



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FOREIGN TRADE

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Jamaica and Canada hold bilateral talks in Toronto

The two top diplomats for Jamaica and Canada have met for bilateral talks on the margins of the Women Foreign Ministers Meeting hosted by Global Affairs Canada, which began on Thursday (September 19). The opportunity allowed for Senator the Honourable Kamina Johnson Smith, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and the Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada to discuss a wide range of issues of mutual interest to both countries.

While underscoring the importance of the relations between Jamaica and Canada, the Ministers discussed opportunities to further advance the relations in areas such as trade and investment, security, immigration, concerns relating to international students, ease of travel between the two countries and labour mobility. The two Ministers also discussed developments relating to Haiti.

The bilateral talks were widened to allow the Ministers to engage with members of the Jamaican Diaspora community in Toronto, as well as other state actors during a ‘meet and greet’ round table discussion. The group comprised representatives from academia the private sector, faith-based organisations, diaspora organisations and other philanthropists.

Minister Johnson Smith also met with the Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of International Cooperation to discuss Canada’s ongoing support to Jamaica and other Caribbean countries in the post Beryl recovery efforts as well as the wider development support in the areas of Climate Resilience and Climate Funding. The two ministers also discussed possible collaboration in the areas of capacity building and training.

Senator Johnson Smith has expressed optimism at the end of the discussions, noting the synergies and mutual interests of both sides to further explore new opportunities for growth and collaboration.

“Our focus is on creating tangible opportunities, particularly by boosting trade and investment, and making mobility easier for both Jamaicans and Canadians. The Government remains committed to building on successful trade missions that have already fostered the formation of agreements in key sectors like film. By working together, we continue to unlock mutual benefits that contribute to sustainable growth and development for both nations”, Minister Johnson Smith explained.

While in Canada, Minister Johnson Smith also met with the wider Jamaican Diaspora Community as with the members of the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council and the Global Jamaica Diaspora Youth Council. At a town hall meeting hosted by Jamaica’s High Commissioner to Canada, Marsha Coore Lobban and Consul-General Mr. Kurt Davis, the Minister updated the community on the outcomes of the 10th Jamaica Biennial Diaspora Conference as well as on the achievements and developments that have taken place in Jamaica in recent years.

She also used the opportunity to recognise the invaluable contribution and support of the Jamaican Diaspora Community to the process of nation-building both in Canada and Jamaica. Several members of the Diaspora Community in Canada are recipients of National Honours and Awards from both countries and many have been appointed to senior positions in various spheres.

Johnson Smith was invited to Canada to Co-Chair a two-day meeting of Women Foreign Ministers from around the world, which focused on issues affecting women’s roles in political leadership and governance as well as the impact of disinformation. Following her meetings in Toronto, the Foreign Minister departed for New York, where she joined the delegation led by Prime Minister Andrew Holness to the 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), earlier today.