



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

STATEMENT BY

**MS. SASHA- KAY WATSON
SECOND SECRETARY**

AT THE

62ND SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

ON

***AGENDA ITEM 3 (A): FOSTERING SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL
JUSTICE THROUGH SOCIAL POLICIES TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS ON
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT AND TO ACHIEVE THE OVERARCHING GOAL OF
POVERTY ERADICATION***

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FINAL TEXT

Madam Chair,

Jamaica aligns itself with the statement delivered by the G77 and China and CARICOM.

We thank the Secretary General for his report on the priority theme for this session and the recommendations contained therein.

Madame Chair,

Central to the concept of social development is the realization of the needs and aspirations of people. As States we have a duty to ensure that our citizens are in receipt of adequate social security and social protection systems. In doing so, we invest in our human capital and their potential to be fulfilled and productive citizens.

Madame Chair,

Since our independence in 1962, Jamaica has created a number of social protection policies and programmes, with the aim of redressing the historical imbalances and inequalities intrinsic to the colonial system from which we emerged, and ensuring that the needs of **all** persons are promoted and supported, with the most vulnerable groups in our society being especially targeted. We recognize that responsive social development frameworks are among the most effective tools to eradicate poverty and create empowered and productive citizens.

Madame Chair,

Allow me to share with you some of the social policy programmes implemented in my country to help our citizens over the years:

We developed a Social Intervention Programme to empower Jamaican youths by providing them with sustainable employment, education or entrepreneurial

opportunities. Between 2022 and 2023 alone, youths were assisted through grants valued at 44.4 million Jamaican dollars.

We also developed an Early Stimulation Programme, designed to provide early intervention services to one of our most vulnerable groups - young children with developmental disabilities. Through this initiative, children are able to receive therapeutic services through our Developmental Clinics as well as Community-Based Rehabilitation Sessions. We are committed to fulfilling the potential of every Jamaica child.

Further, through our Rehabilitation Programme, Jamaicans in need of social assistance for compassionate purposes, including those who may have fallen on hard times and are experiencing circumstances that prevent them from providing for their basic needs or that of their families, are offered one - off grants according to their needs. Some of these grants include:

1. **A Rehabilitation Assistance Grant** - this provides families or individuals with the opportunity to undertake income generating projects to support their household;
2. **A Compassionate Grant** - this helps persons in need of urgent assistance to cover costs associated with medication, burial expenses and more; and
3. **The Education and Social Intervention Grant** - which assists parents to cover school related expenses, such as school uniforms and books.

On a broader scale, the Government of Jamaica has continuously provided social protection to Jamaican families in need through the Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH). The PATH Programme, launched in 2002, is Jamaica's flagship social assistance programme. It was designed to serve as a safety net by preventing families from falling further into

poverty in the event of adverse shock, as well as to support educational attainment and improve health outcomes by breaking the inter-generational cycle of poverty. To date, the programme has served more than 350,000 beneficiaries and in the 2022//2023 financial year alone, provided income support valued at 9.5 billion Jamaican dollars. These are but a few of the programmes we have instituted nationally to help our citizens.

Madame Chair,

Even as Jamaica continues to work to foster social development and social justice, we recognize that true progress cannot be achieved if social policies are not reinforced by our economic and environmental growth mechanisms. It is only by employing integrated policies and approaches that we truly tackle cross-cutting problems such as poverty eradication.

Madame Chair,

Let us not forget that poverty is a multi-dimensional issue. It is our common enemy and one that we collectively pledged to eradicate in 2015 in all its forms (SDG1), through the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as an international community. Yet, even as we are at the midway point for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, millions of people are being left behind. Let us redouble our efforts and take concerted actions to identify the structural gaps that have prevented us from creating an inclusive global system. At this juncture, through the Summit of the Future process, we have the opportunity to begin again to address what has not worked.

Madame Chair,

We are committed to creating a society where every Jamaican is empowered to achieve his or her fullest potential - a life free from the limitations of poverty, where there are even greater opportunities for social and economic mobility. This commitment is also embodied in our Vision 2030 National Development

Plan. It represents our promise to place Jamaica on a path to sustainable prosperity by interlinking our economic, environmental and social development ambitions. Through the implementation of our National Development Plan, Jamaica will become a place of choice to live, work, raise families and do business. No one will be left behind.

Madame Chair,

I also take this opportunity to acknowledge the anniversary of the International Year of the Family. The family is one of the most basic and foundational units of society and at the core plays a key role in the achievement of the sustainable development agenda.

In closing, as an international community let us realize the commitments, we also made in the Copenhagen Declaration. I assure you that Jamaica will continue to play her part to advance the welfare of the whole human race.

I thank you.