



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

**STATEMENT BY**

**HIS EXCELLENCY BRIAN WALLACE  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAMAICA**

**DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE OF  
THE THIRD COMMITTEE FOR THE 76<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF  
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
1<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2021**

**NEW YORK**

**Mr. Chair,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,**

Please allow me to extend hearty congratulations to you and the members of the Bureau on your election. I assure you of Jamaica's full support and commitment to the deliberations at this 76<sup>th</sup> Session. I also wish to express our sincere appreciation for the efforts of the Secretary-General and the Secretariat to provide comprehensive reports for the consideration of this Committee.

The delegation of Jamaica aligns itself with the statements delivered by the Permanent Representative of Guinea on behalf of the G77 and China, and the Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

### **Vaccines and the Global Response**

**Mr. Chair,**

As we continue to contend with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the emergence of new variants, there are increasing uncertainties as the virus challenges the global economy. In the case of Jamaica where the economy is driven by the services sector, the hope of building resilience as we move forward requires that the restoration of the health and well-being of our people, primarily through vaccinations, remain at the core of all our strategies.

Jamaica is grateful for the support received from bilateral and international partners, and through the COVAX Facility and AMSP in accessing vaccines. We call for a globally coordinated approach to the scaling up of production and equitable distribution of vaccines as a global common good.

International collaboration is essential to bridge the gap in recovery across countries and regions and, in this regard, we call for the rejection of nationalistic approaches, including unequal recognition of vaccination programmes.

We are experiencing a global health crisis, but it is glaringly obvious that the COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the severe vulnerabilities that exist in the developing world. Jamaica therefore calls for increased innovation in health across the Global South, and especially investment in research and development and health care services infrastructure, as part of resilience building strategies to ensure that no-one is left behind.

As a strong proponent of research and development in the field of health, Jamaica continues to work towards the establishment of a Centre for Research on Emerging Infectious Diseases to expand the knowledge of emerging and re-emerging viruses in the Latin American and Caribbean region.

## **The Impact of COVID-19 on Vulnerable Groups**

**Mr. Chair,**

It bears emphasising that with restrictions on movements, stress-inducing job losses and school closures, the pandemic has

exacerbated the threats to our people at many different levels. Jamaica, like most other Small Island Developing States, has witnessed significant regression in our hard-won gains in the pursuit of sustainable socio-economic development.

The impact on the most vulnerable and marginalized – persons with disabilities, children, women and girls – is a cause for great concern as cases of violence and sexual abuse, losses and gaps in learning, malnutrition and deteriorating mental health are on the rise.

Jamaica is committed to doing all that is necessary to support our citizens. This includes enhancing psychological support to parents and caregivers and strengthening shock responsive social protection strategies for households struggling with the economic fallout from COVID-19, such as the Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH) and the COVID-19 Allocation of Resources for Employees (CARE) Programme.

## **People of African Descent**

**Mr. Chair,**

Jamaica welcomed the convening of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly to commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Durban Declaration and the Programme of Action, on September 22<sup>nd</sup> of this year under a most fitting theme: “Reparations, racial justice and equality for people of African descent”.

This milestone comes on the heels of the establishment of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent. We look forward to engaging in the first session of the Permanent Forum in 2022

towards the improvement of the lives of Afro-descendants who have suffered the pains of racism, racial discrimination and the legacies of enslavement, including structural under-development.

At the regional level, we are also steadfast in the support of the mandate given to the CARICOM Reparations Commission to prepare the case for the region's indigenous and African descendant communities who are the victims of crimes against humanity in the forms of genocide, slavery, slave trading and racial apartheid.

Jamaica remains committed to the universal recognition of the imperative for reparatory justice and will continue to make the call, at the UN and in other fora, for this duty to be internationally recognized as a necessary path to healing, restoration of dignity and progress for people of African descent.

**Mr. Chair,**

In closing, I take this opportunity to reaffirm Jamaica's full participation and continued support of the work of this Committee. We look forward to the very important deliberations and actions ahead.

I thank you.