



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

STATEMENT BY

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OF JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**On agenda 11 (A) Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS
and the political declarations on HIV/AIDS**

United Nations, New York

3rd June 2019

Mr. President,

The Government of Jamaica remains committed to the full implementation of the Political Declarations on HIV and AIDS and, in particular, to intensifying our efforts towards the goal of comprehensive prevention, treatment, care and support programmes leading to the end of the AIDS epidemic by 2030. Jamaica notes that three years since the adoption of the “fast track strategy,” country progress reports are indicating its effectiveness and that with continued investment, partnership, political will and accelerated action, we can ensure that we deliver on the promise to leave no one behind.

Against this background, my delegation commends the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report which was prepared for this agenda item. We also align with the statement delivered by Saint Kitts and Nevis on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Mr. President,

There are approximately 32,000 people living with HIV in Jamaica. In 2016, there were 1,700 new infections and 1,300 AIDS-related deaths. Our 2017 Knowledge Attitude Behaviour Practice Survey further reveals that more people in the 15-24 age group are having multiple sex partners, with the numbers rising from 58 per cent in 2012 to 65.3 per cent in 2017. In addition, the Survey indicated that knowledge of how HIV is transmitted had declined. These statistics are a cause for deep concern.

Consequently, the Government of Jamaica continues its efforts to support the goals and objectives of the “fast track strategy” to achieve the 90-90-90 targets to diagnose 90% of all HIV-positive persons, to provide the requisite treatment to 90% of those who know their status, as well as achieve viral suppression in 90% of those receiving treatment by 2020. As at March 2019, Jamaica was at 78-49-57.

In this respect, Mr. President, the Government has sought to accelerate its efforts to attain these targets through a range of initiatives, including the use of social media, community engagement improvements in health infrastructure and a multi-agency approach. Particular attention is being given to implementing programmes aimed at preventing mother-to-child transmission (pMTCT), including through improvements in laboratory testing and the implementation of pMTCT services across the island. The Elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission Programme (eMTCT) also focusses on HIV, Syphilis and Hepatitis B.

The Government has also sought to inculcate responsible values and attitudes among young people as a way of addressing negative behaviour such as violence, truancy and risky sexual behaviour. To this end, the Teen Hub was formally launched in November 2017 at one of the major transportation centres in the capital. At the Hub, health care workers conduct mental wellness and sexual and reproductive health clinics. In addition, the National Family Planning Board provides HIV counselling and testing, as well as arranges follow-up for any positive results that occur. Approximately 4,800 young persons have accessed services from the Hub for the period January to September 2018.

The Government is also modernising the legislative and policy frameworks of the Standards and Regulations Division of the Ministry of Health and Wellness, with support from the Caribbean Public Health Agency Medicines Quality Control and Surveillance Department. The Division's functions are essential to ensuring conformance with legislation, standards and guidelines for the health sector.

Mr. President,

The Government of Jamaica remains concerned that progress made to date is at risk of being stymied by persistent and deeply rooted stigma, discrimination and marginalisation of those living with HIV, the deepening attitude of complacency which has arisen as a consequence of successes in prolonging the lives of those living with HIV, as well as gender and cultural biases. The Government, therefore, is committed to redoubling its efforts to confront this problem.

As you can see Mr. President, many of the aforementioned initiatives are already aligned to the recommendations outlined in the Secretary General's report and are critical to efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 3, specifically target 3.3. We must continue to work together if real and sustained progress is to be realised at all levels. Jamaica is ready to play its part and to work with partners, including the UN system, in this regard.

Thank you.