Human Rights Council

26TH Session of the UPR Working Group

Statement by

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Permanent Mission of Jamaica

to the

Universal Periodic Review of

HAITI

Geneva, 7th November, 2016

               Jamaica warmly welcomes our neighbour and sister CARICOM nation, Haiti, and thanks the distinguished Minister for his oral update.

              Jamaica commends Haiti for its commitment to improving the quality of life of its citizens, particularly in the face of overwhelming odds. We commend the appointment of the post of Prime Minister’s Deputy Minister for Human Rights [and the Fight Against Extreme Poverty]; reduction of the number of persons in pre-trial detention; and measures taken to manage and monitor – long-term - the adoption of Haitian children by foreigners. We also recognise the vast expertise amassed by Haiti in disaster risk reduction and management, post-2010, as evidenced by the thorough and cohesive response to Hurricane Matthew.

Jamaica recommends that Haiti intensify collective efforts to ensure that scheduled elections are run as smoothly as possible, in spite of ongoing recovery efforts, utilising its renowned resilience.

We share the Government’s concern about the continued practice of *“restaveks”,* and note the CRC’s recommendation that this practice be criminalised. We recognise, however, that outlawing the practice without addressing the root causes or providing alternative income sources, could force children into even more dangerous situations. We, therefore, recommend that Haiti adopt a holistic, long-term approach that involves phasing out *“restaveks”;* incorporating international best practices which could include increased inspections, sensitisation of parents, children and employers, and guaranteed schooling for child domestics. We also recommend that Haiti renew the mandate of the National Disabilities Council.

            Finally, Jamaica wishes Haiti all the very best in this review.

          I thank you.