



PERMANENT MISSION OF  
JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT BY

MS. SHORNA-KAY RICHARDS  
CHARGE D'AFFAIRES, A.I.

ON

*MEETING THE CHALLENGE  
ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN*

TO THE  
57<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE  
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

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*Please check against delivery*

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

Jamaica has made significant social and economic strides through progressive legislation which has resulted in the upward mobility and empowerment of our women. However, like the rest of the world, an area of growing concern is domestic violence against women. With the election of the nation's first female Prime Minister who assumed office in January 2012, the Government of Jamaica renewed its commitment and redoubled its efforts to end violence against women. In her address to the 67th Session of the General Assembly, Prime Minister Simpson Miller stated that: "ISSUES THAT AFFECT WOMEN AND CHILDREN MUST BE CENTRAL TO THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS".

Human trafficking, a form of modern-day slavery that renders our women, girls and boys as chattel, is a dastardly threat to their welfare and that of our societies. We must never accept, excuse or tolerate any acts of violence against our women and girls. The prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls is at the heart of all gender equality commitments and remains a top priority for Jamaica.

Jamaica reaffirms its obligations under applicable international and regional human rights instruments such as the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW and the Convention of Belem do Para.

This renewed commitment is further evident in national framework policies like Vision 2030 (Jamaica's National Development Plan) and the National Policy for Gender Equality (NPGÉ). Jamaica has also given firm commitments to our International Partners including through the Commit Initiative and the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality.

Several other specific measures have been undertaken to promote gender balance and prevent discrimination. These include the implementation of a National Plan of Action on Gender-Based Violence, and the collection, compilation and analysis of sex disaggregated and other verifiable data to inform social policy. Jamaica is resolute in its commitment to strengthen local and national programmes to eliminate violence against women

Madam Chair,

Jamaica has placed the issue of gender equality and the empowerment of women at the very highest political level, as a demonstration of the level of commitment we attach to this important issue. The national gender machinery now falls under the portfolio responsibility of the Office of the Prime Minister. In addition, Prime Minister Simpson Miller has commissioned a high level multi-sectoral consultative committee to address violence and sexual crimes against women and children in Jamaica. This Committee is charged with developing a holistic approach to tackling the problem by assessing and streamlining measures, recommendations and activities so that national action will be better coordinated, more comprehensive and effective utilising the limited resources available.

Madam Chair,

We must move beyond plans, resolutions and agreements to action. Jamaica therefore is working determinedly on Public Education, Institutional Strengthening, Shelter Services, and promotion of Sustainable Livelihoods.

Legislation to support our commitments and national plans have been either introduced or strengthened. This has, for example, allowed for the establishment of a Sex Offenders Registry, increasing remedies available to women and girls who are victims and increased penalties on the perpetrators. Jamaica believes that purposeful measures like these are required to combat violence against women and girls wherever it persists.

### **Challenges**

Madam Chair,

There are challenges, but we recognize that strategic partnerships must be brokered between government and civil society, and between the public and private sectors to ensure greater cohesiveness and effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes.

During these times of limited resources, especially in small heavily indebted countries like Jamaica, it is essential that we establish and promote partnerships to share best practices on combating gender based violence and to enhance capacity in tackling this scourge. Partnerships also afford us the added benefits of being able to identify and monitor trends as well as introduce new dynamics regarding prevalence and estimates of gender based violence.

Governments cannot undertake this challenge alone as it requires the input of all persons, groups and sectors in the society. We value, recognize and applaud the work of the NGO sector in their steadfast commitment and their advocacy that has served us well. In this regard, we also laud the work of organizations such as UN-Women. We must continue to collaborate with each other to break the cycle of exploitation and insecurity which undermine and thwart development.

“That women are fully integrated in the development process” and “That Violence Against Women is eliminated.”

This is our goal to Achieve....It is our Mission.

I thank you.