobility. National security is reinforced by the men and women of our police force who risk life and limb and who sacrifice quality time with their families to protect the lives and property of all Jamaicans. We must, therefore, continue to demonstrate a sense of caring and concern for their condition of work, their welfare and safety.

Forensic Science Laboratory

Our **Forensic Science Laboratory** has embarked upon an extensive reform and modernisation program. In the last two years several key pieces of equipment designed to bring our

standard of forensic analyses to first world standard have been purchased.

We now have state of the art equipment to assist with DNA analyses. Shortly to arrive are a freezer mill for grinding bones and teeth for DNA extraction and work stations to provide sterile work areas. Applications training have taken place on all the instruments and they are being validated for casework. We have also bought DNA kits that are the latest in available DNA technology. This means that once the validation exercise is completed, the DNA unit at the Forensic Laboratory will one of the best equipped and most modern labs of its kind in this hemisphere. The next step is to clear the backlog of cases to be analysed thus delivering the results required by our stakeholders, results that will aid investigators in crime prevention and detection and aid the judiciary with the administration of justice. The lab's Chemistry Department is also receiving attention. New pieces of equipment for toxicology- identification of drugs of abuse and pesticides, and another for toxicology samples and explosives have been acquired. Also to come are microscopes for organic and elemental analyses.

One of these will also be able to conduct gunshot residue analyses as well as an Evidence Investigator to screen for drugs in toxicology samples. Great strides have been made and in the not too distant future, the Forensic Science Laboratory can be considered an asset to the country and its people.

National Identification System

The **National Identification System** announced by the Prime Minister will be pursued rigorously to provide the security forces with another critical tool for law enforcement. This national identification registration system will require every Jamaican resident in Jamaica to be registered, to have a unique identifying number from birth. Some Seventy Million Dollars (\$70,000,000) has been provided in this year's budget to carry out the preliminary work for this initiative.

Legislation The strategic review lists eight (8) pieces of legislation which are critical to the improvement of the criminal justice system. These include:

- Legislation on DNA evidence

- Modernization of Citizenship and Immigration Laws

- Firearm Amendment (No. 2) Act

- Offences Against the Person (Amendment) Bill

- Parole Amendment Bill

- Bail (Amendment) Act

- Bail (Interim Provision for Specified Offences) Act
- Constabulary Force (Interim Provisions for Arrest and Detention) Bill
- The Constabulary Force Act and the Constables (Special) Act for the ISCF will be revised and streamlined to bring these bodies in line with modern policing practices.

I will work with the Ministry of Justice to allow for discussions as becomes necessary for the promulgation of these pieces of legislation.

Building the Alliance for Community Security

We are all agreed on the importance of the reform of the Jamaica Constabulary Force, technological support, improvements to the work environment and social interventions in the fight against crime. I feel very strongly, however, that the effective management of crime in Jamaica will also require a sustained effort for a new relationship with the community. Without the understanding of the importance of law and order in the process of development at the level of the community and the support of the people which takes the form of a dynamic partnership with the police, we will not achieve the level of success required. It is for these reasons that the success of any national initiative, for the enforcement

of the rule of law, must begin with the understanding and cooperation of citizens in their respective communities. Effective policing can only proceed on the basis of improved community relations. It is the community that the police depend on for information and intelligence. In speaking about crime in New York, US Attorney General Eric Holder states it would be very easy for us to say, ***"That's the job of the police."*** But policing is a shared responsibility. The Chief Minister of the British Virgin Islands has urged his people and I echo the thought today- ***"One cannot simply sit and watch the country being destroyed by criminal elements. If we are to fight this disease, then we must get involved. It is the duty of every citizen and to enroll in the fight against crime"***. I truly believe that residents in many of the critical communities across the island will be more enthusiastic about a partnership with the police when the state and civil society demonstrate a meaningful response to their material needs. This view is confirmed by our experience. Our experience with the positive impact of programmes like the Community Security Initiative (CSI), the Citizen Security and Justice Programme (CSJP), and the Peace Management Initiative (PMI), demonstrates the ongoing benefits to be gained if the police themselves are identified with the community. The Citizen Security and Justice Programme's initiatives have worked well. This program seeks to establish an integrated information system and provides for meaningful community

interventions for sustainable development and crime reduction. For fiscal year 2009/10 it will be further enhanced with the provision of Nine Hundred and Sixty Four Million Dollars (\$964,000,000) to prevent and reduce violence, strengthen crime management capabilities, and improve the delivery of judicial services. In addition, negotiations are far advanced with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for US Fifteen Million Dollars to help the extension of the programme. The positive response of the Fletchers Land and Matthews Lane communities to the timely initiative of civil society provides further evidence of the condition under which an alliance of the law abiding can be built in the most crime ridden communities. During my tenure, therefore, I will be attaching the greatest significance to the education of the public and the mobilisation of your support in the fight against crime. To this end, I will be speaking directly to my fellow Jamaicans. I will embark on a series of public consultations island wide, accompanied and supported on these visits by the Commissioner of Police, the Chief of Defence Staff and a technical team from my Ministry, led by the Permanent Secretary. I will be visiting all the communities where crime and violence has become a feature of their existence. These consultations will provide me with a unique opportunity for direct dialogue during which I will be able to listen to the views of the people, evaluate their recommendations and take on board those elements which

can be incorporated in our crime fighting strategies. The **Civic Centre Montego Bay** has been chosen as the venue for the first consultation which is scheduled for Thursday, May 28.

Conclusion

Fellow Jamaicans, the road ahead requires a deeper appreciation of the challenges we face from crime and the threat it poses to our survival as a nation. My duty as Minister of National Security is to ensure the quality, integrity and effectiveness in the output from the national security apparatus, and I am committed to this process because the future of Jamaica depends on it. However, I can only be successful in this effort if every law abiding citizen comes on board to play his or her part in the search for solutions and to improve the effectiveness of law enforcement God Bless you all. God Bless Jamaica.