



Ministry of National Security

# SECTORAL PRESENTATION 2024



## CITIZEN SECURITY 'TRANSFORMATION FOR A SAFE STATE'

Presented by:  
The Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, CD, MP  
Deputy Prime Minister &  
Minister of National Security

Tuesday, May 14, 2024





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**2024 SECTORAL PRESENTATION**



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Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security

Theme:  
***CITIZEN SECURITY***  
**'Transformation for a Safe State'**

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**M**adam Speaker, it is my privilege to present my 7th Sectoral presentation on National Security. I want to acknowledge and express my appreciation to the Honourable Prime Minister for his continued trust and confidence. I also want to acknowledge my esteemed Cabinet colleagues, with whom I have had the privilege of working as a team. My appreciation extends to the members of both sides of this House, but I must give special mention to the Class of 2020 on this side. Our relationship is very special, as I had the privilege of recruiting many of them. Despite being elected in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, they have demonstrated remarkable resilience and unity throughout these difficult times.

I wish to acknowledge and thank my Minister of State, the Honourable Juliet Cuthbert-Flynn, my Permanent Secretary, Ambassador Alison Stone Roofe, the chief technical directors, and all the members of staff of the Ministry of National Security (MNS), as well as the heads of agencies, which make up this complex ministry that is responsible for public order, public safety and the general security of our country.

Of course, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the great constituency of North West St. James, for electing me for the fifth consecutive term, marking a historic achievement as the first Member of Parliament in this constituency to achieve such a milestone. I am indebted to my dedicated team of councillors, led by Senator Charles Sinclair and supported by Mr. Joshua Cummings, an elder in his church, alongside Mr. Damion Brown and the recently elected Mrs. Donyja Allen-Thompson, the sole female councillor in the St. James Municipal Corporation. My gratitude extends to my management team, supervisors, workers, volunteers, and the many supporters, including those from the various community organisations, who continue to offer unwavering moral and political support. Your enduring loyalty and strength are deeply appreciated.

Last, but by no means least, I must express my deepest gratitude to my family. They not only provide moral support, but also bear the brunt of the cynicism and face the subtle and not-so-subtle sleight of hand that sometimes causes life-long bruises, as a result of my involvement in public service. I am thankful for their love, unwavering loyalty, and steadfast support, which allow me to continue in this most important service to our country, despite the continued challenges.

## **INTRODUCTION**

**O**ver the past two decades, the country has experienced a persistently high level of criminal violence, except for a few periods with intermittent reductions following the imposition of States of Public Emergency. The Ministry of National Security has the awesome responsibility of ensuring crime reduction, public safety and public order. This mandate is compounded by the great sense of individualism and freedom that exist within the society, without the associated sense of responsibility to the nation state. This, if left unchecked, can fuel an escalating level of disorder.



Moreover, our strategic location in the Caribbean, combined with our inherent entrepreneurial and creative spirit, makes the country a prime location for sophisticated transnational criminal activities.

As a Government, we knew we had to change tack to effect real change and transformation. We knew it would have been costly, both financially and politically, but with the unwavering support of this Honourable Prime Minister, we set the course and we are now seeing the results, as I will highlight today. Our journey was based on three (3) strategic policy directions, namely:

1. Transforming and strengthening our security agencies, in particular, the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), our principal law enforcement agency;
2. Transformative investment in socially challenged communities, in a holistic manner; and
3. Ensuring an effective and relevant legislative framework in which to operate;

## **STRENGTHENING OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY**

**M**adam Speaker, the strengthening of the JCF, involves a holistic transformation programme, which is currently in full gear and proceeding at a good steady pace. The programme encompasses a range of initiatives focusing on the people, operational efficiency, and the delivery of high-quality policing services to the public. It is to be noted that the investment programme was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.



### **PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT**

**Madam Speaker,** a critical area of the programme is the improvement to the physical infrastructure of the Force, which has been abandoned or neglected over the last 50 years. This initiative is not only providing a conducive zone of work for effective law enforcement, but it also serves as a significant morale booster to the officers, knowing that they can go to work in functionally appropriate spaces.

We set about the process in a very structured and systematic way. As a result, the Government's initiative, **"Project ROC (Rebuild, Overhaul, and**





**Construct)**” was developed. This is geared at providing modern, citizen-friendly facilities for both the police officers and the citizens they serve. **Madam Speaker**, for the first time in our history, we are building new police facilities with embedded features, designed specifically for the operations of law enforcement officers.

We have developed blueprints for police stations, where all new constructions adhere to standardized features based on their size and service demands; essentially their professional requirements.



In a bid to expedite the process, the Government not only engaged the Consolidated Fund, but collaborated with the National Housing Trust (NHT) and the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF) for additional capital expenditure. The NHT focused on areas where they have built homes, since security is crucial to the communities, while JSIF directed its assistance to bringing opportunities to areas that have particular challenges, in keeping with its own mandate. Madam Speaker, this reflects the high priority this Government places on achieving public safety for its citizens.

Under **“Project ROC”**, we can report that to date:

- We have fourteen (14) new and fully rehabilitated police stations, with the requisite design features, namely: **Shady Grove, Port Antonio, Buff Bay, Olympic Gardens, Mount Salem, Spring Hill, Franklyn Town, Adelphi, Lionel Town, Four Paths, Denham Town, Moneague, Bog Walk, and Hopewell;**
- Five (5) new stations are currently under construction, namely: **Frome, Little London, Stony Hill, Anchovy, and Lacovia.**
- Three (3) major construction projects are on track—the **Westmoreland Divisional Headquarters**, for which we broke ground; the **St. Catherine North Divisional Headquarter**, for which we are about to break ground any time now; and of course the **Specialised Operations West facility in Montego Bay**, representing a combined investment of **J\$15 billion.**





## OPT 2 3D VIEW EAST



- Five (5) new stations are now going through the public investment appraisal phase, namely: **Amity Hall and Granville** in St. James, **Bull Bay** in St. Andrew, **Cave Valley** in St. Ann, and **Dias** in Hanover. They are all slated for construction and some are likely to begin before the end of this financial year.
- All other police facilities have undergone significant levels of repair and renovation in order to ensure that they are in a functional state for the occupants. In addition, a number of our stations are undergoing major rehabilitation in order to accommodate the full digitisation programme of the Force.

**Madam Speaker**, the public can say that they are witnessing tangible efforts by their Government to truly professionalise the police Force and to provide them with the infrastructure befitting of their professional status.

### TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

The area that generated most interest is that of technological transformation. **Madam Speaker**, globally, policing has seen digitisation and the adoption of new technologies playing a crucial role in improving efficiency and performance. In this regard, the Jamaican police are ahead of the curve. As we seek to strengthen the capacity of the police Force, the use of technology as a Force multiplier is a vital component.





In the last five years, the JCF has executed several significant technological changes and projects, starting with:

- The establishment of the **Technology Branch**, headed by an Assistant Commissioner of Police, to manage the entire technological transformation within the Force, working in collaboration with the Ministry, which leads on large projects;

**The build out of the communication infrastructure, which includes:**

- The upgrade and expansion of the P25 Radio Communication Network to ensure island-wide radio coverage;
- The upgrade and expansion of the JCF Microwave Network; and
- The roll out of network connectivity across all police facilities using the JCF Microwave Network, Government Broadband Network (GovNet), satellite connectivity and other modalities as required, ensuring total connectivity.

**Madam Speaker**, efficient communication in real time at anytime, anywhere in the island, is maybe the most far-reaching change we are establishing in the JCF. The digitisation and automation of the Force's business processes will, of course, leverage the foundation laid with the effective communication infrastructure. We now have:

- The replacement of police books and diaries (of which there are about nineteen) by the Station Records Management and Case Management Systems;
- The issuing of traffic tickets using handheld electronic ticketing devices;
- Vehicle tracking and monitoring using the Amber Connect Fleet Management System, which is primarily on the new vehicles;
- The procurement of an Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERPS) to support asset management, requisitioning and budgeting;
- The presence of the Smart Check application in the vehicles and on mobile devices to allow officers in the field to access critical information, in real time, to support their work;
- Police emergency dispatch using the upgraded Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) System;
- Biometric data capture using the upgraded Multimodal Biometric Identification System (MBIS);





- The capture of field confrontations and interactions using body-worn cameras. To date we have deployed 568 cameras in some critical sections of the Force.
- Expansion of CCTV surveillance under the JamaicaEye Programme, which currently has over **900** cameras integrated across the island. We will be installing another **550** cameras this year, with funding coming from both the Consolidated Fund and our partners. The goal is to have approximately **3,000** additional cameras installed over the next three (3) financial years.

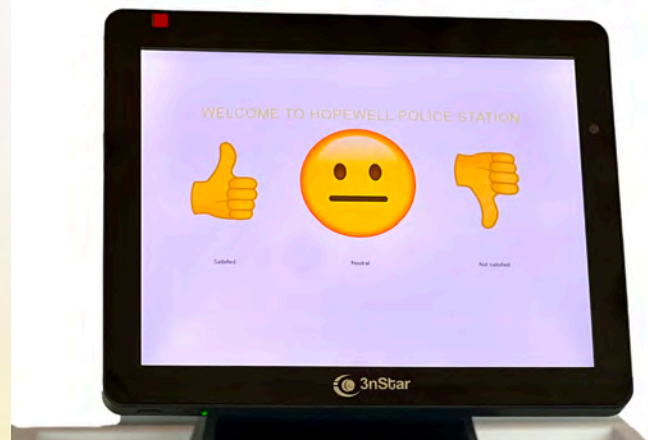


**Madam Speaker**, when you visit our small, newly opened station in Hopewell, Hanover, you will see the comprehensive range of technological tools that is added in a police station and you will understand the impact of this efficiency on the image of our police Force.

Good management entails the establishment of standards that can be easily monitored and evaluated in order to ensure that service quality and gains made do not deteriorate over time.

### QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND STANDARDS

Another area is quality management and standards. **Madam Speaker**, this Government does not view the transformation of the Police Force as an end in itself, but more as a means of enhancing the quality of service delivered to the public.





In a bid to ensure the consistency and sustainability of its services, the JCF, for the first time in its history, pursued and achieved the **ISO 9001 Quality Management** certification back in March of 2022.

At present, the scope of the certification programme involves fourteen (14) sites. However, going forward, we intend to:

- Expand the scope to twenty (21) sites by June of this year (2024), with the onboarding of seven (7) new core sites;
- Establish the Audit and Inspection Branch within the Inspectorate and Professional Standards Bureau (IPROB) to strengthen the internal auditing capabilities and ensure that we maintain our certification; and
- Gradually expand the scope to cover all head stations in the geographic divisions, in the first phase, and ultimately build out to all 186 police stations.

In order to ensure that the transformation process took place within the Force, in a timely and efficient manner, we had to make some organisational changes.

## **ORGANISATIONAL REDESIGN AND RESTRUCTURING**

**Madam Speaker**, in terms of organisational redesign and restructuring, several changes were made to achieve greater operational efficiency and performance in the JCF. These include:

- Establishment of the **Force Development and Logistics** Portfolio to drive planning and help direct the entire transformation process;
- Establishment of the **Specialised Operations** formation (a replacement for Mobile Reserve) to execute high-risk police operations;
- Establishment of the **Public Safety and Traffic Enforcement Branch (PSTEB)** to improve public order and traffic management;





- Establishment of the **Welfare Department**, which will be further developed and decentralised;
- Refocusing of the **Community Safety and Security Branch (CSSB)** to play a more critical role in violence interruption and the maintenance of safe communities;
- The build out of Quick Response teams across the island;
- Revamping of the **Legal Affairs Department**, not just with police officers, but with a cadre of twenty (20) experienced civilian lawyers to assist in the development of cases; and
- Establishment of the **Beat Officer Patrol Division (BOPD)** within PSTEB, focusing on urban centres.

## IMPROVED POLICE MOBILITY

Police mobility, like communication, is crucial for efficiency. **Madam Speaker**, mobility contributes to the agility and effectiveness of the police. They must have adequate mobility to be present and visible on our roadways, to quickly and effectively respond to citizens' calls and critical incidents, and for managing public order.



**Madam Speaker**, this Government has invested significantly in vehicles for the police. Between FY 2016/17 and 2023/24, we procured **1,437** vehicles, which include SUVs, cars, pick-ups, buses and motorcycles at a cost of approximately **J\$4.6 billion**.





And finally, **Madam Speaker**, we look at the human resource development, which is, of course, key to ensuring that we can guarantee public safety and protect our citizens.

### HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

**Madam Speaker**, the human resource is critical to the execution of the operations of the police. I will now identify some of the most noteworthy achievements in this area:

- For the first time in recent history, the strength of the police Force has been brought up to almost full establishment level. We will consolidate and look to even expand if necessary;
- Staff welfare has been institutionalised within the Force through established internal structures, for the first time;
- The JCF now boasts a transparent, merit-based promotional system, incorporating examinations, developmental courses, and accelerated programmes. And now, we are looking at expanding the Officer Corps from about 2.5 to 3.5 percent of the Force, which will have the hierarchical effect of increasing the number of sub-officers required to supervise the thousands of young officers we have recruited.





- We work with the Caribbean Military Academy to deliver the **Initial Officer Training Programme**, which aims to prepare young officers to fill leadership roles at the basic officer level;
- The **Command Course**, at the National Police College of Jamaica (NPCJ) for senior officers, has been revamped into a three-semester (39 weeks) programme, moving from ten (10) weeks;
- We are collaborating with the Delaware State University in the USA for graduate-level training;
- For the first time in its history, the NPCJ is on a path to acquire NCTVET-certification for all its training programmes, covering entry level, specialised areas, and supervisory management;
- The School of Motor Vehicle Driving at the NPCJ is now an Accredited Training Organisation (ATO) offering NCTVET-accredited training in commercial driving, at all levels;
- Importantly, as a Government, we have provided the best compensation package for our police officers in the history of this country. We have sought to bring police officers, at least, to a competitive level in our society. Today, they are in a much better position than before, with a good base from which to have future negotiations, since police officers are now placed in their own sector/category – protective services. Indeed, the major gain, from all of this, lies in the enhancement of their pension benefits. Police officers can now retire with some semblance of financial security, which was previously unattainable due to the fact that most of their compensation was tied up in allowances. Security improves public safety and provides a strong foundation for economic development and prosperity. Our police officers can be assured that their work is not only protective services, but it strengthens the economic foundation of the country, contributing towards their own welfare and the welfare of all Jamaicans.
- We have added **1,105** permanent civilian posts to the JCF, which provide tenure and improved benefits to some of the most vulnerable groups. Madam Speaker, this reflects a Government that cares for the people!

On the recent occasion of selecting a Commissioner of Police, the Police Service Commission (PSC) interviewed the four (4) Deputy Commissioners, who were all found to be very capable of holding that office. However, with the continued evolution of the Force, its expanded size and increasing use of technology, change management skills were deemed very critical going forward. Consequently, the PSC found in Dr. Kevin Blake, the right person at this time. His experience in the police Force, which includes, intelligence, logistics, policy, research and geographic policing, makes him a highly qualified individual. In fact, Dr. Blake's intellectual acuity makes him a chief executive officer in any company; with a first degree in Computer Science and Mathematics, masters in Computer-Based Management Information System, and a Ph.D. in Sustainable Development. These proficiencies and skills are critical to the successful administration of a large organisation that operates in a dynamic environment.



**Madam Speaker**, we are, indeed, blessed to have someone of the caliber of Dr. Blake, who may be the most qualified chief of police in the entire region. **Truly a Jamaican success story!**



**Madam Speaker**, the smooth and seamless transition, from Major General Antony Anderson to Dr. Blake, is testament to the level of human resource development that has taken place within the organisation. There will be some hurdles along the way, but I am confident that Dr. Blake possesses the capabilities to overcome them and resolve any issues that arise. We maintain regular communication, often exploring the current and emerging trends that we observe; however, I do not interfere in operational matters, but will continue the programme of investment to ensure that we take the Force to where it should be in the 21st century.

**Madam Speaker**, I want to express my deep appreciation to Major General Anderson, who over the past six (6) years initiated this broad range of changes and helped to ensure that we could take the Force to this level.

There is no doubt that the elevation of a serving member to the highest office will impact positively on the morale of the Force, since any bright, young officer can now aspire to reach the highest level within the Force.



## ***Territorial Integrity and Security***

**M**adam Speaker, territorial integrity and security are critical elements of our law enforcement and defence apparatus. It focuses primarily on the prevention of transnational criminal activities and the breach of persons through our borders. Several entities come together to ensure the security and control of the country's borders. These include the **JDF Coast Guard**, the **JCF Marine Police**, the **Jamaica Customs Agency (JCA)**, and the **Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICA)**. It is worth noting that the head of the JCA is now a member of the **National Security Council (NSC)**.

**Madam Speaker**, given the vital role tourism plays in our economy, the Government's policy underscores the necessity of maintaining a delicate balance between border security and facilitating travel. Over the years, substantial investments have been made by the Government in enhancing border security. These investments encompass:



- A coastal radar system to monitor our coastline effectively;
- The acquisition of offshore patrol vessels and a maritime patrol aircraft; and
- The use of technological solutions to manage and regulate security and movements at our ports of entry, in particular the airports, where the visible change is now clear to all. We have not only seen the physical expansion of our busiest airport, but now going through the halls on any busy day, is a far different experience from what existed previously.

**Madam Speaker,** the **Immigration Restriction (Commonwealth Citizen) Act and the Aliens Act** are currently being updated to harmonise and modernise the legal framework to effectively address current border security and control mechanisms. It will strengthen anti-terrorism measures and improve the activities of PICA with greater support for the use of technology.

The Visa Policy will be tabled in the House today demonstrating even further our commitment to border control and greater efficiency in our ports.

## ***Law Enforcement Collaboration and Cooperation***

**M**adam Speaker, for Jamaica's law enforcement capacity to be strong, we must have effective coordination among our local agencies and strong cooperation with our international and regional partners. Bilateral cooperation has remained a key priority of this Government in addressing transnational criminal activities. The areas of collaboration include training, intelligence and information sharing, and joint operations, which are established in legal frameworks such as memorandums of understanding (MOUs).

**Madam Speaker,** all our critical security partners, which comprise the 'ABC' countries – 'America, Britain, and Canada, have agencies working with their local counterparts in Jamaica to combat transnational organised crime. We also have police officers as security attachés based in all our Jamaican missions in the USA as well as liaison officers at the NYPD Intelligence Bureau and CARICOM Crime Gun Intelligence Unit at IMPACS in Trinidad and Tobago.

**Madam Speaker,** it is crucial that the citizens feel the benefit of the change and this transmits not only to public safety and good order, but to other services critical to the welfare of our citizens.



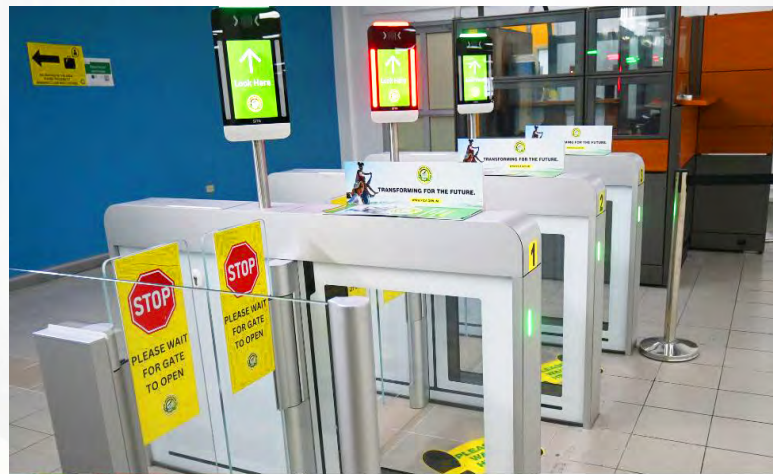


## Efficiency in Delivering Government Services

**It is the policy of this Government that services delivered by state agencies should meet minimum quality standards.** We believe that these services, which include those delivered by our various security agencies, must be delivered in an efficient and citizen-centred manner that affirms the rights and dignity of customers.

**Madam Speaker,** as we enhance our law enforcement capabilities with digitalisation and the integration of cutting-edge technologies, we have significantly addressed several inefficiencies and pain points in Government service delivery. Among the notable improvements are:

- Implementation of an online application system for police certificates at the Criminal Records Office (CRO) to eliminate long lines at the respective offices;
- Implementation of online passport issuance and renewal application systems at PICA;
- The issuing of electronic or e-passports to the public;
- The implementation of electronic or e-gates and self-service immigration kiosks to allow for smoother passenger flow and the elimination of congestions in the halls of the two major international airports, while ensuring effective security screening;
- The implementation of an online tracking system for firearm applications submitted to the **Firearms Licensing Authority (FLA)**;
- Implementation of an online process for the renewal of **Private Security Registration Authority (PSRA)** registration card/licence for security guards and companies;





- The introduction of electronic ticketing with the new Ticketing System, significantly reducing the time it takes for the police to issue a traffic ticket to a motorist and far more credible and effective in impacting behaviour;



- The anticipated opening of the brand-new state-of-the-art Forensic Pathology Autopsy Suite will significantly reduce the wait time for post-mortem examinations. This will essentially mean a total renewal of the **Institute of Forensic Science and Legal Medicine (IFSLM)**, which is crucial to the successful prosecution of the various criminal cases, through its powerful databases, which store forensics and ballistics information.

**Madam Speaker,** our commitment to bolstering law enforcement capacity has been strong and continues unabated. We are mindful that the full return on investment will only be realised upon the completion of all our initiatives. Nevertheless, we are witnessing good signs that our investments are steadily generating positive outcomes.

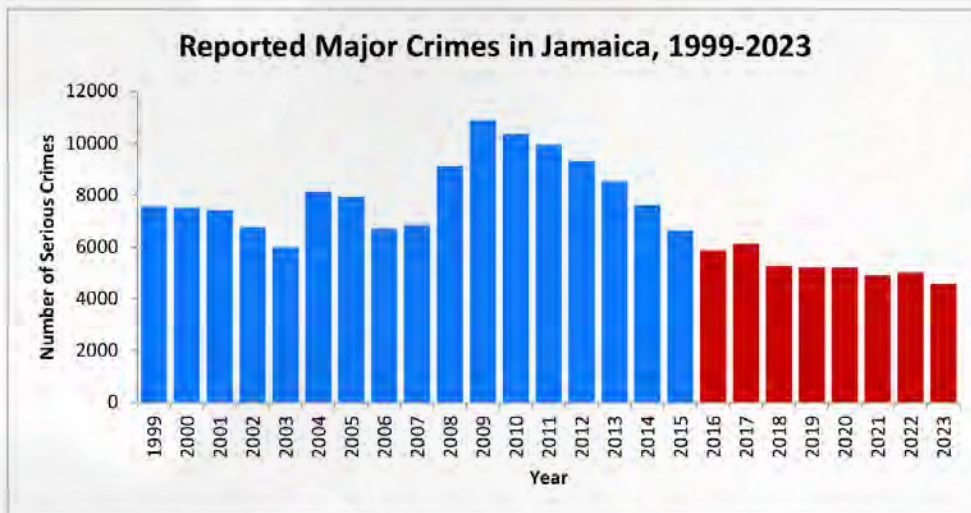
Today, the JCF stands as one of the most advanced police forces, and the IFSLM is recognised as one of the finest institutions of its kind in the Western Hemisphere.





## Steady Decline in Crime

**M**adam Speaker, not only do the police look better, but they are performing better. They have, indeed, become the embodiment of true professionals under our policies and programmes. Major crimes have been on a consistent decline, with the past eight (8) years recording some of the lowest counts in recent history. In fact, last year (**2023**), major crimes recorded its lowest level in 25 years.



It is worth noting that as of November last year, when we brought the Force to almost full establishment numbers and were able to bring the mobility to a more acceptable level, we are seeing a slow, but steady decline in severe violence. In fact, for the 6-month period, **November 2023 to April 2024**, we have seen a **24** percent decline in Murder, when compared with the preceding 6-month period.



Gang wars, which are predominantly based on conflicts over turf, have been significantly reduced across the island. The police's assessment indicates that the number of gangs across the country has been considerably reduced and they are now smaller and less organised. Several large gangs have been disrupted, a number of gang trials are pending and the police have picked up several contract



killing syndicates. Nevertheless, the homicide rate is still unacceptably high. Killings are, by and large, contract killings as a result of smaller disorganised gangs killing each other, as well as interpersonal conflicts between individuals in the criminal underworld.

These are mainly carried out by drive-by shootings, as the police are better equipped to respond and therefore the criminals now seek to leave the scenes as quickly as possible after perpetrating their acts of violence. Nonetheless, this year, Murder is trending on a **15 percent decline**, following on an 8 percent reduction for last year. We expect to maintain this downward trend going forward.

**Madam Speaker, I will pause to note that if we had the full use of the strong and effective legislative tool, that is the state of public emergency, as we were building the capacity of the Force, we would have saved hundreds of lives.** That is a matter clearly impatient of debate. We note the failure, of those on the other side, to operate responsibly and allow the police to function most effectively to save Jamaican lives. Nevertheless, we will persist with our investments and policies, and we are confident that with the required supporting legislation, we can look towards continued improvement in safety and security in our communities.

**Madam Speaker,** this Administration has shown consistency and commitment. We were willing to take the political risk and we have done so. We said from day one that if we strengthen the Police Force, provide the supporting legislation and give the police the tools to fight the crime, as we carry out the social investment, then these efforts would converge, where we begin to get sustainable reductions in criminal violence. We are approaching that point. That was our original statement made six years ago, and it is now coming together. And in fact, it is being accepted internationally by many, that security and personal protection must accompany social transformation. The Police Force is stronger, more professional and we are making the transformative social investment in our most challenged communities.



**Madam Speaker,** we are not raising a flag of victory in policing, but it is essential to acknowledge the significant progress we have made. Much of the changes and investments are already progressing.



We have increased the size of the Force, improved communication and mobility, and we are in the process of completing the technological transformation. However, we have never adequately explained our social investment initiatives as a Government. It is important to clarify that the MNS is not a social service ministry; however, we have the responsibility of coordinating the Government's social investment programme in the vulnerable communities.

We are building out a system that will demonstrate sustainability and transformation that can be scaled up in other areas. In this role, it might be said that, I am acting in the dual roles assigned to me by the Prime Minister; that of Minister of National Security and the Deputy Prime Minister.

## **TRANSFORMING OUR COMMUNITIES**

**M**adam Speaker, in order to effect social, cultural and behavioural changes, we have to ensure sustainable social transformation. It, therefore, requires that institutions that serve the communities are resourced and coordinated. Vulnerable communities not only need changes in terms of roads, water supply, land titling, zinc fence removal and garbage collection, but they need the best social services from the ministries and agencies of Government, such as the Ministries of Labour and Social Security, Education, and Health, and the Social Development Commission (SDC). These entities need coordinated collaboration in order to ensure increased efficiency and that the resources reach those who are in need and not those who seek to take advantage of Government's inefficiencies.

Our review of previous efforts at social intervention shows that a significant amount of funds were spent on parallel staffing and consultancies. In fact, some of the flagship programmes saw approximately **70 percent** of their funding going in this direction. **Madam Speaker**, this new approach, unlike the old method that depended on projects, will ensure real transformation and sustainability. The object now is to strengthen and increase the efficiency of the institutions of Government that serve our challenged or volatile communities.





## IDENTIFYING VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

The Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) has an objective set of instruments to measure the volatility and vulnerability of any community. We will recall that as far back as the initiation of the **Community Renewal Programme (CRP)**, the **100** most vulnerable communities were identified across the island. **Madam Speaker**, this is an objective analysis of our most critical communities; there is no bias involved. Ongoing situational analyses allow for the periodic updating of this list, incorporating new communities and removing others as our programmes evolve.

We are now working in a number of these communities, with emphasis on the Zones of Special Operations (ZOSOs). To ensure effective coordination and collaboration among the various Government agencies, we need a strong governance structure. **Madam Speaker**, agencies of Government tend to work in silos, even when they share common objectives. As a result of this, the **Citizen Security Business Group (CSBG)** was established, on the instruction of the Honourable Prime Minister.

## EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT

The Citizen Security Business Group involves:

- The Financial Secretary;
- All Permanent Secretaries;
- The heads of all the relevant agencies such as the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), HEART/NSTA Trust, and the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ);
- The Chief of Defence Staff;
- The Commissioner of Police; and
- The Director General of the Major Organised Crime and Anti-Corruption Agency (MOCA).

The Group is supported by the Cabinet Office through the **Cabinet Secretary** and the **Office of the National Security Advisor (ONSA)**. **Madam Speaker, the CSBG is the nearest we will ever get to reflect a whole-of-Government operation in the history of this country.**

The CSBG meets on a quarterly basis to ensure that the programme of work to reach the communities is progressing. The Prime Minister is the titular head of the CSBG, but the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security is the functional chairman.



The **Citizen Security Plan** is the first such programme to be instituted, using this whole-of-Government approach, and involves the Government, the community and international partners.



**Madam Speaker,** I will now show how the programme operates, outline our achievements thus far, and discuss our ongoing efforts to advance the process of transformation within our communities.

### **EXECUTING THE CITIZEN SECURITY PLAN (CSP)**

In this comprehensive programme, some seventy (70) social parameters were identified, which were further condensed to seven (7) key indicators among the following areas:

- 1) Parental interface for training;
- 2) The training and certification of at-risk youth;
- 3) The creation of safe spaces;
- 4) The rehabilitation of police stations;
- 5) The establishment of shelters for victims of violence;
- 6) A governance framework; and
- 7) The tracking of corruption in justice and security agencies and departments.

We then laid out the targets for each area, with particular emphasis on the Zones of Special Operations (ZOSOs). However, aspects of it were national efforts, as the training of at-risk youth and parental engagement were considered too critical to be confined to the ZOSOs. The entire programme, which is geared towards a holistic approach, will be scaled up to other areas going forward.



In this initial phase, Madam Speaker, the targets were as follows:

- **400,000** parents;
- **58,000** at-risk youths over a three-year period;
- **75** safe spaces across the communities to improve parks, green areas, and walkways as well as to enhance security in schools;
- **74** police stations to be rehabilitated in line with the new standards established to make them user-friendly and provide quality service to communities; and
- **3** Government-run shelters for victims of violence.
- A review of the execution of the **CSP** shows that to date:
  - We successfully rehabilitated **59** police stations/facilities to include a number of specific added features; however, they were still apart of the overall **Project ROC** initiative;
  - **75** safe spaces were created;
  - **2** Government-run shelters for victims of violence are now open, with a third shelter scheduled for completion in November this year;
  - **Approximately 40,000** at-risk youths trained or certified across the island. With HEART training now free and trainees in receipt of lunch, a stipend to help with bus fares as well as enterprise assistance, it is likely that we will see an increase in training and certification.
- **CSBG** has met successfully 12 times;
- **Approximately 81,000** parents trained in parenting programmes. Parenting engagement proved challenging and demonstrated by virtue of the monitoring and evaluation that the concept we had in place was not workable. The Ministry of Education and Youth (MOEY) has taken steps to correct that, by rendering the National Parenting Support Commission (NPSC), a technical support and consultancy, while the Schools' Services Department mobilise the parents. Of note, is that the revision came about as a result of the successful monitoring and evaluation established under the Citizen Security Secretariat (CSS).
- The Jamaica National Crime Victimization Survey (JNCVS), which looks at the perception of corruption in the JCF and other institutions, is done every three years and one is currently being done.



## CONTINUOUS MONITORING AND EVALUATION

**Madam Speaker,** the Citizen Security Secretariat (CSS) carries out monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) on an ongoing basis. This ensures that we make timely adjustments and changes to our programmes, thereby assuring attainment of the targeted outcomes. This is what happened in the case of the parenting programme, mentioned earlier.

The CSP partners have indicated that the MEL framework is a key strength within the whole-of-Government structure, driving accountability, responsibility, and effective tracking of the activities in the programme. It is desirable to maintain this kind of framework in the execution of any social investment programme, going forward.

## RISK ASSESSMENT, CASE MANAGEMENT AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SERVICES

**Madam Speaker,** in executing the CSP, we crafted a number of tools and professional innovations to ensure effective implementation. Among them were risk assessment tools, which, notably, are now being adopted on a global level by our international partners, who work in the area of violence prevention. For example, **USAID Positive Pathways** has adopted our risk assessment and case management tools to implement their programmes.

**The Needs Assessment for Case Management and Psychosocial Services Report,** in 2021, and again in 2024, has indicated a great need for psychosocial services within the areas where we are currently focusing. The research, in fact, identified 10,000 individuals in need of these services and further review indicated that the institutions within the system had the capacity to serve less than 5,000. **Madam Speaker,** the best way to redirect these individuals is to start them with the required psychosocial services.

Emotional stress and antisocial behaviour will lead the individual into violent and criminal behaviour, if left unaddressed. The Majority (not all) of these young Jamaicans are to be found in the volatile communities. **Madam Speaker,** we need to find these individuals when they are still young. This is why the family is so critical in the process.

We, therefore, required a whole cohort of individuals with the necessary social work and psychosocial skillsets to help to divert these persons from a life of crime and dysfunctional behaviour. Hence, a number of individuals were trained and engaged, some of whom volunteer on a part-time basis. These skillsets are designed to be acquired by individual MDAs working in tandem and in concert with the MNS. This is in addition to existing providers in the various agencies of Government. The full profile of the human resource includes:





- **Twenty-two (22) Case Managers:** These are full-time professionals engaged through MNS, who conduct risk-to-violence assessments of individuals, develop treatment plans and direct persons to the various support services. **Their aim is to bridge the gap between needs and the available services.** The case managers are supported by Community Liaison Aides (CLAs) and Psychological First Aid responders, who will refer families and individuals with needs, to the case managers. **It is worth noting that our international partners are also examining the concept of case managers for adoption, as a critical part of community transformation.**
- **Sixty (60) Community Liaison Aides (CLAs):** These are community-based members, who are already employed, but volunteer their time to assist the case managers. They are trained to determine the social needs of households, using well-developed surveys.
- **Forty-six (46) Psychological First Aid (PFA) Responders:** This group consists of both full-time professionals and community volunteers, who are trained in psychosocial support to respond immediately to trauma situations. Their main task is to provide trauma support to victims and help to ward off any acts of reprisal. They are also equipped with the requisite skillsets to identify emotionally disturbed persons and refer them to the case managers, even before they commit acts of violence.





The Ministry of Health (MOH) will have the additional professional staff to accept the referrals. The research indicates that the western parishes have the most severe problem at this point in time and the first **Child and Adolescent Guidance and Therapeutic Wellness Centre** is being built in Montego Bay, St. James.

The Ministry of Health will provide the recurrent staff to manage the Centre and other related agencies will be accommodated. Going forward, we will examine how we can scale this kind of facility.

- **Ninety (90) Curfew Monitors:** These are community volunteers, who are trained in basic conflict mediation, twenty-nine (29) of which are gazetted by the Courts as certified mediators. Their responsibility is to identify the vulnerable young people in the communities, who are often subject to child abuse, human trafficking and sexual abuse.

**Madam Speaker,** we have embarked on a new and novel approach, based on the policy of this Government. The entire team of personnel indicated, is involved in efforts to steer and direct individuals away from violence. In a collaborative way, the team is working to resolve the social dysfunctions, maintain peace and offer opportunities. The activities of the team are proactive and designed to prevent individuals from becoming either victims or perpetrators of criminal violence. As we are executing within the framework of existing agencies, it will be sustainable and become the normal social service process.

The model of the case managers and the CLAs working in unison extends attention beyond the individual and focuses on the entire family. We are looking to improve and expand this model and all other aspects of the programme as required, across the island. It is important to recognise that the link between criminal violence and its contributing social factors has evolved. While poverty helps to create the environment, it is no longer the main driving force behind criminal violence. Madam Speaker, the reality is that the proliferation of advance-fee fraud, commonly known as lottery scamming, has given enormous power to some immature youngsters, who cannot handle such power. This is one of the main drivers of the targeted criminal violence that we are seeing and helps to explain why overall crime victimisation is still relatively low in the country, among the individuals not involved.





## GATEWAYS TO THE COMMUNITIES

**Madam Speaker,** CSP is an ongoing programme based on the policies of the Government. In addition to the things outlined above, we have now started an **Inter-Ministerial School Support Strategy (ISSS)**, working closely with the Ministry of Education and Youth. The **ISSS** is designed to engage the younger population and involves **34** primary and high schools located in or around the seven ZOSOs. We are targeting the families from these institutions and we have, within the Citizen Security Business Group, a sub-committee that involves four (4) critical sectors, namely: Security, Education, Health and Social Security that work closely together to reach the identified families.

The Ministry of National Security spearheads this committee, which is tasked to ensure that those who should be in the social safety net are identified and so engaged; whether it is PATH benefits, economic grants or civil registration.

Many of the services within the social safety net provide an effective cover for individuals in genuine need. However, the challenge is to ensure that only those persons access the services and not those who will seek to exploit the inefficiencies of the system.

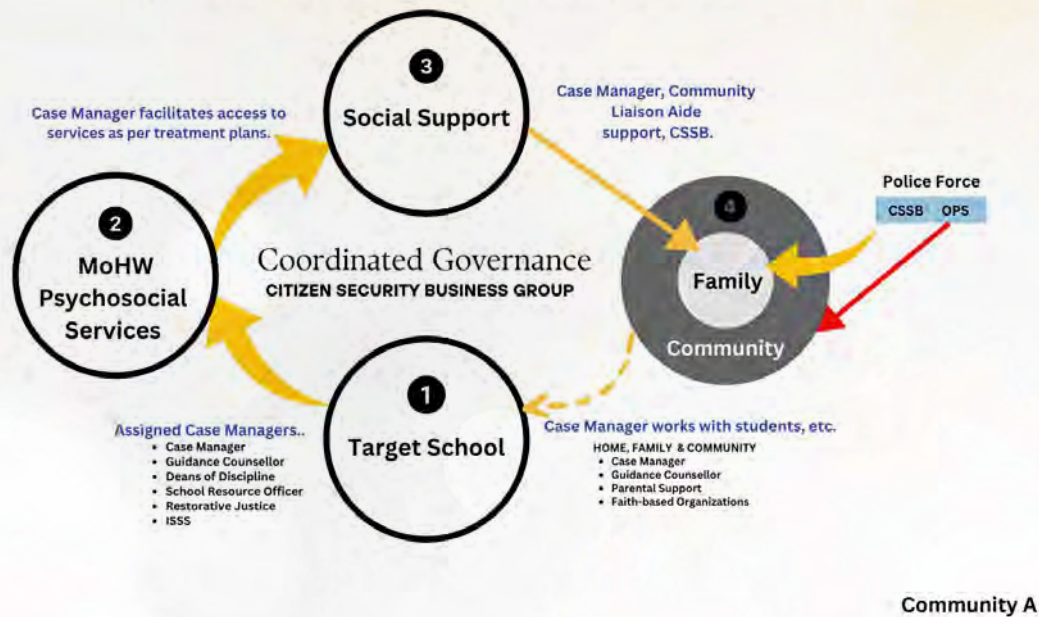
**Madam Speaker,** earlier programmes tended to deal with a narrow demographic of unattached youths, who had dropped out of secondary school. This approach proved to be unsustainable and ineffective. The current approach takes on a much broader perspective; by engaging with and entering through the schools, we are able to reach the vulnerable families in the community. Upon identifying a child in need, we move to the family and bring them into the social safety net to provide the transformation at the family level and ultimately at the community level.

So, for example, when we encounter a truant child or a child exhibiting troubling behaviour, we treat the child as well as address the needs of the entire family. This includes skills training for the unattached older siblings, economic support and training for the parents, and PATH and health benefits for the children. Madam Speaker, it is worth mentioning that even the funding agencies require short-term results, while we are looking at the medium to long term.

The schools, themselves, have specific initiatives that are supported by the various support programmes. One such initiative is the **Literacy Education Acceleration Programme (LEAP)**, which has proven quite dramatic in improving literacy. There are other programmes and support services, like counselling, which can operate at a lower level in almost all the schools. However, it is still important that the most challenged schools get the extra support.



## Virtuous Circle of Social Transformation



## IMPROVED DATA MANAGEMENT

**Madam Speaker,** within the framework of our programme, effective data management is paramount. The additional funding has been earmarked to ensure that the data and research components of the programme are properly developed. Our goal is to establish a real-time decision-making hub, equipped with comprehensive social data, enabling ongoing monitoring of key social parameters. This initiative will facilitate timely policy adjustments and guide our strategic direction. Essentially, we intend to create a **“Social C5 Centre”** where professionals can continuously assess the outcomes of our investment in the communities. This centre will incorporate the seven indicators mentioned earlier, along with the social parameters established by the PIOJ, regarding community vulnerability and volatility. The volatility parameters encompass crime, violence-related injuries, and gang activity, while the vulnerability parameters include poverty, squatting, teenage pregnancy, child abuse, police access, and literacy. Our overarching aim is to standardise the data across all the agencies involved to ensure that we can respond appropriately.

We are examining how we can make the data more reliable and credible to provide a basis to validate ongoing and new programmes. Disaggregated data at the community level is critical for swift and appropriate targeted response in our communities. Some initiatives we have used to bolster data collection and data management within key Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) include:

- Data Liaisons were engaged to provide data in order to support the respective MDAs;
- Data management consultations were held with the JCF’s Statistical Information Monitoring Unit (SIMU) for data disaggregation support;
- Three (3) Community Data Sharing Committees were established and remain active in West Kingston, St. James and Westmoreland;



- Data Interns were assigned to schools, in conjunction with the MOEY, to collect selected data aligned to the indicators of the Inter-Ministerial School Support Strategy;
- Seven (7) Violence Audits with community scorecards (case studies) were commissioned by the Crime Prevention and Community Safety Branch of the MNS for the communities of, Whitfield Town, Trench Town, Denham Town, Olympic Gardens, Barrett Town/Spot Valley, Grange Hill, and Mountain View. There is an immediacy to get these audits done at this time, while the **National Violence Prevention Commission** continues its work, on a national scale.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

**Madam Speaker**, as demonstrated above, transformation depends on a whole-of-Government approach as well as the inclusion of community leadership. We, therefore, welcome meaningful partnerships and collaboration, whether they come from our international partners, the private sector, or non-Governmental organisations (NGOs). In our efforts, we collaborate closely with NGOs such as **Project STAR** and the **Multi-Care Youth Foundation**. These organizations, however, operate within the Government's established policy framework, which emphasises collaboration, cooperation, and sustainability, as opposed to independent silos. Our focus is on fostering integrated efforts rather than isolated activities. It is imperative that projects complement one another in order to enhance efficiency. However, sustainability must come through the Government institutions that serve the communities. It is the Government institutions that must be strengthened to deliver the social services in the volatile communities. At the end of the day, we must have better schools, better health clinics, and services in psychosocial counselling and parenting that work effectively.

I wish to convey to the country that we are doing the work and we are providing a foundation that can be expanded into various communities.





## TRANSFORMING THE CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

**Madam Speaker,** the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders stand as vital pillars in crime prevention and community transformation. The tabling of the **National Correctional Services Policy (NCSP)** Green Paper in the Houses of Parliament in January this year (2024) marked a pivotal moment in our nation's approach to rehabilitation and reintegration in our Correctional System. This comprehensive blueprint signifies our intent to transform the Correctional Services, by shifting away from punitive measures towards a more humane, rehabilitative ethos.

The NCSP embodies a commitment to investing in tangible action and meaningful transformation across all aspects of our Correctional Services. At its core, the NCSP prioritises the welfare and well-being of all involved, from offenders to staff and the wider community. Through improved management, enhanced human resource development and better working and living conditions, the Government intends to create a culture of rehabilitation and transformation within the Correctional Services. By investing in new and upgraded facilities, focusing on health and wellness and expanding rehabilitation programmes, we will aggressively target the sustained reduction of the recidivism rate and foster successful social reintegration outcomes.

Some of the transformative initiatives we will be embarking on when we move to implement the NCSP include:

- Mandatory participation by offenders in approved rehabilitation programmes;
- Provision of family engagement and psychosocial services to enhance responsiveness to rehabilitation and treatment programmes;
- Transformation of the existing educational system within the Correctional Services, by creating a Corrections Education Branch within DCS, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Youth;
- Development of psychosocial, welfare and other assistance programmes for Correctional staff;
- Fostering greater and more partnerships with corporate Jamaica through the We Transform Youth Empowerment Programme, to upskill child and youth offenders, to increase their employability;
- Transformation of how we reintegrate our offender clients, by establishing a multi-agency Reintegration Committee, tasked with coordinating the management of the agencies critical to the successful reintegration of released offenders;





- A comprehensive review of the Corrections Act and Rules, the Parole Act and Rules and the Probation of Offenders Act;
- Advance the process which will see the construction of a new purpose-built, correctional centre and bring existing facilities to acceptable international standards. Indeed, some of our existing facilities should have been closed long ago.
- Establishment of National Standards for Corrections that will outline the guiding principles for Corrections in Jamaica.



We welcome the timely appointment of Commissioner of Corrections, Brigadier (Ret'd) Radgh Mason, OD, under whose leadership we are confident the transformation that we seek will take place, as he builds on the groundwork put in place by previous Commissioner Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Gary Rowe.

## **RELEVANT LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

**M**adam Speaker, our third strategic leg is ensuring that we have a robust and relevant legislative framework in which law enforcement can operate effectively. During our term in office, we have developed and amended several pieces of legislation. Those which we have developed include:

- The Law Reform (Zones of Special Operations) (Special Security and Community Development Measures) Act, 2017 (“ZOSO Act”);
- The Major Organised Crime and Anti-Corruption Agency (MOCA) Act, 2018 and related Regulations; and
- The Firearms (Prohibition, Restriction and Regulation) Act, 2022; Meanwhile, amendments were made to the following:
- The Proceeds of Crime (Amendment) Act, 2019;
- The Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering Prevention) (Amendment) Regulations, 2019;
- The Trafficking in Persons (Prevention, Suppression and Punishment) (Amendment) Act, 2021;
- The Criminal Justice (Suppression of Criminal Organizations) (Amendment) Act, 2021 (**“Anti-Gang Amendment Act”**);



- The Corrections (Amendment) Act, 2021; and
- The Law Reform (Zones of Special Operations) (Special Security and Community Development Measures) (Amendment) Act, 2023 (**“ZOSO Amendment Act”**).

**Madam Speaker,** today we are laying in the House, the Visa Policy, which aims to strengthen the country’s border management capabilities. This is the second policy we are tabling in the last five months, having laid the **National Correctional Services Policy (NCSP)** in January of this year, which was mentioned before. Madam Speaker, we continue to amend various pieces of legislation in order to further strengthen our law enforcement framework, as we examine and interrogate old policies that we need to review and renew.

## CONCLUSION

**M**adam Speaker, in closing, I want to re-emphasise that we are executing our policies in a manner that is generating success and assures sustainability. We have made the investments and we are seeing the results. We are completing these investments, even though some may go in the third term. We have demonstrated that strong security provides the foundation for effective social investment and transformation. I wish to emphasise that the broad cross-section of social investments in a whole-of-Government approach, coupled with creativity and innovation will lead to the social stability that we all desire.

**Madam Speaker,** I must address the members on that side and highlight that even their own people have evolved with the times, while they remain entrenched in outdated thinking and philosophy. Only recently an article written by Jorge Castañeda, a former member of the communist party in Mexico, and Carlos Ominami of Chile and published in the Financial Gleaner (Jamaica Gleaner) on April 26, 2024, clearly asserts that **“security must be regarded as an essential component of social protection.”** They further affirm that **“tackling violence is essential, because it obstructs the exercise and enjoyment of all other rights.”** And hence you have to lock up the criminal terrorists!

To my fellow Jamaicans, let me remind you, this is a Government of transformation. This Government is setting the stage for great prosperity. Our critical policies are taking us on the right road.

**Security** protects!

**Education** transforms and empowers!

**Prosperity** abounds!

May God continue to bless Jamaica, and the Government of Andrew Michael Holness!



# NOTES



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