

Presentation to Sectoral Debate

Minister of National Security, July 17, 2012

'On A Mission To Make Jamaica Safe And Secure'

SALUTATIONS...

INTRODUCTION...

Our systems of national security, policing, law enforcement and justice are facing a range of rapidly evolving challenges. Criminals are using modern cyber-technology and psychological tactics. They are becoming increasingly innovative, developing new forms of crime, and expanding their international cooperation. It is clear that incremental adjustments to the way we do things will not provide an adequate response. There is a need for a completely new framework of law enforcement, based on:

1. Transparency, trust, and credibility;
2. Strong measures against gangs, major criminals and the people who facilitate criminal operations;
3. The structuring of the security organizations to maximize their adaptability and effectiveness; given severe economic constraints;
4. Cooperation of all agencies of government in crime prevention, and
5. Accelerating the pace of the judicial process.

My contribution to this debate begins with a brief analysis of crime trends to establish the context, before looking at the recent performance and initiatives within the Ministry of National Security, and its primary departments and agencies. I will then outline the strategic direction that this administration will be charting for public security in the medium term, and close with a call to action for the whole of Jamaican society.

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

I would like to ask this Honourable House to pause for a moment to soberly reflect upon the loss of the 16,537 Jamaicans who have been murdered in this country since the beginning of the year 2000. This represents an enormous cost to the society in terms of foregone economic development as well as the fear, grief, pain and misery inflicted on victims, their families and communities.

Whilst we celebrate many accomplishments of our 50 years of independence, our performance with regard to the safety and security of our citizens leaves a great deal to be desired. There are a number of reasons for this lamentable performance. Some are internal - such as our history of political tribalism, our innate anti-authoritarianism, and the sub-culture of extreme violence that has developed in our country. Others have to do with our geographic location between the major cocaine producing countries in South America and the major markets in North America and Europe – which contributes to making the Caribbean and Central America, as a whole, the region with the highest murder rate in the entire world.

Jamaica had 887 murders in the year 2000, which is about 34 per 100,000 population. By 2009, the murder rate had escalated to a historical high of over 60 per 100,000, with 1,682 Jamaicans being killed in that, our most bloody year. The international benchmark for a civil war is 30 homicides per 100,000 population, so Jamaica had the equivalent of two civil wars that year.

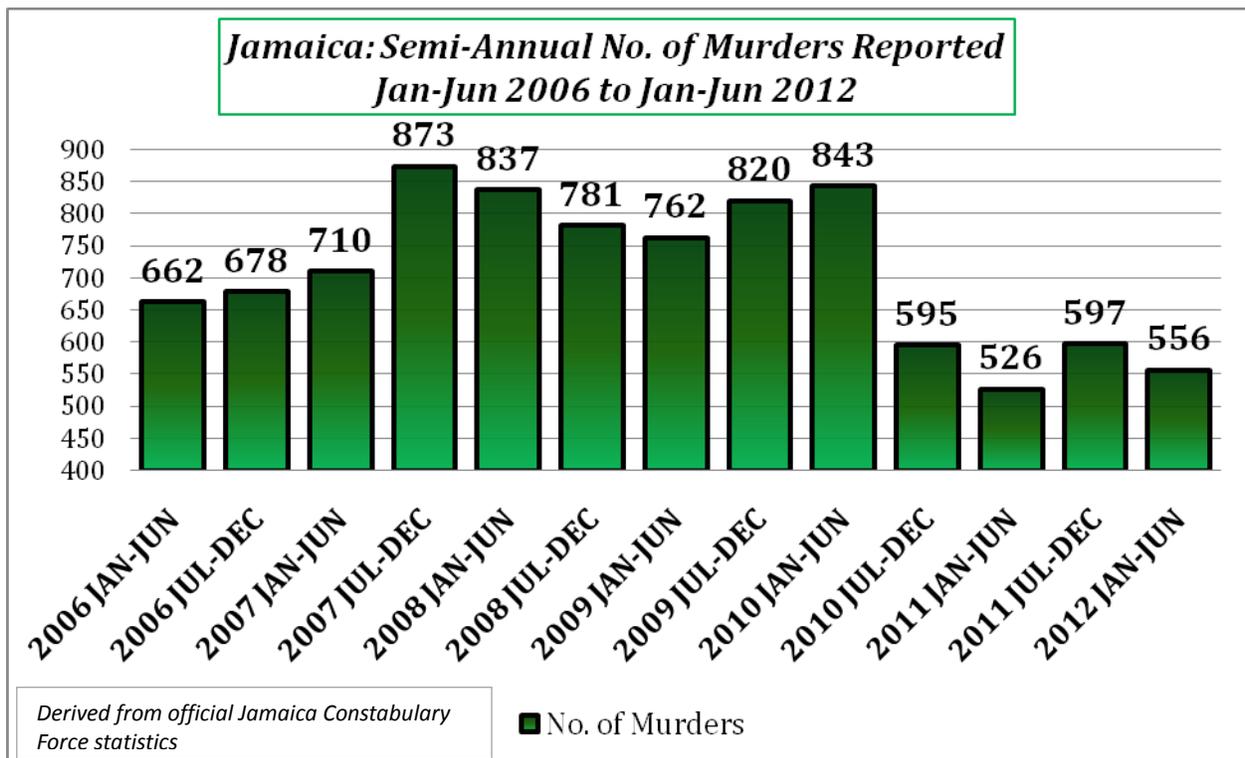
The sustained and valiant efforts made by the security forces in responding to systematic and widespread attacks from criminal networks in May 2010 and the subsequent extradition of Christopher Coke, resulted in a significant reduction of the murder rate. By last year (2011), the murder rate had fallen to just over 40 per 100,000. That was a remarkable achievement, but still gave an unacceptably high total of 1,124 murders in that year.

Since the beginning of this year, we have seen a slight increase in the actual number of murders compared to the same period last year. While there are some persons who

have sought to gain political mileage by suggesting that this is an indication that crime increases under a PNP administration, the empirical data shows this is a false assertion.

For ease of analysis, let us compare the number of murders occurring semi-annually for the previous six years with the first six months of this year (as depicted in the chart). The lowest number of murders was recorded in the two years (four semi-annual periods) immediately following the extradition of Coke, with the lowest totals in January to June 2011 (526), followed by the next lowest in January to June 2012 (556).

The fact is that the first six months of this administration recorded the second lowest number of murders of any comparable period over the last six years; and in most cases, by a wide margin.



In other words, the simple comparison of y.t.d data for 2011 and 2012 fails to show some of the longer-term trends that are critical for a more in-depth understanding of the crime problem that Jamaica faces. With all other major categories of crime showing a reduction this year, I am optimistic that we will continue to consolidate the post-Tivoli gains that have been made. However, there is still a long way to go and a lot to be done before we arrive at an acceptably low level of violent crime. I am inviting the

opposition and the media to let us all use this opportunity, outside of the election cycle, to demonstrate some unity of purpose in tackling the crime monster. Let us avoid the temptation to use every tragedy, every bad day, weekend, week or month to spread fear and alarm.

RECENT PERFORMANCE AND INITIATIVES

NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY (NSP)

This administration recognizes that it is important to inform our actions with careful policy analysis. The Ministry of National Security has been actively collaborating, since the beginning of this year, with the National Security Policy Coordination Unit in the Cabinet Office to develop a 2012 National Security Policy. The concept of national security, as used here, includes all the measures taken by a state to ensure its survival and the safety and welfare of its people.

While some of the original (2007) NSP is still relevant, substantial upgrading and revision are necessary to address rapid changes in the environment. The increasing use of advanced telecommunications technology for fraud, identity theft and other forms of criminal activity is a prime example.

The updated policy framework ranks the major threats to Jamaica's national security in four tiers:

- **Tier 1** includes high-impact, high probability threats; the clear and present dangers. These are the top priority and include threats such as organized crime, gangs, corruption, and weaknesses in the judicial system.
- **Tier 2** includes high-impact, low probability threats, such as a terrorist attack or Mexican drug cartel expansion into the Caribbean. These require constant monitoring, while building early warning systems and strengthening resilience.
- **Tier 3** includes high-probability, low impact threats e.g. high public debt and other factors that erode and degrade Jamaica's performance. These typically require reforms such as improving governance and building stronger institutions.

- **Tier 4** includes low-probability, low impact threats e.g. water security. However these too require periodic monitoring, in case there is a need to upgrade them.

The new policy outlines five key reforms, which together constitute a strategic, comprehensive and cohesive approach, which address all the elements of the crime fighting machinery. The reforms are:

- I. Removing the profit from crime
- II. Reforming the Justice System
- III. Policing by Consent
- IV. Dismantling gangs
- V. Focusing on at-risk Individuals and Communities

Later in the presentation I will describe how these recommendations are being addressed in our strategies.

I am happy to report that the final draft of the entire 2012 National Security Policy is now complete and has been circulated to the members of the National Security Council (NSC), and the Opposition Spokesman on National Security. I am anticipating final approval at the July meeting of the NSC. The Tier 1 section of the report was presented and discussed at the April meeting of the NSC.

I will now give brief reports on the major departments and agencies that fall within the portfolio of the Ministry.

JAMAICA DEFENCE FORCE (JDF)

Military Tattoo

Let me begin this section by congratulating the men and women of the JDF, under the leadership of the CDS, Maj. Gen. Antony Anderson, who provided us with a spectacular Military Tattoo that is one of the high points of our Jamaica 50 celebrations.

Support for Government

While having the primary responsibility for defending the country against external aggressors, the JDF plays an equally critical role in providing support to the police in maintaining internal security, crime fighting and anti-narcotics operations. The Coast Guard and Air Wing provide search and rescue services, emergency evacuation, and conduct offshore operations to deter smuggling, poaching, and trafficking.

In addition, several government agencies and departments benefit greatly from JDF expertise in security, engineering, and construction. These include the Department of Correctional Services, at Horizon Adult Remand Centre and Metcalfe Street, and the JCF Armoury at Elletson Road. Work is also continuing on the restoration of the Simon Bolivar Cultural Centre and the long awaited Falmouth Police Station, scheduled for completion this year. There are areas of this country where it can be difficult for private contractors to work without suffering extortion. The JDF engineers, however, are immune from such pressures.

International Collaboration

The JDF received disaster preparedness support from the Canadian Government to assist with preparations for the 2011 hurricane season and provided assistance to the Bahamas in August 2011 to assess the extensive damage caused by Hurricane Irene.

Recently the Ministry signed an agreement for the establishment of an Operational Support Hub to be located in Jamaica to launch disaster relief and other humanitarian programmes across the region. It will be one of just seven located worldwide, and the JDF is the main implementing partner. This extraordinary accolade for the JDF was the direct result of their exceptional performance in the Haitian earthquake rescue and recovery effort, which saw Jamaica becoming a staging area for Canadian and other international relief efforts.

JDF Operations in Western Kingston

Over the past few weeks, we have heard some negative rhetoric about the actions undertaken by the security forces, and in particular the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF), during the operations in Western Kingston in May 2010.

Various media reports, editorials and commentary have tried to question the integrity of the JDF and its leadership. This is mainly because they did not disclose the tactics and weaponry that they were using in the operation, while the operation was still ongoing.

No security force in the world routinely discloses its choice of weaponry and tactics during an operation, and even thereafter, would be reluctant to unnecessarily disclose information that would render the future use of these tactics ineffective.

Let me state at the outset that the JDF and its leadership enjoys the full confidence of the Government of Jamaica and that we will continue to support the JDF as one of our most trusted public organizations, and one that continues to make our country proud.

The Jamaica Defence Force has thoroughly earned its reputation as a trusted organization. This is based on the integrity of its leadership and membership. The JDF has consistently demonstrated its commitment to professionalism, political neutrality and nation building throughout the years of our independence.

May 2010 was a watershed in our history. Heavily armed criminals challenged the authority of the state itself. They wanted to carve out a failed-state enclave inside Jamaica; a place where there was no law – other than their will.

The months prior to the events in Tivoli were characterized by increasing fear and uncertainty as the murder rate spiraled upwards, and armed criminal gangs became bolder and more aggressive. In May 2010, the bloodiest month in our nation's history, 184 persons were killed.

On May 23, we saw a barricaded Tivoli Gardens controlled by armed gunmen openly displaying automatic weapons. News networks around the world were showing the Darling Street and Hannah Town Police Stations in flames. The criminals killed three members of the security forces, and seized and destroyed police property. Two police armored vehicles were fired on with high-powered military-grade weapons powerful enough to penetrate and disable them. The Commissioner of Police was forced to

conclude that there was "no policing solution to the threat that the criminal gang in Tivoli Gardens presented."

Those were the stark conditions when then Prime Minister, Bruce Golding, ordered the JDF and the JCF to conduct joint operations in the constituency that he represented, in an effort to resolve the threat to the state and to the citizens of Jamaica, and to restore the rule of law.

If there were any specific cases of misconduct or inappropriate use of force, the security forces know that they will be held accountable for those actions.

It was the decisive actions of our national security and law enforcement agencies that restored the rule of law in West Kingston. This is one of the main reasons why we are now experiencing a significant reduction in our rates of violent crime.

Let this never be forgotten. If the security forces had failed, it may not have stopped at Tivoli. Other gangs could have emerged and attempted to seize control of their areas. People would have started moving their families and their assets to safety - outside of Jamaica; and eventually the nation would have paid a much higher price than it did.

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES (DCS)

The Department of Correctional Services is responsible for securing and rehabilitating offenders for their eventual re-integration into society.

As of June 2012, there were 3,965 adults and 446 juveniles in custody. One Hundred and Fifty Four (154) of these juveniles are maximum-security remandees at Metcalfe Street Secure Centre.

The Department of Correctional Services faces two serious challenges. One is inadequate accommodation and the other is aged infrastructure. Both are hampering rehabilitative efforts and resulting in non-compliance with international standards.

Despite these challenges, since the start of 2011, the operations of the Department of Correctional Services have gone smoothly, with only one escapee (who was recaptured within four hours), and a 65% reduction in violent incidents.

As part of the long-term plan for our correctional services to meet international standards, we must aggressively move towards building a new adult facility to accommodate 5,000 inmates. It will be a high security facility for both men and women and will allow for the closure of the obsolete Tower Street, St. Catherine and Fort Augusta facilities.

Discussions are currently taking place with an international partner to support the Ministry of National Security to:

- a) Develop a full business and economic case to commission the building of a new facility to house up to 5,000 inmates;
- b) Advise on the process, including the appropriate balance of state and privately-run services within a new multi-purpose correctional system; and
- c) Assist in the development of a three-tiered specification; namely
 - i. Technical: covering the standards the building will need to achieve and the elements to be incorporated;
 - ii. Operational: covering the general operation of the facility and what this will achieve in terms of outcomes, including reducing re-offending and improving public safety; and
 - iii. Service: covering offender management and rehabilitative interventions and appropriate facilities management.

The correctional services have traditionally been the 'poor cousin' within the Ministry of National Security. Jamaicans tend to have a rather Old Testament approach to the correctional system; many people feel that inmates are sent to prison for punishment rather than rehabilitation. Given that, at any given time, the majority will be reintegrated into the society within two to three years, it is very important, even from a point of view of rational self-interest, to ensure that prison sentences are rehabilitative rather than dehumanizing. In that way there will be a better chance of former prisoners becoming productive citizens, rather than graduates from an advanced tertiary criminal college.

PASSPORT, IMMIGRATION & CITIZENSHIP AGENCY (PICA)

The Passport Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICA) is on the frontline of border protection in relation to the movement of people in and out of Jamaica. Over the period, the Immigration Unit processed Four Million Six Hundred Thousand (4,600,000) arriving and departing passengers.

The Agency, which remains focused on the continuous improvement of service delivery to clients, received a total of 138,773 passport applications. Of the 93,314 walk-in passport applications processed in Kingston, 99% were completed within the standard time of seven working days.

Very shortly, the total re-engineering of outgoing immigration functions will be completed. Under the new system, to be tested next month, the immigration kiosks in the departure area will be removed, allowing for faster processing of departing passengers and allowing airlines to improve turnaround time.

FIREARM LICENSING AUTHORITY (FLA)

The Firearm Licensing Authority (FLA) was established in 2006 to take over the responsibility of granting and renewing firearm licences from the Jamaica Constabulary Force.

Significant progress has been made in using new technologies to keep track of firearms and their usage. The FLA is now able to capture the unique ballistic signatures of new firearms for which licenses have been granted, and the use of this information by the police is making a valuable contribution to crime fighting. In addition, there is a re-certification process for holders of firearm licences issued before 2006, which allows the Authority to capture the ballistic signatures of those weapons as well.

Firearms previously surrendered to the police for safekeeping are being transferred into the custody of the FLA. To date, some 1,500 weapons have been transferred from Police Divisions in Portland, St. Mary and St. Ann.

The main challenge now is the large backlog of firearm licence applications on which no decision has been rendered. Of the 16,230 applications that have been received by the

Agency since its inception, a decision has been made for 8,100, about fifty percent. There will be significant changes to the operation and structure of the Agency, beginning in this fiscal year, in order to improve its efficiency:

- The accumulated backlog of applications must be cleared as soon as possible.
- Under the new system, the objective will be to complete the processing, from application to decision, within a six-month period.
- The outdated, cumbersome licensing booklet will be replaced by a new secure, hi-tech identification card, similar to the current driver's license but with enhanced security features.
- Finally, for the convenience of clients in the western part of the island, a Firearms Licensing Authority office will be established in Montego Bay to serve St. James, Hanover, Westmoreland, and Trelawny. We expect that this facility will open in October.

III. STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Crime today has evolved into an intricate pattern of destructive human behavior, with complex social, economic and political dimensions. This can only be resolved with a clear strategy, informed at every level by best practice. Our strategic approach is two-pronged: the first set of initiatives is designed around the **control** of crime while the second will focus on **prevention**.

CONTROL

The police are at the centre of our efforts to control crime and will therefore be a catalyst in the effort for modernization and reform. Already the leadership of the JCF, recognizing the need to restructure the organization to deal with the evolving nature of

crime, has embarked on a set of comprehensive internal initiatives to increase effectiveness. These involve increased training, better use of technology, internal restructuring and continuous upgrading of technical proficiencies.

- **Restructuring to increase responsiveness**

- Heightening responsiveness of the police especially in high crime and complex divisions through the establishment of institutions such as the **Headquarters Command and Control Team (HCCT)** that is responsible for executing planned and unplanned operations at nights.
- Better management by conducting major reviews, revamping and establishing major policies. These include the review of the Major **Scenes of Crime Policy** and the establishment of the **Violence Attribution and Assessment Policy 2011**.
- The appointment of **Prosecution Liaison Officers (PLOs)** to attend on the courts and save valuable man-hours of many detectives who only have to attend when the case is being heard.

- **Improvement of Crime Management and Investigation Infrastructures**

- The establishment of various divisions and units with specific mandates to strengthen the overall investigative capacity of the Force. These include the **Transnational Crimes and Narcotics Division (TCND), Street Crimes Unit (SCU), and the Communications Forensic and Cyber-Crimes Unit**.
- Increased use of intelligence apparatus and advanced technological tools in criminal investigation.

- **Centralization of Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Initiatives**

- The institution of the **Performance review and work plans management system** is aimed at streamlining all work plans and the implementation of a robust performance review management system, to enable monthly and quarterly tracking of performance against targets.
- Strengthened partnership with local and international research centres and universities to increase police training and to strengthen the intelligence architecture. The organization also has the **Research, Planning and Legal**

Services Branch (RPLSB), an internal unit with the responsibility of collecting, analysing and providing data to the Force.

Police Organizational Structure

Modest adjustments can only take the police part of the way to create a modern police service. Criminal organizations constantly evolve and innovate, so our police must be even more flexible and adoptive to successfully combat them. Achieving this requires major changes.

We recognize that the traditional, hierarchical structures of the JCF and ISCF, together with the old laws that brought these organisations into being, are no longer ideal for today's realities. This is why both Government and Opposition agreed, in 2009, to bring the management and supervision of the JCF and its auxiliaries under one modern statutory body called the Police Management Authority. This would involve, among other things, combining the Police Service Commission and the Police Civilian Oversight Authority to form this new body.

The next step in this direction will involve merging the JCF and the ISCF. The original rationale for a separate ISCF, was that it should be a part-time auxiliary force that would support the JCF during peak policing demand periods. Over time, however, the ISCF has evolved into a full-time force that no longer justifies a separate chain of command. In practice, almost 1/3 of the ISCF is already operationally integrated into various divisions of the JCF and the conditions of service are very similar. Many studies/reports conducted over the last twenty years have recommended that the two organizations should merge. A team comprising JCF, ISCF, and MNS officials is now finalizing the implementation plan for approval by Cabinet.

Police Culture

Police by Consent- transforming the JCF to a more modern and professional institution is an essential part in strengthening the national security infrastructure and enabling an effective partnership against crime. Citizens must feel that they are able to trust and confide in the police before they will be willing to divulge evidence against dangerous

criminals. This will require a shift from a police force to a police service, where citizens are confident that the police will always act to serve and protect them.

In March this year, after some disturbing incidents regarding the apparent excessive use of force, I made a statement in Parliament reinforcing the policy of this administration that, while the police may be obliged to use deadly force in some situations, this authority must not be abused, and that they will be held accountable for any unlawful action. Every use of lethal force has to be justified, and will be independently investigated.

It is encouraging to note that the number of fatal shootings by police officers continues to trend down, with the year to date showing a 11.6% decrease in police fatal shootings over the same period last year. As you will be aware, a recent newspaper editorial commended the actions by the police in two incidents last week, one involving a hostage situation and the other related to a car theft. In both cases the police demonstrated great professionalism and restraint, and apprehended the criminals without anyone being hurt.

Finally, the Anti-Corruption Branch continued to make headway in weeding out unsuitable officers. A total of 66 persons were arrested and charged, including 39 sworn officers and 27 civilian support staff.

Major Organized Crime & Anti-Corruption (MOCA) Task Force

One of the most important recommendations of the 2012 NSP is to **take the profit out of crime**. Experience has taught that the fight against crime cannot be won by simply reacting to the actions of criminals and disrupting specific forms of criminal activities. Instead, we must understand what motivates criminal syndicates. Criminals are not in the business of trafficking narcotics or weapons or any other criminal activity; they are in the business of making money. Crime is motivated primarily by profit; therefore the only way to only way to permanently reduce crime is by taking away the profit gained from such activities. This means that the focus must shift from the street level criminals and target the bosses who enjoy the profits and their facilitators, which includes the lawyers,

accountants and corrupt public officials who launder the proceeds of crime, channel contracts to criminals, and enable these individuals to thrive.

In June, the Major Organized Crime & Anti-Corruption (MOCA) Task Force, a multi-agency body was launched as an institutional response to that imperative. It is an example of a cross-ministerial collaboration which draws on personnel, resources, and information from the police, the military, the Financial Investigation Division, Customs, Tax Administration, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, etc. as well as support from our international partners.

Legislative Programme

This administration is actively developing a number of pieces of legislation to strengthen its crime-fighting capabilities. While we are guided by the pressing demand to bring legislation to Parliament, we have taken a deliberate decision to rigorously examine and properly review bills before they are introduced to Parliament, in order to ensure that they are sufficiently robust to protect our citizens.

Within the Ministry we have prioritized three pieces of legislation that we hope to bring before parliament by the end of this financial year. They are the Anti-Gang legislation, the DNA legislation, and the act to establish the Police Management Authority.

The 2012 NSP pointed out that the judicial system is currently the weakest link in the national system of law enforcement and criminal justice. There is a huge backlog of cases. Serious crimes take years to be settled, violent criminals are granted bail, evidence is compromised, witnesses are murdered, and the criminals are free to continue to enjoy their criminal profits.

A culture of adjournment has infected our judicial system, which is costing the state millions of dollars, while also punishing the victims and witnesses in criminal cases. Lawyers frequently delay legal proceedings on spurious grounds with the acquiescence of some judges. Reforming the Judicial System is really the key priority rather than the passage of more legislation.

Cost Recovery

The Ministry of National Security has not been immune to the severe fiscal constraints facing the Government of Jamaica. When you look at our capital budget allocation we will be hard-pressed to improve the motor vehicle fleets, the mission-critical communications systems and other new technologies, and the physical infrastructure to optimize the effectiveness of our security forces.

Nevertheless, recognizing the severe fiscal austerity within which we are operating, the Ministry of National Security will be seeking to ensure that we can continue to effectively deliver certain services to the public by adopting a cost-recovery approach for these services provided by the Ministry and its Departments and Agencies. For example, increasingly, we see where both individuals and corporate entities require various police records or reports, motor vehicle accident reports, lost documents, accident reconstruction reports, etc for employment, visa applications, firearms licenses and other purposes. These are provided by the Police at substantial internal cost but our analysis show that the fees charged are considerably less than the cost to deliver the service; and in many cases we do not charge anything.

The Ministry of National Security recognizes that our first responsibility is security but we are also aware that there are critical junctures where specific services to the public, both individual and corporate, are important and that with the fast pace of business time is critical.

In going forward the MNS is going to ensure that we identify all the general services that we supply to the public which can be done on a cost-recovery basis, and ensure their effective delivery without incurring any excessive burden on the public purse.

Any share of revenues that come to the MNS will be used to maintain, develop and enhance our equipment and systems to meet service level requirements and to fulfill our security mandate.

Traffic Ticketing

At this stage I must mention the initiative that the Government only recently started, to collect on the backlog of unpaid and un-adjudicated traffic tickets. There were some problems with the query website resulting from the difficulty of integrating different systems at Tax Administration, the courts, and the MNS.

Based on the feedback received from members of the public, we are updating the website to include information on the date and place of issue for all tickets and we expect the website to be back online within the next two weeks. In the interim, the call centre continues to operate and persons are taking advantage of the amnesty.

In every difficulty there is an opportunity however, and the collaboration across the ministries, agencies and departments involved in the project, is yielding benefits that will help bring order to our roads. For example, through this project, the Transport Authority will now have direct electronic access to the driving record for the last decade, of any person that applies to be licenced in the public passenger system.

Now let me turn to the second critical track in our crime reduction efforts, that of prevention.

PREVENTION

Many of the individuals who drift into criminal activities have been victims of criminality and social injustice themselves. Many are from broken or dysfunctional families and have limited social skills; others are seriously traumatized, having been abused, raped, beaten, or having seen family members murdered. Therefore, there must be strong social intervention programmes working in tandem with the crime control strategies to ensure that significant rehabilitation and regeneration is taking place to break the cycle of crime.

Criminal gangs have permeated our society, recruiting our youth – especially young men. These gangs wield significant control over the communities in which they operate, instituting fear in the constituents of these communities. The execution of an effective anti-gang strategy will therefore require an integrated approach, called a “clear, hold and build” strategy. This strategy entails ‘**clearing**’ gangs out of entire communities;

'holding' those areas by maintaining a strong, continuous police presence to provide lasting security, and then **'building'** a robust civil society by partnering with other government agencies and NGOs to provide education, training, economic opportunities, health care and prompt justice.

Inter-Ministerial Committee on Community Safety and Security

A critical component of this new approach is the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Community Safety and Security. The Prime Minister chairs this body, which co-ordinates the various policies and programmes to support safer communities generally. It will now focus on the "build" component of our anti-gang strategy, ensuring that social interventions are now targeted at permanently reducing the levels of violence and resolving the underlying social problems that foster a culture where criminality is seen as desirable.

Community Renewal Programme (CRP) /Citizen Security and Justice Programme (CSJP)

The CSJP II is the Ministry's main vehicle for implementing social interventions to combat crime and interpersonal violence in communities. During the period under review, expenditure in 50 volatile communities amounted to nearly one billion dollars.

Primary areas of engagement were:

- Community Mobilization and Governance in Canaan Heights, Farm/Effortville, Tawes/ Ellerslie Pen, Steer Town, Brown's Town, Matthews Lane and Homestead. Salt Spring, Rose Heights, Fletchers Land, Top and Bottom Melbourne
- Delivery of Violence Prevention Services including tuition support, skills training for at risk youths and job placement
- Community Multi-Purpose Centres completed in Cassia Park, Matthews Lane, and Tivoli

- The opening of four Restorative Justice centres
- A comprehensive social media campaign targeting at-risk youth and men.

There are several initiatives implemented in many at-risk communities across the island including those of the CSJP. These are established programmes ranging from the recreational and educational based initiatives, to those targeting specific values and attitudes such as parenting and sexual behavior.

The Community Renewal Programme (CRP) is a new project aimed at channeling more resources to the build element of the anti-gang strategy, under the direction of the Inter-Ministerial Committee.

JDF/CSJP Training Partnership

In order to address one of the primary risk factors relating to crime and violence, namely unemployment, the CSJP has, over the years, been providing vocational skills training to young persons from participating communities. The training programmes seek to improve the participants' employability by training them to HEART/NTA certified standards in select vocational areas as well as improving their social skills through Life Skills Education.

Recognizing that classroom training needs to be complemented by practical experience, a critical component of the vocational skills training programme is On-the-Job Training. Recognizing the need to improve the relationship between the security forces and young men from the communities, the CSJP grasped the opportunity to partner with the JDF and this partnership is so far, the most robust in terms of the scope, number of trainees, cost and potential impact.

Scope: Through a MOU with the MNS, the trainees are managed by the Engineering Regiment of the JDF and are placed at four sites, three in Kingston and one in

Falmouth. Nine skill areas are involved as well as educational field trips and life skills sessions. All trainees are HEART/NTA certified. An Oversight Committee, comprised of the JDF, MNS and a representative from the trainees, provide supervision of the partnership. Trainees who are interested in joining the army will be facilitated during the programme and to date a number of them have shown interest in doing so.

There are 225 trainees participating, including 8 females. The participants are drawn from 22 communities in the Kingston Metropolitan Area and Montego Bay. Trainees are provided with safety gear, lunch and a stipend of \$5,000 per week. The duration of the programme for each batch will be 6 months.

Upon completion of the programme it is expected that the trainees' employability would have been enhanced through improvement in their technical and social skills. It is also expected that their perception of the security forces would have been positively impacted. On completion of the training, the participants will be given a certificate of completion by the JDF and we anticipate that this will help their employment prospects.

National Culture Change

Jamaica is victim to a pervasive sub-culture of violence, lawlessness and disregard for authority. No policing tactic or government strategy will be successful without a serious improvement in the police–citizen relationship and the buy-in of **every** citizen. The Ministry of National Security is leading the call for a new approach with the implementation of a communication programme aimed at changing the pervasive and counter-productive culture which teaches that “Informa fi dead”.

In March, we successfully launched a media and communication campaign as a response to the spike in violence. The first, “A Gang is a Dead End” was supported by some of our major athletes and entertainers. The message was all over the mainstream and social media and more importantly should now be firmly planted in the consciousness of every “schooler” who may be struggling with pressure from criminal recruiters.

We will continue with other campaigns during the year to tackle some of the deep-rooted, dysfunctional norms that only serve to assist criminals.

CONCLUSION/CALL TO ACTION

During the first six months of my stewardship, I have given a lot of thought to how the Ministry of National Security can more effectively reduce crime, violence, and anti-social behaviour. I have studied and contemplated the problem and engaged academics, security professionals, and community groups. I have received intelligence briefings from local agencies and our international partners.

There is no doubt that improving the efficiency and effectiveness of our security forces and the wider law enforcement system is necessary - and we are working on it, as I've outlined earlier - but it is not sufficient.

We need a 'whole of government' approach. We need to get the entire machinery of government involved. If every Ministry, Department, and Agency helps in our national effort to promote community safety and prevent crime, we can finally start to erode the power of the criminals who have done so much harm to this nation.

Even this, however, will not be enough. I am convinced that the only way to bring the crime rate down to acceptable (world class) levels is to engage the whole of Jamaican society in the struggle against crime, violence and corruption. Every citizen of goodwill must be prepared to do something towards achieving our most important national goal – one that is far more critical to the long-term future of Jamaica than most of the successes that we are celebrating in this Jamaica's 50th Jubilee. We are battling a deep-rooted and dysfunctional sub-culture of violence and it will take the determined will of an entire people to change this harsh reality and reclaim our nation.

There is **something** that everyone can do – and there are many good projects already underway. These include, for example:

- **The Back2Life Project of the Kiwani's Club** of New Kingston will mentor 100 boys in a juvenile correctional facility;

- **Jamaica National** has a programme called “Action Jamaica” to empower citizens to tackle persistent problems like crime and violence;
- Later this month, the **Manchester Dispute Resolution and Violence Prevention Association** is being launched as a partnership of the Police, Northern Caribbean University, the Ministers’ fraternal, trained mediators, and other civic and political leaders;
- A meditation teacher is bringing **meditation courses to inner-city parents and youth** as one way to transform anger, alienation, and violence into togetherness, trust, and peace.

Everyone can play his or her part in this national mission:

Mothers, sisters, wives and girlfriends: Don’t hide the guns. Do not wash or hide the bloody clothes of the ‘shottas’.

Pastors and church leaders: Make it clear to your members what is morally wrong, particularly in the areas of crime and violence and scamming.

Teachers: Make a special effort to help struggling children, especially those who cannot READ. Remember education is one of the greatest antidotes to crime and violence. Be vigilant for signs that any of your children are being traumatized by violence or abuse.

Bankers: Be vigilant about suspicious transactions. Report them.

Doctors and nurses: Report persons who come in with gunshot or knife wounds to the police

Young professionals: Mentor an at-risk youth

Corporate entities: Help develop and sponsor public education campaigns and community outreach programmes

Parents, neighbours: Watch over your/our children. Tell the police if you have any suspicions of child abuse and domestic violence.

Everyone: Share your information with the police. They are here to protect and serve the nation – but they need your help. Tell them who the criminals are, and they will

protect you. What a fine example the media provided in a recent article about one community:

"We believe in the value of the life of others. Crime of no sort is tolerated here," said the chief historian of the Accompong Maroons, Melville Currie. "Every member of this community is a police, and this is a standard we intend to maintain."

This is a call to action for all Jamaicans! Our children deserve to live in a safe, peaceful, and prosperous Jamaica.

Wherever you are, whatever you do, and in whatever way you can, help make Jamaica safe and secure for everyone.