

Message by
Senator the Honourable Kamina Johnson Smith
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade
In commemoration of
Nelson Mandela International Day
18th July 2020

Jamaica is pleased to join the international community in celebrating 18th July as **Nelson Mandela International Day**. Although this year's commemoration takes place in an environment where our health and economies are threatened by a global pandemic, we heed as always the call to action of the spirit of Mandela. The covid19 pandemic also having unmasked grave inequalities and systemic injustices across the world, Jamaica recommits to the quest for international peace, equality and justice.

Today, our global community recalls the objectives of the *Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace 2019-2028*, as designated on the occasion of the centenary of his birth. Jamaica therefore re-affirms our full commitment to the promotion of peaceful, just, inclusive and non-discriminatory societies. We will continue to work locally and globally to pursue lasting peace, collective security, sustainable development and human rights that are fundamental to our well-being and continued survival.

We are constantly inspired by the work and the sacrifices of Nelson Rolihlahla “*Madiba*” – a wonderful human being, role model and Ambassador for peace and reconciliation. Mandela's legacies are the results of a life-long commitment to fight for truth, freedom and justice for all. He was dedicated to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and was committed to its implementation. In spite of his own experiences of institutional racial discrimination and his imprisonment for twenty-seven (27) years by the illegal and oppressive apartheid regime, he remained resolute and committed to the dismantling of the system and the realisation of the dream of justice and equality for all South Africans.

Let us be guided by his legacy. Let us take personal responsibility to denounce hate and injustice. Let us promote peace and reconciliation among ourselves and others. Let us abide by the rule of law and the processes established for ensuring justice. Let us work with our communities to protect and care for our children and reduce acts of violence, particularly against the most vulnerable in our societies. Let us work with one another to promote a peaceful just and non-discriminatory society. In the words of *Madiba*, “To be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others”.

Let us live a Mandela Day every day!