



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

REMARKS BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY E. COURTENAY RATTRAY
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAMAICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

AT A SIDE EVENT ON

***THE ROLE OF SAFE & SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY IN
ERADICATING POVERTY AND IMPROVING HEALTH***

**UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK
14 JULY 2017**

Excellencies,
Special Envoy Todt,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am pleased to join you this afternoon for this event on safe and sustainable mobility as we highlight the role it can play in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. I congratulate FIA, the Global Initiative for Child Health and Mobility & the G4 Alliance, as well as the co-sponsoring Missions for advancing this important initiative.

Jamaica has had a firm commitment to safe and sustainable mobility that pre-dates the creation of the SDGs. Our National Road Safety Council has been chaired by our Prime Minister through successive administrations and was recognized as a 'best practice' example of a highly effective lead agency on road safety. In fact, in 2013, the National Council was honoured to be the recipient of the prestigious Prince Michael International Road Safety Award in recognition of its success in reducing the number of fatalities on our country's roads.

We nevertheless recognize that more needs to be done to address road safety holistically, including through better implementation and enforcement of laws and regulations on safe road use, improving vehicle safety standards, increasing road user awareness, investing in post-crash treatment and services, and addressing the five risk factors namely, drinking and driving, speeding, and failing to use motorcycle helmets, seat-belts, and child restraints.

Our experience has taught us the critical importance of employing multi-sectoral collaboration in addressing the epidemic of road traffic injuries and deaths. This has resulted in greater effort for and awareness of the need to strengthen capacity and to put in place coordinated policies and programmes that involve all key stakeholders, with the aim of improving road safety in the country.

We are making concerted efforts to reduce road fatalities and are committed to halving the number of deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by 2020. While road fatalities in Jamaica so far this year are 25 less than the 185 deaths recorded over the corresponding period in 2016, that figure is still too high.

Our Minister of Transport was quoted recently as saying that "While the trend suggests that we are on track to achieve another below-300 year, I will not be satisfied until I see a significant change in the behaviour of our motorists and all road users in general".

In our quest to aggressively target human behaviour we have ramped up efforts to engage the public with stronger messaging about the need to adopt responsible practices, especially by wearing seatbelts and helmets, exercising discipline on the roads, and keeping within the speed limit. We are leveraging our assets to do this more effectively by intensifying our public communications targeted at encouraging safe driving practices in both traditional and social media. This is being done with the support of our popular musicians and athletes. Jamaica is known for speed: we have the fastest men and women

athletes in the world. However, when it comes to road usage, our World 100m Champion and Olympic goal medalist Yohan Blake, in supporting the #SlowDown promotion campaign, puts it best; he says, "Leave the speed to me".

In addition to public education campaigns, we are employing more scientific and analytical methods, through the use of crash data and *Black Box Technology*. We are also working to ensure that our physical infrastructure and vehicles are constructed and maintained to a standard that supports, rather than challenges, the safety of all road users.

By taking this multi-pronged and strategic approach, we are working towards meeting its SDG commitments, which our Prime Minister recently reaffirmed at the launch of Global Road Safety Week. He stated clearly that this is a national priority for his administration. In fact, our Global Road Safety Week culminated with the symbolic signing of an open letter by our Prime Minister, urging action on reducing and enforcing traffic speeds to a level safe for children everywhere, as well as prioritising low-speed zones in residential areas and near schools as part of the 'Speed Vaccine'.

With strong political will, and thanks to the support of multiple stakeholders both locally and internationally, we fully intend to build on our successes and meet or exceed the targets that have been set.

Thank you for this opportunity to briefly share some of the work that Jamaica is doing in this important area. I look forward to an engaging discussion this afternoon.

Thank you.