



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FOREIGN TRADE

2 Port Royal Street, Kingston

MEDIA RELEASE

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Celebrating Diaspora Day; The Start of the 10th Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference

Today 16th June, we celebrate Diaspora Day, as we do every year in recognition of the presence and valuable role of the Jamaican Diaspora, to national development. This year's observance takes on special significance, as Diaspora Day 2024 marks the start of the 10th Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference set for 16th to 19th June in Montego Bay. A Thanksgiving Church Service and Welcome Reception organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade are the featured events for the day and will set the tone for the Conference's staging.

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Senator the Honourable Kamina Johnson Smith in welcoming this history-making Conference, noted that **“this Conference is definitely not only about getting together; it is a celebration of the invaluable connections between our beloved Jamaica and our communities overseas; a celebration of the contributions our Diaspora makes to Jamaica's growth and development; and an opportunity to explore opportunities for their growth and wealth creation. We are excited to welcome our fellow Jamaicans home and to honour the impact they have both here and in their adopted countries”**.

Since 2004, the Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference has been a key platform for engaging with the Diaspora, fostering partnerships, and addressing shared goals. This year's Conference, themed **‘United for Jamaica's Transformation, Fostering Peace, Productivity and Youth Empowerment,’** is being held at the Montego Bay Convention Centre in St. James, as the first full in-person staging since the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Conference provides the principal vehicle for discussions on matters of interest to the Diaspora, to include peace and security, digitisation, trade, investment, health, education, constitutional reform and the creative industry among others. The event aims to build on the successes of previous conferences, including the Jamaica Diaspora Sustainability Symposium in 2021 and the 9th Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference in 2022.

On Tuesday June 18, Prime Minister Holness will deliver the Keynote Address at the Conference's Ceremonial Opening. The Governor-General's Diaspora Achievement Awards which we are pleased to once again host, will take place on Wednesday June 19. The Week of activities will conclude with the Diaspora Day of Service (June 20), for which exciting and beneficial projects have been organized to improve buildings and communities. Senator Johnson Smith and Minister Terrelonge will work with Diasporan teams in their acts of philanthropy.

Supported by the Government and with sponsorship from Legacy Partners such as VM Group, GraceKennedy Group, and Jamaica National Group, as well as other private sector entities, the 10th Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference is strategically designed to engage in a spirit of mutuality and to harness the power of the Jamaican Diaspora to support nation building. The Government of Jamaica remains committed to fostering deeper engagement by creating policies that remove obstacles, identify goals, map Diaspora locations and skills, and maintain effective communication channels. These initiatives are crucial for leveraging partnerships with the Diaspora as catalysts for national development, making Jamaica the ideal place of choice to live, work, raise families and do business.

Registration is still open for Jamaicans locally and in the Diaspora, who wish to attend. Visit www.mfaft.gov.jm to find out how!

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