

JAMAICA

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ADDRESS TO 14TH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS ON CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE KYOTO, JAPAN

MARCH 2021

Mr. President,

It is my pleasure to bring remarks on this the opening of the Conference on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

I thank the Government of Japan for hosting this meeting, especially given the challenging circumstances in which the international community is dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. I would also like to thank the Secretariat for its work in organising this meeting. Whilst I am not able to physically join you in Kyoto, please be assured of Jamaica's support and engagement. We know it will be a successful Conference.

Mr. President,

The overall theme "Advancing Crime Prevention, Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law: Towards the Achievement of the 2030 Agenda, SDGs" is very fitting. It is our view that crime prevention and the rule of law are critical to the attainment of the sustainable development goals and the 2030 Agenda. No country, large or small, can successfully advance the economic and social well being of its people without addressing the scourge of crime. It is for this reason that Jamaica has embedded the safety and security of its citizens in its National Development Plan, Vision 2030 as we seek to make Jamaica the place of choice to live, work, raise families and do business.

However, transnational organised crime continues to be an obstacle in the path towards the socio-economic development of our society. We continue to grapple with the negative impact of the illicit trade and proliferation of small arms and

light weapons and the trafficking of narcotic drugs which serves no other purpose than to promote conflict, exacerbate violence and in many instances, undermine the authority of the State.

Mr. President

Crime and criminality is a global phenomenon which requires a unified global approach and cooperation. The situation in Jamaica serves as an example of the need for collective responsibility and cooperation in addressing transnational organised crime. Guns are not manufactured in our country but they enter our borders from surrounding nations. These weapons are responsible for approximately eighty per cent of the murders committed in the country, and are also responsible for other serious crimes, including shooting with intent, robberies and many other abuses. It is important that we have international co-operation to control the flow of guns from the neighbouring countries so that we can stop the prevalence of murders and other criminality in our country.

International drug trafficking is another major concern for Jamaica. Whilst Jamaica is not considered a destination or a source country for illicit drugs such as cocaine, it is often used as a transshipment point for narcotics, creating an atmosphere for an enormous amount of criminality within our country.

Mr. President,

It has been determined that Jamaica's economy could grow by more than five percent of our Gross Domestic Product if we could control crime. Jamaica seeks all assistance in reducing and deterring criminality. It is therefore important that we find ways and means to assist one another. This will take us further in our efforts towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Whilst Jamaica continues to strengthen our legislative framework for crime prevention and control and enhance our border protection measures, we simply cannot do it alone. As we do our part to reduce crime and deter criminality, we seek committed cooperation in this fight and encourage all countries to work in partnership. The Extradition Agreements that we have in place with specific countries provide one way in which to accomplish this. We must strengthen our efforts towards guaranteeing the safety and security of our citizens.

Finally, I take this opportunity to reiterate Jamaica's commitment to engage with all countries as we seek to combat transnational organised crime. I express our support to the Kyoto Declaration adopted at the Conference.

Thank you.