



**PERMANENT MISSION OF JAMAICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

STATEMENT BY

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AND CLIMATE CHANGE OF JAMAICA**

DURING THE

CLIMATE CHANGE SUMMIT 2014

New York

23rd September 2014

Co-Chairs,
Colleagues Ministers,
Distinguished Ladies & Gentlemen

I bring greetings from the people of Jamaica and our hope for a successful outcome of this Summit on Climate Change. I must express my deep appreciation and gratitude to you and your team for organizing this critically important and timely meeting.

The scientific consensus on climate change is unequivocal, and Jamaica recognises the existential threat that climate change poses. Jamaica's beaches, hotels, roadways, fisheries, two international airports and power generation systems are under threat of destruction from the effects of rising seas and stronger storms. One of our cays has already been submerged due to sea level rise.

The losses that we have already experienced and will continue to suffer if climate change is not mitigated are invaluable, and in many instances irreversible.

Our people, and indeed all peoples of the world ought to be given the chance to live, grow, develop and pursue happiness in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Co-Chairs,

Because this is an existential issue for Jamaica and many other small island developing states, Jamaica is placing on record its commitment to, and full support for the negotiation of a new Climate Change Treaty in Paris, in December of 2015. We recognise the complexity of the issue, but our deliberations must consider the climate consequences of continuing on the same emissions trajectory. Paris provides us with an unprecedented opportunity to conclude a robust agreement that obligates each country to mitigate GHG emissions, according to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Co-Chairs,

Jamaica understands this principle and has been playing its part in several ways to effectively respond to the effects of climate change.

In 2012 Jamaica became one of the first Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to establish a named Ministry with responsibility for Climate Change. This was in recognition of the threat that climate change poses; and also because we see the many connections between emissions mitigation and the sustainable development of our country.

Jamaica will continue to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as far as practicable.

We expect to more than double our renewable electricity generation capacity by 2016, and are on track to have 20% of our entire energy supply coming from renewable sources by 2030. Within this decade we will switch fuels and technologies in conventional power plants to replace more than half of our peak energy demand with cleaner, more efficient generators.

On the demand side, Jamaica will continue to invest in energy efficiency. We are currently implementing energy efficiency and conservation projects across the government, to improve lighting, building envelopes, and air conditioning in government buildings, hospitals, and in schools. And we are upgrading, among other things, the energy efficiency of water distribution systems in our urban areas. These are significant investments for a struggling economy like ours to make, but we make them boldly, because we are investing in our own future and the future of the planet.

Jamaica is integrating climate change considerations into all national planning and decision-making. Over the next few years, critical sectors will each develop sectorial action plans that will guide the mitigation and adaptation actions for each segment of the economy. My Ministry, which has responsibility for Climate Change, is coordinating collaborative efforts with internal and external partners. For example, in adapting agriculture to the expected drier climate, we are exploring the use of drought tolerant crop varieties, modernising agricultural techniques and making more efficient use of water resources. This will give our farming communities a fighting chance to survive future droughts.

Jamaica will continue to work with our international partners at the central and local government levels to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Co-Chairs,

These initiatives have become the foundation on which the country will further develop in a sustainable way. The Jamaican Government will continue to build resilience. We have had only a small role in creating the problem of climate change, but we are taking the necessary steps to build our capacity to weather the coming storms. However, like many other vulnerable small island developing states, we will need the continued support of the international community if our country is to survive and grow in a sustainable manner.

Ultimately, our motivation is the well-being of the most vulnerable and the creation of conditions which spur growth, greater prosperity and well-being. This must be the aim of every nation represented here today. We must negotiate, adopt and implement an agreement, with contributions from all Parties, that will close the emissions gap, keep global warming below 2 degrees Celsius, and provide finances to assist those countries that will require such support.

We urge all nations to make every effort to achieve this global goal. We must never lose sight of the collective responsibility to conserve, protect and preserve the planet and its inhabitants, and the patrimony which we must bequeath to future generations.

I thank you.