

Foreign Affairs

Jamaica Remains Firmly Committed To The Haitian Cause

By Mickella Anderson-Gordon

Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Andrew Holness, has reaffirmed Jamaica's commitment to the Haitian cause and called on the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and regional and international partners to act urgently to restore order to the French-speaking island.

Mr. Holness made the statement at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel in New Kingston on Monday (March 11) on the occasion of a high-level meeting on Haiti convened by the Heads of Government of CARICOM.

The Prime Minister pointed out that the political, security and humanitarian crisis in Haiti has been worsening on the ground, especially over the last few weeks.

"It is clear that Haiti is now at a tipping point. CARICOM and our regional partners are deeply concerned, as are our international partners," the Prime Minister said.

"We who have agreed to facilitate consensus will do an injustice to the people of Haiti if we ourselves are unable to move forward with urgency and resolve," he added, while noting that the special meeting "must lead us closer to action."

Prime Minister Holness said that CARICOM Heads have

been intensely engaged in discussions and outreach to prevent the situation in Haiti from becoming a civil war.

"We have all agreed that this cannot be allowed to happen, not in our hemisphere, with our long-standing reputation as a zone of peace," Mr. Holness said.

He outlined, further, that Haiti requires a long-term reconstruction and support plan from regional and international partners.

Furthermore, with the Haitian national police being under-resourced and outmanned, the Prime Minister said that the United Nations (UN) Security Council-approved multinational support mission to Haiti is a critical and necessary first step to restore basic law and order.

The Prime Minister also noted that Haitian voices must be central to any deliberation towards a resolution of the situation.

"It is my hope that at the end of this meeting, we will have developed a clear and defined pathway forward and would have infused our planning for deployment of the agreed multinational security support mission with the urgency and the vision it requires," Mr. Holness said. (Source: jis.gov)



Prime Minister the Most Hon Andrew Holness (right), is in conversation with CARICOM chairman and President of Guyana, Dr. Mohamed Irfan Ali, during a press conference at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel (March 11) on the occasion of a high-level CARICOM meeting on Haiti. Photo: Yhomo Hutchinson

US Pledges Additional \$100 Million To Support Multinational Force To Haiti

By Garfield L. Angus

The United States (US) Government is providing an additional \$100 million to assist a United Nations (UN) multinational force mission to Haiti to restore stability to the country.

US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, made the announcement following a meeting with Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Heads, at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel in New Kingston on Monday (March 11).

He said that with the additional sum, the total US support for the mission will now move to \$300 million. Another \$33 million will also be provided by the US in humanitarian aid.

The Secretary of State said the US is in full support of a Haitian-led effort to get the country back to a path of stability and growth, with neighboring countries providing critical assistance.

He added that the joint proposal by CARICOM and Haitian stakeholders to expedite a political transition in Haiti has the backing of the US.

Secretary Blinken said the US also supports the plan to create a "broad-based, inclusive, independent presidential college" that would take concrete steps to meet the immediate needs of the Haitian people, enable swift deployment of a multinational security support mission, and through that deployment, create the conditions that are necessary to hold free and fair elections and allow for humanitarian relief for the people.

Much of the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince has been taken over by gangs, with CARICOM playing a lead role in restoring functioning institutions in the country.

The meeting included CARICOM Heads of Government as well as international partner countries. (Source: jis.com)



United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken, addresses a high-level CARICOM meeting on Haiti, held on Monday (March 11), at The Jamaica Pegasus Hotel in New Kingston. Photo: Donald De La Haye

State Minister Outlines Significant Contribution To Diaspora



Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Hon. Alando Terrelonge, addresses the recent Diplomatic Day Event, held at the Ministry in downtown Kingston, Jamaica

By Garfield L. Angus

The contribution of the Jamaican Diaspora to the country's economy now stands at 14 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), says Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Hon. Alando Terrelonge.

Mr. Terrelonge said the growth and successes that have been achieved over the decades, particularly in recent times, have been due, in part, to the Government of Jamaica's steadfast recognition of the "power of our diaspora."

Speaking at a recent Diplomatic Day event at the Ministry in downtown Kingston, the Minister of State said the 14 percent contribution from the diaspora was from remittances, which amounted to US\$3.4 billion in 2021 from the United States (US) and three other countries.

He added that for the period April 1 to October 31, 2023, contribution to the health sector from overseas Jamaicans totaled

\$93.8 million, with support to the Adopt-A-Clinic Program amounting to \$4.3 million "from three diaspora locations."

"In the area of education, alumni associations and churches in the diaspora have themselves been solid social investors in students and people of Jamaica. In fact, the Jamaican education sector received US\$24.6 million for [the financial year] 2019/2020," he noted.

Mr. Terrelonge said the term diaspora is one that has "tremendous meaning to us as a Government," as the Administration recognizes the potential contribution of its overseas nationals, and the power that they hold towards national development, "even as we seek to strengthen our critical bilateral partnerships".

Further, he outlined that the recently adopted National Diaspora Policy prioritizes a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to nation-building, which underscores the "significance of the diaspora" as an essential and long-standing partner

and actor in the national development efforts.

There is a recognition, he underscored, of the multiple avenues that have existed for years among diasporans for giving back, and the Administration has instituted a "strong formal" forum for partnership between Government and the diaspora through the premier biennially held Diaspora Conferences, the 10th of which will be held from June 16 to 19, 2024 in Montego Bay, St. James.

"As we seek to improve and perfect our engagement, based on the principles of forging partnerships and sustainable development, with an emphasis on human capital and youth development and empowerment, and a more inclusive approach, the Government of Jamaica has established other key supportive mechanisms, chief among them the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council and the Global Jamaica Diaspora Youth Council, to assist in further realizing the developmental potential of Jamaica and her people," the State Minister said. (Source: jis.com)

Woman Of Jamaican Descent Becomes First Black Female Pilot To Fly Boeing 777 For Air Canada



Jamaican Canadian Zoey Williams, 27, is the first Black female pilot at Air Canada to fly a Boeing 777 aircraft. She had already made aviation history by being the first Black female pilot to join the Air Canada team. Her father, Orrett Williams, a native of Jamaica who is a Boeing 777 Captain with Air Canada, inspired her outstanding career as a pilot. (Source: jis.com)

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The Rise, Fall, And Rise Of Diaspora Unity

By Garfield Grandison

Imagine this: The National Association of Jamaican and Supportive Organizations (NAJASO), a movement born from the heart, a collective whisper turning into a booming voice, uniting Jamaicans far from their sun-soaked shores, all with a singular goal—to bolster their beloved island.

NAJASO, America's premier diaspora organization, is aiming for a grand re-emergence. Before we sail into the essence of NAJASO's revival, hit the subscribe button if you haven't yet. Trust me, you don't want to miss the treasure trove of insights, especially the bonus facts waiting to dazzle you at the end.

Picture this: It's 1977, and the vibrant Jamaican community in the United States finds a new voice, a beacon of unity, through NAJASO. Spearheaded by the visionary Senator Alfred Rattray. This organization emerged as a patriotic front, a bridge not only for Jamaican Americans but also for an eclectic mix of Caribbean, African-American, and international organizations—all rallying for Jamaica's prosperity.

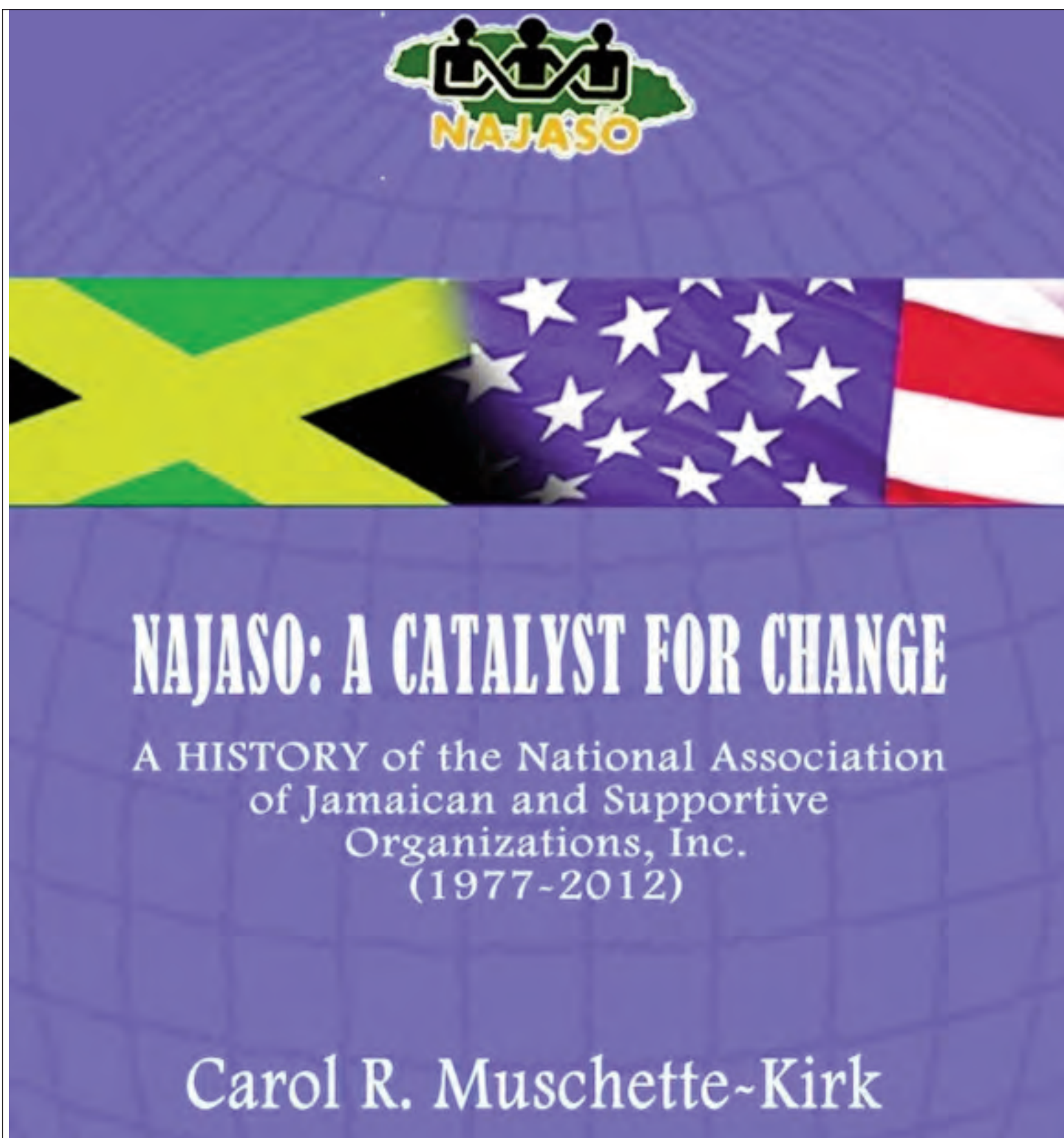
Fast forward as the narrative takes a twist: NAJASO, once a powerhouse with 200 strong, now whispers in the shadows, its numbers dwindled, its voice a faint echo of its former glory. Yet, hope flickers anew as Her Excellency Audrey Marks, Jamaica's current Ambassador to the United States, extends her hand, calling for a rekindling of this once mighty alliance.

But why has this titan of diaspora unity found itself on shaky ground? A controversial policy change by NAJASO's leadership demanded back payments from former members seeking re-entry, causing ripples of discontent. This maneuver, seen by many as a tactic to cement current leaders' positions, has inadvertently shrunk NAJASO's voice and influence.

Yet, amidst the challenges, there's a beacon of hope. The Jamaica Diaspora Institute's research sheds light on what makes diaspora organizations like NAJASO indispensable. They offer inclusiveness, value addition, connectivity, and collaboration, essential ingredients for a robust diaspora presence.

Why does this matter, you ask? Ambassador Curtiss Ward reminds us of the diaspora's lifeline to Jamaica's economy, their remittances a steady stream in turbulent times. But beyond dollars and cents, the diaspora holds potent views on governance, human rights, and security. The diaspora's potential to influence positive change in Jamaica is immense, yet untapped.

Enter Dr. Robert Clarke and Dr. Roy Davidson, past NAJASO presidents, pledging to steer this ship back to prominence. Their commitment signifies a beacon of hope, a promise of revival. You, the reader of this article are part of the story—your engagement, your voice matters. If this tale of unity, challenge, and hope resonates with you, consider joining the digital community by subscribing. Together, we can be part of NAJASO's resurgence, part of a movement shaping the future of Jamaica and its global family. Here are the sparkling bonus facts about NAJASO:



Founding Vision: The West Indian Social Club of Hartford, Connecticut, a cornerstone in this story, was among NAJASO's founding members, embodying the vision of unity and support across the Jamaican Diaspora.

A Legacy of Leadership: Collin Bennett, NAJASO's first president, set the stage for a tradition of leadership that transcends borders, inspiring generations of Jamaicans in the diaspora.

Beyond Remittances: Professor Neville Ying's insights reveal that the Jamaican Diaspora contributes over 40% of Jamaica's GDP or gross domestic product, highlighting the economic powerhouse beyond mere money transfers, including investments in business, real estate, and boosting tourism.

As we draw this journey to a close, remember that NAJASO's story is not just about the challenges

we faced but also about resilience, unity, and the indomitable spirit of the Jamaican people. Let's be part of that continuing story. And in this connection, let's thank Mark Milward, host of the popular Jamaica Diaspora Show, for his role.

If this story has touched you, ignited a spark, or made you curious, don't forget to like, share, and subscribe for more tales of unity, courage, and change. Together, let's make a difference; and keep the spirit alive, and as always, stay inspired.

For questions and inquiries from individuals or organizations on the subject of reviving NAJASO, please contact former NAJASO past president Dr. B. Roy Davidson at (661) 495-8834 or email binzied@yahoo.com.



Mark Milward, host of the popular Jamaica Diaspora Show & NASJO PRO, presents book *NAJASO: A Catalyst for Change* to Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett (Delegate Rep. Virgin Islands).

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