



GOVERNMENT OF JAMAICA

STATEMENT BY

**SENATOR THE HONOURABLE KAMINA JOHNSON SMITH
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FOREIGN TRADE**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE
FORTY-SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MINISTERS FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF THE GROUP OF 77, HELD UNDER THE THEME:**

**"ADDRESSING THE FOOD, FUEL AND FINANCE CRISES AND PATHWAYS
TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS"**

**AT THE 77TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HIGH-LEVEL WEEK**

23rd SEPTEMBER 2022

NEW YORK

Mr. Chairman,
Colleague Ministers,

I warmly congratulate Foreign Minister Zardari and his team on their Chairmanship of the G-77 during a very challenging year. Jamaica fully appreciates how difficult it is to protect and advocate for the interests of such diverse membership. We also express our condolences on the recent tragic loss of life and damage experienced by the government and people of Pakistan.

The changing geopolitical climate in which we now operate demands a robust and effective G-77, to continue the advancement of the priorities and interests of its membership.

We therefore look forward to supporting the work of the incoming Chair of the G-77, and congratulate the Republic of Cuba on their election to this important role.

Mr. Chair,

Jamaica, like other countries, faces immense challenges in our COVID-19 recovery efforts. These challenges have been compounded by the war in Ukraine, which has increased pressures on food and energy security through higher commodity prices and acute supply chain disruptions, eroding our progress towards and pushing us farther away from the achievement of the SDGs.

For Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the increased frequency of intense climate-related shocks disproportionately impacts our vulnerable economies. Jamaica is highly vulnerable to climate change as frequent and intensifying weather events have massive consequences on our agriculture and tourism sectors, as well as our infrastructure.

Energy security is also an area of vulnerability. Frequent spikes in fuel prices impinge on the spending power of households, and increase the cost of doing business, thereby lowering expectations for economic growth. Jamaica continues to be proactive in seeking to minimise the impact of volatile fuel prices by promoting investment in clean energy and renewable resources, as well as increasing energy efficiency in all sectors of society.

Food insecurity remains a significant concern. Globally, the number of people affected by hunger increased by 150 million since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. This requires urgent actions to remedy an intolerable situation.

Jamaica has worked to increase agricultural outputs and to improve sustainability and resilience within the sector. We have implemented new programmes to encourage the participation of youth and women; and incentivizing use of technology. We are promoting

increased consumption of local produce through a “*Grow Smart, Eat Smart*” campaign to strengthen food security and food value chain operations. Furthermore, under the CARICOM Sustainable Import Replacement Programme, we aim to reduce imports by 25% by 2025.

Mr. Chair,

We are faced with the sobering reality that the attainment of the SDGs is becoming more elusive for developing countries. We face high indebtedness, limited fiscal space, and gaps in human development. Slow progress to mobilise financing for infrastructure, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, continues to undermine our progress.

Despite these myriad challenges, Jamaica believes that there are viable pathways to effectively address global food and energy insecurity, and to avoid the worst effects of a financial crisis. We call for enhanced cooperation to increase self-sufficiency in developing countries, especially Small Island Developing States and highly indebted middle-income countries.

Strategic partnerships will be critical to achieving this goal. Such partnerships must be cross-regional and multi-sectoral, including all relevant stakeholders across the spectrum of society. This is not a time for business as usual.

Mr. Chair,

It is imperative that the international financial institutions urgently embrace fair and affordable solutions to support highly indebted developing countries to access debt relief, concessional finance and grants. Now more than ever, the international community needs to demonstrate solidarity by scaling up development cooperation and finance. Now is the time to advance innovative, bold and far-reaching solutions to ensure that no country is left behind. As we are on the cusp of Bali, and in this connection we take this opportunity to also expressly support the S-G's call for a G-20 Stimulus package.

I thank you.