



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

STATEMENT BY

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DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

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Mr Chair,

Jamaica joins with other delegations in congratulating you and your bureau on your election to lead the Committee on Information during its work in this Session. Please be assured of our full support during your tenure. We take this opportunity to also commend the previous Chair and his bureau for their outstanding work during the last session.

We express our continued support to the team at the Department of Global Communications, led by the Under-Secretary General Melissa Fleming, for their efforts in promoting the work of the United Nations, around the world, under extraordinary circumstances.

I will take the next few minutes to highlight a few points of interest to my delegation, further to the statement delivered by Guinea on behalf of the Group of Seventy-seven.

Mr Chair,

My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for the reports prepared for our deliberations today. We applaud the very detailed information provided on the work of the Department of Global Communications, especially at a time when the world was extensively challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic. We therefore share with you some of our observations, in this regard.

Firstly, we welcome the innovative approach the Department employed, to expand and intensify its ability to reach people everywhere throughout the pandemic, especially bearing in mind the loss of revenue as a consequence of the imposition of physical distancing protocols at the various UN offices. My delegation takes note of the advances in technology and innovative collaboration that facilitated the Department's expanded online outreach to the global community in a multiplicity of languages, fulfilling the need for multilingualism.

Of importance, to my delegation, is the Department's continued efforts to provide the public with accurate information through various initiatives such as *Verified* and its *Pledge to Pause Campaign*. We are pleased that the *Verified* initiative has already provided more than 1 billion people worldwide with

critical public health information and guidance, while also combating the spread of misinformation. In respect to the latter, Jamaica is proud to have led a core group of Member States that presented a Resolution entitled “Global Media and Information Literacy Week”, which focuses on the promotion of Media and Information Literacy as a viable, sustainable, collective, and global approach to countering the increase in disinformation and misinformation. My delegation strongly believes that this Resolution comes at a point when it has become increasingly urgent for us to adopt a sustainable approach that ensures the widespread promotion of media and information literacy for all.

Secondly, we remain supportive of the *International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, as well as the *Remember Slavery* programme. We are conscious that the causes, consequences and lessons of the transatlantic slave trade remain relevant today and for future generations, in particular the dangers of racism and prejudice. My delegation welcomes continued collaboration with other Member States, the UN system and academia to educate and inform the public of the horrors of slavery. In this regard, Jamaica recommends the forging of increased partnerships/deepening of collaboration with the African diaspora in recognition of this important issue. We are committed to continue the “unfinished conversation” which was aptly chosen as the title of discussions held earlier this year on the same topic.

Thirdly, my delegation commends the integral role played by the UN Information Centers in the development of crisis communication strategies, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. They have been able to do so through their active collaboration with UN field offices and by utilising diverse communication platforms. Here we wish to recognize the UN Information Centre in Trinidad and Tobago for initiating the *Build Back Better Caribbean* podcast series, which highlights the response of Caribbean non-governmental organization to the pandemic. For the future, we encourage greater collaboration between the UNICs, country teams and host countries throughout the wider Caribbean, to facilitate the sharing of initiatives that redound to the benefit of both the UN and the host country.

Mr Chair,

Finally, Jamaica believes it is timely for the Department, in collaboration with the people of African Descent, to promote in a more meaningful manner the International Decade for People of African Descent, in line with the objectives of the international decade. The ongoing activism of the Black Lives Matter Movement, brings into sharp focus the need for greater attention to be given to addressing the legacy of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. This highlights the importance of placing increased attention on the issues affecting people of African descent. Jamaica is, therefore, concerned that the Report on activities undertaken by the Department in fulfilling this mandate, in line with the objectives of the International Decade of People of African Descent, appears to pay scant regard to this important issue. We hope that this is merely an oversight and anticipate that it will be reflected in a more fulsome account of the activities conducted by the Department.

Thank you.