

Message
Launch of the Diaspora Mapping Exercise Website

Senator the
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The Government of Jamaica has long declared that its most precious asset is its people and, from as early as the first Biennial Diaspora Conference hosted here in 2004, stated its interest in creating a borderless Jamaica involving all our people, wherever they reside. One of the basic requirements to achieve this ideal is the development of an effective tool to provide information on the attributes of our people, their location and interests.

With this in mind, you will understand why I am extremely pleased to be a part of the unveiling of the Official Website of the Mapping Jamaica's Diaspora Project. The project aims to identify, through survey responses, the ways in which the Diaspora can contribute to the development of Jamaica, while also determining their needs and concerns. This website will be an essential tool in gathering information from our Jamaican Diaspora, in order to enable the Government to identify the human, financial and technological resources that exist within this very diverse group.

The Diaspora Mapping Exercise is an eighteen (18) month project which is being funded by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and will be implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade in collaboration with that organization. The website will initially be hosted on the IOM platform for the duration of the survey aspect of the Project. However, once completed, data gleaned will become the property of the Ministry. Subsequently, the Government will be able to analyse the data and formulate appropriate responses that address the needs and concerns of the Diaspora. The information will also be made available generally for the use of Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

The Jamaican Diaspora is estimated to be three (3) million strong, many of whom we expect to eventually capture on the website. With the information that we anticipate the project will provide, Jamaica will be in a better position to make informed choices and to bring to bear the collective talent of our people on our plans for the future.

The Government of Jamaica is deeply grateful to the IOM for its support of the Mapping Jamaica's Diaspora Project. I am confident that it will contribute to the advancement of our people at home and abroad.