



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

STATEMENT BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**DURING THE
GENERAL DEBATE
OF THE
HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM/HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT**

**19TH JULY 2017
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Ministers,
Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my pleasure to share with you Jamaica's activities with respect to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Localising the SDGs has been a priority for the Government of Jamaica. An intense consultative process with the objective of aligning the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with Jamaica's Long-Term Development Plan *Vision 2030 Jamaica* was undertaken. This process resulted in a national outcome document which provided a seamless integration of the agreed outcomes and targets of the 2030 Agenda with the national development planning, monitoring and evaluation framework.

Furthermore, a Rapid Integration Assessment was undertaken last October by a team of sustainable development experts from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which found a 91 per cent alignment of our national goals and outcomes with the 2030 Agenda. A Roadmap for implementation of the SDGs in Jamaica was completed in early 2017, which resulted from the UNDP Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) Mission. The Road Map proposes a set of accelerators in each of the four national goals identified in *Vision 2030 Jamaica*. These include interventions that could be implemented within existing programmes, in order to improve efficiency and maximize dividends across various development priorities. There is strong alignment of Agenda 2030 and *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and so the imperative for localising and implementing the SDGs will be facilitated through successive three-year Medium Term Socio-Economic Policy Frameworks.

The development of an appropriate governance structure and coordination mechanism has been critical to Jamaica's achievement to date. The Government has established an inter-agency SDGs Core Group, comprising representatives from the Planning Institute of Jamaica, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and the Statistical Institute of Jamaica.

In addition, our Cabinet recently approved the establishment of a multi-stakeholder national oversight committee comprising representatives from government, private sector and civil society organizations. Some of its main functions include: the delivery of policy advice to the government on monitoring the implementation of the SDGs, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and other platforms of action; oversight of the alignment of the SDGs with policies and plans through strategic partnerships; and monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the SDGs against agreed targets and indicators. This committee will be chaired by the lead national focal point for the SDGs, the Planning Institute of Jamaica, which reports directly to the Prime Minister.

Jamaica has also played a leading role in regional efforts to mainstream the SDGs into national policies and programmes. In February 2017, we hosted the ECLAC Caribbean Symposium on

mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals in national development planning. An outcome from this meeting was recognition of the need to identify priority goals and targets for the region. In addition, at the recently concluded Caribbean Action 2030: Regional Conference on the SDGs, which was held in Kingston last month, a draft Partnership Framework was endorsed by Ministers from the region in attendance. The conference was jointly hosted by the Government, UNDP and the University of the West Indies. The Partnership Framework addresses the need for political commitment, cooperation and coordination among countries in the Caribbean sub-region in order to ensure successful attainment of the SDGs.

The Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN) has played a lead role at the global level by representing the country and the Caribbean sub-region on the Inter-Agency Expert Group on the SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs). Jamaica is also a member of the UN Statistical Commission's National Quality Assurance Framework Expert Group.

STATIN's engagement in these global processes provides opportunities for strengthening our capacity in data management. With support received from the Paris 21 partnership, efforts are underway to create a formal definition of the national statistics system of Jamaica and to establish a National Statistics Commission. We have also been the beneficiary of support provided by Statistics Canada, which assisted the development of a Data Quality Assurance Framework, in line with norms established by the UN Statistical Commission. These are but a few of the steps being taken currently to bring our national statistics system to a level necessary to facilitate the effective monitoring of the implementation of the SDGs.

Consistent with the theme of this year's HLPF, the Government of Jamaica has undertaken several initiatives aimed at lifting the standard of living and reducing the numbers of those living in extreme poverty. These include the formulation of a National Policy on Poverty and National Programme on Poverty Reduction; as well as implementation of eight growth initiatives that emerged from our Economic Growth Council (EGC). These eight initiatives, which all reflect the integrated nature of sustainable development are:

- to maintain macroeconomic stability and pursue debt reduction;
- improve citizen security and public safety;
- improve access to finance;
- pursue bureaucratic reform to improve the business environment;
- stimulate greater asset utilization;
- build human capital;
- harness the power of the diaspora; and
- catalyse the implementation of strategic projects.

The real challenge for Jamaica is not related to localizing the 2030 Agenda. Rather, it concerns the need to design and implement policies and programmes that will trigger fast and sustained

progress towards the goals in the context of limited fiscal space. The main impediments to full implementation of the SDGs are primarily in the following areas: financing; effective development cooperation; data required for monitoring and, accountability and capacity building.

We note the theme of next year's Forum is "*Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies*" and look forward to sharing our experience in implementing the SDGs via our Voluntary National Review (VNR).

Moving forward, we are eager to engage with our partners to end poverty in all its dimensions, to safeguard our environment and to secure the future of our world.

Thank you.