

**Statement by Barbados on the Occasion of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Jamaica**  
**Wednesday, May 13, 2015**

Thank you Mr. President.

Barbados extends a very warm welcome to the delegation of Jamaica and in particular the Minister of Justice of Jamaica and Head of Delegation, Senator the Honourable Mark Golding.

My delegation commends Jamaica for the work they have put into producing their national report and the presentation made here today.

We have noted the significant effort undertaken by Jamaica to further strengthen the legal and institutional framework for human rights and, within its administrative and financial capabilities, align its human rights policies and practices with internationally accepted best practice.

We should not underestimate the constraints placed on small, financially resource-scarce states in acceding to international human rights conventions and treaties with the concomitant reporting responsibilities. Timely reporting are real issues for Jamaica, Barbados and other fellow CARICOM states. To quote Jamaica's national report:

" This (however) is not to be construed as a lack of genuine interest or desire to abide by the reporting schedule but rather a reflection of the real challenges faced by small countries...."

Notwithstanding these challenges, Barbados commends Jamaica on the emphasis placed on strengthening the human rights architecture of the country and placing human rights in the forefront of its development efforts.

We note the progress made on enhancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls which we know few countries can boast. The numbers speak for themselves. Twenty-one percent of parliamentarians are female, 56% Permanent Secretaries are female and females hold many major positions in government, the foremost being the position of Prime Minister.

The proposed National Strategic Plan of Action to Eliminate Gender-based Violence is therefore a natural follow-on in strengthening efforts to address gender-based violence. While the Plan has not yet been finalized, my delegation notes that it focuses not only on protection against violence but also on prevention and redress. We urge Jamaica to give priority to finalizing and implementing this worthy initiative.

We view positively the efforts made in enhancing the security of citizens and in particular the programmes and interventions that involve ordinary citizens in their communities under the *Unite for Change Initiative*. This initiative, along with improvements in the delivery of justice by the courts and adequate human rights sensitization training of the security personnel will further consolidate human rights achievements.

Finally, Barbados compliments Jamaica for incorporating human rights education into the national curriculum for primary and secondary schools and its extension to all levels of teacher training.

In concluding, Barbados takes this opportunity to wish Jamaica a successful UPR.

Thank you.