**Human Rights Council**

**25TH Session of the UPR Working Group**

**Statement by**

**Miss Cherryl Gordon, Minister/Deputy Permanent Representative,**

**Permanent Mission of Jamaica**

**to the**

**Universal Periodic Review of**

**ANTIGUA & BARBUDA**

**Geneva, 9th May, 2016**

             Thank you, Mr. President.

 Jamaica warmly welcomes the delegation of Antigua and Barbuda, a sister CARICOM State, and thanks the delegation for the update on the situation of human rights in the country.          Jamaica commends Antigua and Barbuda for its commitment to improving the quality of life of its citizens, through legislative reform and programmes directed at increased socio-economic advancement; in particular, the protection of children and empowerment of women. Particularly commendable was the passage, in 2015, of a suite of laws relating to children and families; as well as the Defamation Act and the amendment to the Trafficking in Person (Prevention) Act. We also commend Antigua and Barbuda for placing children with visual disabilities into the mainstream educational system from pre-school; formation of the multi-stakeholder National Wellness Committee to address the risk factors driving the Caribbean’s NCD epidemic; and for its commitment to several socio-economic programmes implemented under the *PDV Caribe* umbrella, itself a product of the Venezuelan Government’s PetroCaribe Initiative.

        Jamaica recommends that Antigua and Barbuda make a concerted effort to increase the number of households with access to piped water, sanitation and electricity; with appropriate assistance from bilateral, regional and international partners. We also encourage Antigua and Barbuda to prioritise its prison reform programme to tackle over-crowding in prisons, in keeping with the Government’s stated ambitions in this regard.

        Finally, Jamaica wishes the Government of Antigua and Barbuda all the very best in this review.

                I thank you.