



Ministry of
Culture, Gender,
Entertainment
and Sport

THE NEXT LEVEL

Contribution to the 2026/2027 Sectoral Debate
By the Honourable Olivia Grange, OJ, CD, MP
Minister of Culture, Gender,
Entertainment and Sport



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*30 June 2026
Gordon House
Kingston, Jamaica*



The Introduction

Madam Speaker, thank you for your leadership.

Thank you, Prime Minister Dr. the Most Honourable Andrew Holness for allowing me to serve as the Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport. I have been happy to lead these subjects, which were once considered fringe. I am proud that these subjects are now being seen at the heart of Jamaica and are being acknowledged as a source of growth and prosperity. It is testament to the work that we have been doing since the Prime Minister gave us the charge to enable, develop, set things right and build.

I thank my daughter and my granddaughters as well as my extended family, the people of Central St Catherine for persevering with me and supporting me through my many years of service to the people of Jamaica.

I thank the team who has worked hard with me over the years, including my colleagues in the Cabinet, my Minister of State, my Permanent Secretaries, management and staff of my Ministry and the boards of management and the executive leadership and staff in my Departments and Agencies. I wish to thank the stakeholders in the sectors whom we serve. We have done well together and we

are taking our performance to the Next Level.

Our men and women in culture, entertainment and sport have never shied away from taking on the world superpowers. There is no area of culture, entertainment and sport that has not shown itself to be unwavering, unconquerable and unparalleled. In these areas, we have a competitive advantage.

The National Hero, the Right Excellent Sir Alexander Bustamante, spoke of his time in the Houses of Parliament, in this place and next door. He said: "I have spent some of the happiest moments of my life in the Old Headquarters House and Gordon House. It has been a great feeling working for the people of this island in those legislative chambers, a great feeling of satisfaction to know that what you are doing is for the ultimate good of your people."

To serve the people: that is our purpose.

There was something curious about Bustamante. He was the centre of attention everywhere, including in the Parliament. However, as Ulric Simmonds, the late journalist, reminded us in 'Bustamante: Notes, Quotes and Anecdotes', Bustamante was a "good parliamentarian. No member was more obsequious to Mr. Speaker. No one was more intent on keeping the rules."





At a time when our discourse has become rancorous, we could learn from the example of our National Hero.

I make this reflection, not only as the mother of the House, but also because I lived through a very challenging time in our politics; a time when political opponents, including myself, were detained, and in my case, exiled from Jamaica in June 1976.

We cannot go back. So I urge us to turn down the temperature and remember always that we are all here to serve the people.

*I*t is remarkable how challenges and disasters can motivate us to do extraordinarily good things. Through that period of my incarceration and exile, I was motivated to take steps to fulfil my purpose of a lifetime of service to the country I love.

It was through the challenges that affected our communities that we have been able to transform Central St Catherine, which is now a model constituency and living evidence of what we can achieve when we work together. I thank all the stakeholders — educators, the police, the business community, and my Councillors for their service and support. But I reserve my biggest praise and congratulations to the people of Central St Catherine. We have achieved a lot together, and we still have much to do.

I speak today following the most devastating disaster in our country's history. Hurricane Melissa brought unspeakable damage and destruction to our homeland. In its aftermath we have seen the best of Jamaica and the world as people opened their hearts and gave of themselves and

their resources to assist someone in need. The rebuilding is not yet complete. The destruction is such that it will take some time. But even as we build stronger, we are called to help the people of Venezuela who only last week experienced a devastating earthquake.

In the words of Kipling: 'If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs and blaming it on you... If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster and treat those two impostors just the same... If you can... hold on when there is nothing in you except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'... Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it.'

There is hope for a better tomorrow.

*T*he Next Level recognises that the groundwork has been laid for new levels of growth, development and prosperity in culture, gender, entertainment and sport. We've introduced bold, ambitious, beneficial, strategic and impactful legislation, policies and programmes to unleash our creative potential, enable our athletes and the business of sport, build and formalise the entertainment sector, protect the vulnerable and advance gender equality. The Next Level is about sustained and impactful support so that our women and men in the culture, entertainment and sport sectors will continue to grow and prosper.



Next Level Infrastructure

The Next Level requires new and updated infrastructure to keep pace with a forever-changing world. In this regard, the re-development of the National Stadium is an important project.

We've completed the feasibility study, we've completed the concept design and now we're into the detailed design stage.

Today I reveal the latest rendering of the new, modern National Stadium. The new facility will not only enhance the performance of our athletes, but will significantly change the ways in which we interact with and enjoy sports and entertainment events at the National Stadium.

We will increase seating capacity to 37,500 with roof coverage and shade for every seat. There will be improved views from every seat. We will move the seats closer to the action and improve safety for everyone.

The concert capacity, with people not only in stands, but on the field, will be 50,000.

Additionally, the new National Stadium will have 30 boxes — two of which will be VIP boxes. There will be two hospitality lounges, a fan boulevard, and two fan zones. We will also be putting in meeting accommodation and dedicated media suites with TV

studio, broadcast facilities and a venue operations centre.

This is a once in a lifetime redevelopment and so I've taken the chance to do as much as we can as we move to the Next Level. I'm pleased today to announce that we will also construct two well-needed facilities during this re-development. The first is a new Sports Hall which will be a flexible multi-sport, multi-use, naturally ventilated facility for training and also competition.

We're also constructing a Throws Area which will facilitate training in the shot put, discus, hammer, and javelin. The Throws Area will incorporate shelters for when athletes are resting and will provide easy access to the Sports Hall, gym and changing facilities. At the Next Level, Jamaica will not only dominate the track, but with our sustained support and facilitation, we intend to also dominate field events.

The new Sports Hall and Throws Area will be adjacent to Stadium East, which will also benefit from upgrades under this re-development programme. We intend for Stadium East to become a 4,000 seat capacity venue with a track and field set-up which will be similar to the main stadium. Stadium East will continue to be a training venue, a warm-up facility, and the place of







choice, especially for development meets and small events.

The new facilities will be Green Guide compliant, as well as FIFA compliant and World Athletics compliant. This is Next Level stuff.

I wish to report that Jamaica has achieved a major milestone in women's football, having been selected to co-host the 2031 FIFA Women's World Cup, alongside the United States of America, Costa Rica, and Mexico. This comes at the right time to allow us to host the tournament in our re-developed National Stadium — a world class facility, duly retrofitted and ready to accommodate the world's best women football players.

I now have the duty to quote from a correspondence which we recently received from World Athletics. The message included some technical language, but I will just read the sentence that we are all waiting to hear: "All synthetic surface field test measurements comply with World Athletics requirements."

This means that the National Stadium track — the beautiful and unique black, gold and green track — is certified. The Class One facility certification means that the record setting times that can now be run on our modern track will be fully recognised.

Our stakeholders in the west are not left out. As part of my commitment to sports transformation in the west, we are advanced in discussions around a partnership to redevelop and re-imagine the Trelawny Stadium through the investment of US\$550 million into the expansion and redesign of the facilities. The proposal supports the Government's objective for the Trelawny Stadium to be

re-developed based on a solid economic foundation through the establishment of a world class facility which meets the regulatory requirements of international sports associations such as FIFA and World Athletics, and to enhance the sports and entertainment tourism brand of Jamaica. At the direction of the Cabinet, an Enterprise Committee consisting of prominent and highly respected Jamaicans reputed for moving development projects forward will be announced in short order.

We have also improved the infrastructure at Sabina Park — with modern, new lighting and scoreboard — to facilitate the return of international cricket to Jamaica. With the support of the Jamaica Defence Force, and many volunteers, we were able to build up and fix up facilities at Sabina Park on Labour Day, ahead of the recent West Indies series against Sri Lanka and the upcoming Caribbean Premier League.

The stakeholders of Sabina Park including the JCA, KCC and GOJ have already met and are in discussions about the new governance model for Sabina Park, going forward, treating this mecca of cricket as the hub for the development of grassroots cricket in Jamaica.

I am saying this in the recent aftermath of a comprehensive victory by the West Indies men's cricket team over Sri Lanka in the T20 Series and their recent comprehensive innings and 217 runs victory in the first Test match.

Congratulations are also in order to our Women's Cricket Team who have qualified for the semi-finals of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup.

The transformation in cricket is at the heart of the Next Level performance of

this Government. We have returned the CPL to Jamaica. Our country will host the opening match of the 2026 tournament on August 7, the first of five or six matches involving six or seven teams, with the teams arriving within the first week of August and continuing for three weeks thereafter. We are satisfied that the return of the CPL to Jamaica will result in significant investment in the country well beyond visitor arrival to include capital investment, infrastructure development and the building of long-term and sustainable business relationships.

The US-based Kingsmen Group with strong ties to the Premier Super League in Pakistan has committed to assisting us in taking our game to the Next Level through significant investments in Jamaica's cricket development. We propose to build cricket at the community and junior levels through infrastructure development and the sponsorship of competitions islandwide.

The Kingsmen Group's investment at US\$2.75 million annually to operate a Men's CPL Franchise, and US\$500 thousand to establish a Women's CPL Franchise, provides support for grassroots cricket development through collaboration with government and corporate stakeholders to deliver measurable economic benefits to Jamaica. Embedded in the agreement for the Sabina Park upgrades and the Caribbean Premier League is a commitment from the Kingsmen to support the development of cricket in this country. The Government of Jamaica will use this partnership to embark on a 3-year programme to push the development of the sport at the primary school level.

Six main objectives have been set for the Programme:

- 1. Increase in the number of teams participating in primary schools' cricket*
- 2. Facilitate the availability of sufficient, proficient coaches to guide schools in need*
- 3. Foster renewed interest in the game of cricket by returning passion to the sport, which will see young girls and boys enjoying the sport*
- 4. Provide greater access to gear and equipment by making them both available and affordable for schools and parents*
- 5. Promote excellence and resilience through improvements in technique, awareness and the mental fortitude of players on and off the field.*
- 6. Create strategic pathways through early identification of potential players for entry to an enhanced development programme.*

Some of the specific targets for the next three years will see 300 schools involved, 300 new coaches trained and certified, acquisition of transferable/transportable cricket pitches to allow access for training and matches, 300 kit bags for schools equipped with bats, pads, gloves and safety gear and at least 15 players identified each year to be placed in the enhanced pathway programme, the first step towards an Academy – to allow for better and more structured development.

This is how we move to the Next Level in cricket – by going back to the grassroots, equipping our children, training our coaches, putting pitches in schoolyards, and building a pipeline from the classroom to Sabina Park, to the West Indies, and to the world.



I am pleased to announce the establishment of the National Sports Advisory Council to perform the following functions:

1. Provide advice to the Minister on policy and harmonisation of the sports industry
2. Promote sport development actions
3. Conduct impact assessments and analyses of government's policy directives
4. Provide on-going development of proposals for National Policy in relation to sport.
5. Advise on strategies to create synergies among sports federations through capacity building, streamlining, funding and infrastructure development
6. Monitor the transformation plan for sports ensuring timely and effective implementation

I am also pleased to announce the establishment of the National Sports Commission, which will oversee the streamlining of the agencies serving the sports sector, thus moving the sector to the Next Level. As part of our transformation plan the entities will be resourced to benefit from innovation, take advantage of opportunities for economies of scale and expand their services to the sports sector. This is Next Level impact.

We are putting money where it matters.

The Sports Development Foundation spent J\$236 million on sports infrastructure across constituencies in the last financial year. The projects included the construction of multi-purpose courts as well as the rehabilitation and fencing of playing fields and improvements to national facilities. The Sports Development Foundation also supported national sports federations to the tune of J\$197 million for their development programmes as we seek to lift sports performance to the Next Level through tangible support.

At the same time, the Ministry supported the entertainment sector through grants, tour support and sponsorship in the sum of J\$148.6 million. Working together with the entertainment sector, the Ministry raised funds to support hurricane relief efforts through the I Love Jamaica series of concerts in major cities across the world. I use this opportunity to express thanks to our entertainers, who never let us down in a time of crisis; and to the peoples of the world for their help.

The Ministry will be collaborating with the Jamaica E-Sports Initiative and the Inter-secondary Schools Sports Association to raise funds to support restoration projects in schools that were affected by last year's hurricane.



People at the Centre

The Next Level calls for sustained focus on human development – on unearthing, nurturing, unleashing and promoting talent and creativity. That is the aim of our National Festival of the Arts Programme of the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission. In the 2025 season, we accepted 14,281 entries in all competitions including dance, drama, music, speech, traditional folk forms, culinary arts, creative writing, visual arts, Fiwi short film, Jamaica Festival Queen, Gospel Star and the Jamaica Festival Song competition. The hurricane in October has led to a 30 percent reduction in entries this year as schools and community groups, particularly in Western Jamaica, recover from the hurricane.

The National Festival of the Arts Programme has been an important platform for celebrating, promoting and preserving the unique things that make us Jamaicans – our ways, our traditions, our heritage, our creativity, our culture. It continues to be the launching pad for singers, writers, musicians, actors, artists, broadcasters, and increasingly, film makers.

I must comment on the increased quality of entries that we have seen over the last few years. I credit our deliberate training and coaching initiatives across the country for the improvements that we continue to see. I thank all our culture bearers, particularly our teachers and community

leaders who work hard each year to prepare items for our various competitions.

This year, we have a very strong group of finalists—four women and five men—in the Jamaica Festival Song competition, which is celebrating its 60th year. The songs are being posted to the major music streaming platforms across the world, including Apple Music, Amazon Music and Spotify. Just search Jamaica Festival Song Competition 2026 to listen to this year's album.

The albums of previous years, since 2020, are also available on streaming platforms and will continue to provide royalties for performers and writers. This is another of the ways that we have taken Jamaica Festival to the Next Level, by building a global stage for our talented people to shine.

As we continue to the Next Level, I announce today that we are in the final stages of publishing a cookbook of some of the most exciting, delectable and creative Jamaican recipes that have been exposed through our culinary arts programme. This is yet another opportunity to expose and promote our people and our culture.

I invite Jamaicans and friends of Jamaica overseas to join us for the celebrations under the broad theme “United in Celebrating Resilience”. This year will also be the warm up for Jamaica 65 next year.



We are facilitating the training and certification of our creatives to the Next Level. Last year, I spoke about our new creatives school, formally the Institute for Cultural Practitioners, Innovators, Entertainers and Creatives. This centre of innovation and excellence will offer flexible, cutting-edge education and professional development across the full spectrum of creative disciplines. Through the Institute we will equip our creatives with technical expertise and business acumen. We will offer micro-credentialing so that practitioners can upskill without interrupting their careers.

The Institute will be housed at the Caribbean Maritime University and will include courses taught by industry professionals in Jamaica and overseas. The programme is also being developed in collaboration with overseas institutions and the Creative Production and Training Centre, an agency of my Ministry.

I am pleased to announce that the Jamaica Tertiary Education Commission recently renewed the registration of the CPTC's Media Technology Institute as a General Higher Education College. The Media Technology Institute is registered to deliver levels 2 to 4 programmes of study on the National Qualification Framework, in subjects including animation, radio, motion graphics, still photography, and video production. And starting in the new academic year, we will add digital media and audio engineering to our programme.

We continue to support the training of coaches as we lift sports from the grassroots to the high performance level by unearthing and nurturing athletic talent and building a culture of physical activeness.

Last year, through the Institute of Sports, 311 primary-level coaches were certified under the Jamaica Football Federation's 'D Licence' programme. We also facilitated multi-disciplinary training seminars to improve coaching standards and lift athlete performance to the Next Level.

This year, I was pleased with the performances at the National Primary Schools Track and Field Championships hosted by the Institute of Sports where our future stars broke 13 records and gave us a taste of what the future holds. We must continue to hone their talent and help them to the Next Level.

At the Next Level, Jamaica's athletes set a world record twice in 24 hours in the mixed 4×100m at the World Athletics Relays in Botswana earlier this year. We send congratulations to Ackeem Blake, Tina Clayton, Kadrian Goldson, and Tia Clayton who first ran 39.99 seconds in the qualifying heats before lowering the record to 39.62 seconds in the final.

Their record-setting gold medal helped Jamaica to top the medals table at the Championships and we send congratulations to the entire team, including Elaine Thompson-Herah who made a triumphant return to the track.

For the first time Jamaica's women's three on three basketball team have qualified for the Commonwealth Games. The Games will be held in Scotland in July.

And the young Reggae Boyz also qualified for the FIFA Under 17 World Cup 2026 to be held in Qatar in November.

Big Up! to our athletes who continue to carry our flag and make us all proud.

What a country!



Our focus on human development also includes expanding access for people with disabilities to our national treasures and activities. Working through the Jamaica Libraries and Information Network, the National Library of Jamaica launched “Bridging the Gap: One Sign at a Time”. I am so pleased by the initiative which will ensure that user facing team members in libraries across Jamaica will be proficient in Jamaican sign language and will be able to communicate with members of the deaf community. Just imagine the difference this important development will make when the programme is up and running at full speed.

We were also able to install ramps and platforms at Sabina Park to ensure that wheelchair users have access to cricket.

Additionally, the Jamaica National Commission for Unesco collaborated with the Salvation Army School for the Blind to upgrade and expand their music programme. The initiative facilitated the procurement of specially adapted musical equipment, and professional audio recording equipment.

During the year, the National Commission facilitated five projects totalling US\$80,000.





Legislation, Policies, Initiatives

Among our proudest legislative achievements has been the enactment and implementation of the Sexual Harassment (Protection and Prevention) Act which will lead culture change in how we engage with each other in the workplace, in institutions and in the accommodation sector. The Sexual Harassment Tribunal, established by the law is fully functional and has been hearing cases. Between July and March, 21 complaints have been received with 62 percent resolved and closed. I use this opportunity to again remind workplaces of the need, under the law, to develop policies for the prevention of sexual harassment and to ensure that the policies are brought to the attention of workers. The Bureau of Gender Affairs is standing by to provide assistance.

We are developing a mobile app to enable people in domestic violence situations to call for help. The app will integrate with the National 24-hour Domestic Violence Hotline and will provide a discreet, secure, and accessible platform to respond to and support those who need help and prevent gender based violence.

The app will enable us to offer Next Level services as part of our Continuum of Care for Survivors of Gender-Based Violence. The app is coming, but the hotline is open now.

I encourage anyone who needs assistance to call 876-553-0372. We will help you!

We are now providing group life and group health insurance to our entertainers and creatives under the Jamaica Entertainment and Creative Industries Practitioners Insurance Plan. The life and personal accident benefit was launched in 2024 and the health benefit— which covers hospitalisation, surgeries, maternity care, dental and overseas medical — was activated in August.

This insurance plan is free to members of the entertainment, culture and creative industries sector. Visit the Ministry's website at mcges.gov.jm to find out how to enrol and sign up. I encourage those who previously signed up to the life and personal accident insurance benefit, but have not yet signed up for the health benefit, to move quickly to ensure that they are fully covered.

The Jamaica Entertainment and Creative Industries Practitioners Insurance Plan has been implemented to address longstanding vulnerabilities faced by entertainers, cultural and creative practitioners by expanding access to critical social protection benefits.

It is similar to the highly successful Jamaica Athletes Insurance Plan which in the last financial year recorded almost 12,000 claims. We are doing a review of the



Jamaica Athletes Insurance Plan as we look to expand the coverage to coaches.

We have also begun the process to revise and update the National Policy for Sports; and we are reviewing the Jamaica Anti-Doping Commission Anti-Doping Rules to ensure they align with the new WADA Code which will take effect on January 1, 2027.

Our proposals for moving culture, entertainment and the creative industries to the Next Level are outlined in the Green Paper for the National Policy for Culture, Entertainment and the Creative Economy. The Green Paper is now being considered by a Joint Select Committee of Parliament. The Green Paper presents our blueprint for growth of the creative economy through innovative strategies which focus on cultural diversity, equity, and inclusion; building resilience against the challenges of climate change and socio-economic disruption; and leveraging frontier technologies and innovation to fuel and sustain Jamaica as a cultural superpower.

Culture, entertainment and the creative industries are economic drivers as well as a vital social force. In this regard, we embed in this policy mechanisms for empowering communities, fostering social cohesion, building pathways for sustainable livelihoods for our artists, cultural practitioners, and creative entrepreneurs, as well as funding for the sector.

Importantly, as well, this policy aims to increase access to culture for every Jamaican and build national identity. The building of national identity has implications for consolidation of positive values, the strengthening of communities and the

promotion of higher levels of productivity, peace and stability in our country.

Regarding our aim to fund the sector, we are establishing the Jamaica Entertainment and Cultural Development Foundation – a dedicated mechanism to provide sustainable financial support for creative projects, cultural preservation, and institutional development across the sector. It will be operationalised to address critical institutional gaps in Jamaica's culture and creative sectors which will rise to the Next Level with systematic support. The Foundation will promote cultural diversity and preservation; foster community engagement and social cohesion; drive economic growth; provide resilience mechanisms for the sector; upskill individuals; support creative entrepreneurs; encourage innovation and creativity. It is intended to support the development of the entertainment, cultural, and creative industries by providing a structure for investment, funding, and strategic support to creators and practitioners. Through such a mechanism, the sector can better nurture talent, expand opportunities, strengthen institutions, and help transform creative work into meaningful economic and social value for the country.

We are also moving to amend the Jamaica National Heritage Trust Act. The amendments will modernise the legislations, create new categories of recognition of heritage and cultural assets and enact provisions of the Unesco Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. This will prevent pilferage of our cultural and heritage assets and



enhance efforts to repatriate our artefacts which are in foreign countries.

Jamaica ratified the Convention earlier this year during the visit to the island by the Director General of Unesco.

Moving to the Next Level, Unesco accepted our nomination for the inscription of Port Royal to the World Heritage List. The inscription recognises Port Royal's unique terrestrial and submerged 17th-century archaeological landscape, including fortifications and earthquake-submerged structures from 1692. Port Royal joins the Blue and John Crow Mountains as Jamaican properties on the World Heritage List. The heritage list recognises and preserves monuments, buildings and other sites,

that are considered to be of outstanding universal value.

We are currently developing a case to add Jonkuunu to the Urgent Safeguarding List as part of our efforts to revive and protect the waning cultural practice. An inscription will provide access to funding through Unesco's Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for programmes aimed at revitalising Jonkuunu.



Reparatory Justice

Today, we take our mission for reparatory justice to the Next Level with the launch of a campaign to petition His Majesty the King, Charles III. We intend to petition King Charles on September 6 – an historic day. On this date in 1781, the Zong Slave ship departed West Africa for Jamaica with 442 enslaved Africans. Throughout the journey the ship ran into trouble and the captain kept throwing enslaved Africans overboard in order to claim insurance for loss of cargo. 140 enslaved Africans were killed. The ship finally arrived in Black River on December 21, 1781.

We erected a monument to the murdered Africans in Black River where the ship docked. Interestingly, when hurricane Melissa devastated the town, it was the only monument standing as if to remind us of our duty to seek reparatory justice.

Our petition to the King will request that he refers to the Privy Council—the final appellate Court of Jamaica—three questions related to the criminal nature of the transatlantic trafficking and racialised chattel enslavement of Africans in Jamaica. The three questions relate to:

a) whether the forced transportation of African people from their homelands to Jamaica and their subsequent enslavement in Jamaica were lawful because such

unauthorised removal and enslavement was contrary to the fundamental principles of the common law;

b) whether the forced transportation and subsequent enslavement of people of African descent up until 1838 constituted crimes against humanity under international law, for which the UK bears responsibility;

c) in light of the said actions/illegalities, whether the UK is under an obligation to provide a remedy to the Jamaican people for the unlawful transportation and enslavement of African people in Jamaica under British rule up until 1838 and for the continuing consequences of the same.

This request is made to His Majesty the King in his capacity as Head of State of Jamaica and from whom we expect protection. We have the full support of CARICOM in the execution of this action.

The enslavement of our ancestors lasted over three hundred years before, by their own sustained effort, they were able to remove the shackles of enslavement. When the ancestors achieved their emancipation in 1834, the planters were compensated for loss of ‘property’. Let us remember that the Government of England calculated the cost to the planters of losing their so-called ‘property’ at £47m. The Government of England was only able to finance up to



£20m in compensation through a loan that was finally settled in 2015. They decided to impose a period of apprenticeship to offset the additional cost of £27m. This apprenticeship system meant that the newly emancipated Africans were forced to provide years of additional free labour to the planters, thereby literally paying their enslavers for their freedom.

On March 25, this year – the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Slave Trade—the Government of Ghana secured in the United Nations the passing of a resolution declaring the trafficking of Enslaved Africans and Racialised Chattel Enslavement of Africans as the Gravest Crime Against Humanity. Jamaica and the rest of CARICOM supported the declaration. Regrettably, all the countries of Europe abstained.

I invite every Jamaican to join the conversation and the movement for reparatory justice on behalf of the ancestors.

In an effort to improve public awareness on the matter of reparations, my Ministry will in short order publish a document titled One Hundred Discussion Points on Reparations, contributed by three members of the National Council on Reparations: Dr. Jahlani Niaah, Professor Clinton Hutton and Dr. Michael Barnett. The aim is to fill the gap of knowledge and guide our deliberations at this strategic moment.

Additionally, as we move to the Next Level, the NCR has developed a programme for the integration of reparatory justice and the history of our people into the curriculum of schools at every level of education. It is about developing content,



teaching methodologies and approaches to integrating reparatory justice and the history of our people into all subjects. We look forward to sharing our approach with the Ministry of Education, Youth, Skills and Information.

Our reparatory justice mission also includes internal reparations. You will recall that the Most Honourable



Prime Minister in 2017 proffered an apology on behalf of the Government of Jamaica to the Rastafari community for the Coral Gardens incident of 1963. Since then, my Ministry has made payments to the Coral Gardens Rastafari Benevolent Society through a fund administered by the Administrator General.

On Good Friday, I formally presented to the Coral Gardens Rastafari Benevolent Society the titles for two lots in Albion, St. James in furtherance of our commitment to facilitate establishment of an elder care facility.



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Concluding Statement

Madam Speaker, much has been achieved of which we can be and have been truly proud. Yet we recognise that the Next Level is for things to soar to even greater heights with higher levels of growth and development bolstered by new ways of being, thinking and doing.

It is about raising the proverbial bar even higher than we have done so far by re-envisioning culture, gender, entertainment and sport and ensuring that we continue to take bold, ambitious, beneficial, strategic and impactful actions to improve the lives and careers of the people and sectors that we represent.

We're committed to the task ahead, confident in our purpose, in our record of service to the people and in our ability to continue building to the Next Level.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Babsy



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