



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

**Remarks**

**by**

**Honourable Olivia Grange, CD, MP  
Minister of Culture, Gender,  
Entertainment and Sport**

**High-level Meeting on the 25th Anniversary of  
the Fourth World Conference on Women**

**United Nations, New York  
1 October 2020**

Mr. President,

Jamaica is proud to join the international community in commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

Since that landmark meeting in Beijing, we have seen progress across the world towards achieving gender equality.

In Jamaica, we have been working hard to create a society that values women and girls; and enables them to achieve their potential and contribute to nation building in any way they choose.

We are proud to say that by and large, ours is a country in which a young girl feels free to make her choices and to live as a liberated, confident woman. Whether she wants to be the Prime Minister, a Cabinet Minister, the Attorney General, the Chief Justice, the Director of Public Prosecutions, or the Public Defender — she can aspire towards any leadership position in our country. But more than that, she has seen outstanding women in these leadership positions during the last few years.

As I speak, I am still celebrating an important achievement for women in leadership. A record number of women have been elected to the House of Representatives. Women now make up 28.5 per cent of members of the House and are performing the important duties of Speaker, Deputy Speaker, and Deputy Leader of the House.

We are proud that more women are being empowered to offer themselves as representatives and that more of them are being elected.

In the Senate, women now comprise 38 per cent of the members — enabling us to achieve, for the first time, our national gender policy goal of at least 30 per cent women membership. We are convinced that we will make better decisions for our nation when women and men make them together as equal and competent partners.

Despite the progress, there are still many challenges, especially when it comes to violence against women and girls. My Government is committed to put an end to the violence through legislative, policy and programme initiatives. In this regard we are grateful for the support and assistance of our international partners.

We continue to be concerned about the COVID-19 pandemic and the threat it poses to our efforts to achieve gender equality. The stay-at-home measures that countries have had to implement have had the unfortunate side effect of having women locked up with their abusers — sometimes without access to family or friends, or an opportunity to call for help.

We are in the process of establishing three national shelters for victims of domestic abuse and 24-hour helplines so that we can more effectively respond to calls for help.

We must also be concerned about the effect of the economic downturn on vulnerable members of our society who are more likely to be women and children.

As a global family, we have achieved much in the last 25 years to lift the status of women towards gender equality. The current global situation requires us to work together to protect the vulnerable, preserve the gains of the last 25 years and accelerate progress.

I thank you.