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

 SURINAME

Geneva, 2nd May, 2016

                Jamaica warmly welcomes the delegation of our sister CARICOM State of Suriname, led by Her Excellency Mrs. Jennifer van Dijk-Silos, and thanks her for the update on the situation of human rights in the Republic.

                Jamaica commends Suriname for concerted and committed action to improve the situation of human rights of all Surinamese, through legislative reform and programmes, especially for women and children. Particularly commendable are the amendments to the National and Residency Act and the Election Act; drafting of legislation on ‘Sexual Harassment at the Workplace’ and to amend the Civil Code to introduce maternity leave for women employed in the private sector; formulation and implementation of the Domestic Violence Plan 2014 – 2017; and signing of the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Also commendable are the benefits and services in place to combat child labour, as well as the innovative Conditional Cash Transfer programme, which offers families an incentive to keep children in school rather than in the labour force.

                Jamaica recommends that Suriname urgently address the constraints affecting the functioning of the CCT programme, including, if appropriate, through technical and/or financial assistance from regional and international partners.

 We applaud Suriname for progress made in increasing attention paid to mental health and look forward to the sharing of best practices and lessons learned within the context of the Caribbean Community of nations. We recommend that Suriname consider adopting a more targeted programme to address the reported high suicide rate, especially among the youth, through, *inter alia*, the revitalised National Mental Health Plan.

 Finally, Jamaica wishes Suriname all the very best in this Review.

 I thank you.