**Independence Message 2019**

 **From The Governor-General**

**His Excellency**

 **The Most Hon. Sir Patrick Allen, ON, GCMG, CD, K.St.J**

My fellow Jamaicans, I greet you warmly as we celebrate the 57th Anniversary of our Independence.

This is a time when we reflect and give thanks for:

* Love
* Liberty
* Freedom
* and Nationhood.

The theme of our Independence celebrations this year, **“*One Nation, One Peopl*e”** encapsulates the message thatin spite of our differences, we must be united in our mission to build a peaceful and prosperous nation.

The world around us is characterized by divisiveness, turmoil, and uncertainties. There are threats to the physical environment, growing intolerance of differences, related to ideology, ethnicity or culture. We are often disturbed and numbed by the flagrant disrespect for human life.

However, against these realities, we must remind ourselves that most Jamaicans represent the best of our wholesome traditions and values. Our citizens have benefited from a level of social responsibility without which our achievements would not have been possible. Our development and processes will, therefore, depend on how we build social cohesion and national unity.

Jamaica experienced varying fortunes during the past year.

There was cautious optimism about the improvement in the economy, the increasing employment rate, and the construction of the impressive road network.

However, the inability to find a permanent solution to crime and violence, the many road fatalities, and the spectre of human trafficking, have threatened to overshadow the gains we have made. We, therefore, must renew our efforts to successfully overcome these challenges and maintain our vigilance in seeking success.

I urge all Jamaicans to return to the values we know well, such as:

* Respect
* Honesty
* Integrity
* and patriotism

So that our country can flourish, and celebrate many and more prosperous years of Independence.

At this special time, I urge you to take pleasure in the freedom preserved in our Constitution, and God’s blessings of freedom in thought and mind. Let us value and respect each other and our country.

Let us pledge to give back to society and help those who are less fortunate than we are.

As we approach our fifty-eighth year as a nation, I encourage each one of us to reflect on the maturityof a country which is on the move and resolve to chart our destiny with faith and courage.

As **“*Our Freedom Song”***says:

***“We are proud Jamaicans***

***And our past we can’t forget***

***For we know the strength***

***Which carried us through***

***Lives deep within us yet.”***

God bless you, and God bless “*Jamaica, land we love.”*

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