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STATE OF THE NATION



SENATOR GABRIELA MORRIS

Shadow Minister | Youth & Civic Engagement

STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

JANUARY 17, 2025

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Mr. President,

This morning, as I rise to deliver what may be my final State of the Nation Address in this chamber, for the life of this Senate. I do so with a heart brimming with gratitude, pride, and resolve. Serving the people of Jamaica in this capacity has been the honor of a lifetime, a trust placed in me at just 23 years old—a trust I have held sacred and with humility, every step of the way.

I would like to take the opportunity to salute the former Leader of the Opposition Dr. Peter Phillips for entrusting me with this awesome responsibility. To the current Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Mark Golding, thank you for your faith in me, for granting me the opportunity to serve as Spokesperson on Youth and Civic Engagement and for always lending your wisdom and guidance.

I have been blessed to share this chamber with colleagues who have inspired and challenged me. To my Senate family on this side, we have weathered storms together, we have stood resolute, and I am stronger for it. To the staff of this Parliament, your dedication does not go unnoticed. Respect is due for every long session you have endured.

And to my village; my family, my friends, you are my foundation, my strength. Your unwavering belief in me has made all of this possible.

As I reflect on my journey, I am reminded of the powerful words of Langston Hughes:

"What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun?

Or fester like a sore—and then run?"

Mr. President, too many Jamaicans' dreams have dried up.

This is precisely why I am so grateful for the privilege of representing the people of North West St Ann as of October of last year. As I engage with my constituents, I notice a troubling reality. Their hopes have withered under the weight of broken promises and unfulfilled potential. The farmers, the youth yearning for opportunity, the single mothers fighting to make ends meet, and the elders only hoping to live with dignity in their golden years—they ask, "What about us?"

And I have walked with them. I have sat in their homes. I have listened to their stories. I carry their burdens in my heart. These are not just my constituents; they are my family. They have adopted me as their daughter, their sister, their champion. I look forward to becoming their voice... their representative.

Mr. President, representational politics is not about titles or prestige. It is about love—love for the people, love for justice, love for the belief that together, we can create a Jamaica where dreams are not deferred but fulfilled. It is about demonstrating that love tangibly within the framework of a government to ensure that their lives, each life is changed for the better.

Today, I stand here resolute, with the voices of the Jamaican people resounding in my heart, to say: the time for deferral is over. The time for decisive action is now. For CHANGE is upon us. *People time come! The time has come for the realization of the dreams of our forefathers, The time has come* to turn deferred dreams into a brighter reality.

THE STATE OF OUR NATION

Mr. President,

Jamaica is a land of extraordinary promise—a nation whose people inspire the world with our resilience, creativity, and spirit. But beneath the surface of our national pride lies a sobering truth: far too many Jamaicans are still waiting for their share of the dream.

- This is a nation where falling ill is a curse—not only because of pain but because our hospitals are overwhelmed and under-resourced. They have become hotspots of chaos. With all the resources spent in this sector, outlined today, sick people are dying, some as they try desperately to find the comfort of sleep on hard hospital benches or chairs when they should be resting in a hospital bed. They wait for months for treatment. Their illnesses worsen because of the shortage of equipment. Severe outbreaks are denied to protect the ‘optics’ for the government, while the lives of babies are lost. This is the state of our nation.
- This is a nation where food insecurity threatens the survival of families. Too many parents send their children to bed hungry. Too many children are expected to learn on hungry bellies. This, Mr. President, is the state of our nation.
- This is a nation where our education system fails too many of our people. Too many youth graduate from schools ill-equipped for the demands of life and work. 30% of children leaving primary school are unable to read or write, and about 50% do not have basic numeracy nor comprehension skills. It breaks the hearts of all who care. This is the state of our nation!

After 62 years of political independence, this is not where we should be. I look into the faces of the people I meet everyday. Their dreams have been deferred—not because our people lack ambition, but because our systems and leaders lack vision and are still gambling with the political will to make real CHANGE on behalf of the masses.

We continue to wrestle with the legacies of our colonial past and the burdens of modern mismanagement and corruption. The legacies of colonialism are not just talking points. It is not just a concept. The legacies of colonialism are borne out every day in the Jamaican reality. It is seen in the decision making of the government and has become particularly stark in the past nine years.

The weight of deferred dreams has become unbearable. It is our moral obligation to lift it. Decolonisation is about lifting that weight and walking in true freedom as a people. It is about getting out from under a low growth, low wage, low productivity, low hope, underemployed, under-resourced reality designed to benefit only a few. That is what we have pledged to do.

ECONOMIC GROWTH FOR WHOM?

Mr. President,

When the government of Jamaica speaks of ‘recovery’ and ‘prosperity’, we must ask: for whom? The figures tell a sobering story. Over the past five years, our economic growth has averaged just over 1% annually. Compare this with the aspirations of Vision 2030, which called for sustained growth of 5% per year to achieve a thriving and equitable society.

These are not just numbers and economic jargon. When we go to the supermarkets and can’t buy the things we did a year ago, with the same budget; when we have to choose one bill over another

and our last Christmas dinner has to be like any other day; that is what 3.2% contraction in the July to September quarter feels like. It is real!

This administration once promised “5 in 4”—five percent growth in four years, but today, we see no such transformation. Instead, what we have is:

- **Concentrated wealth:** The benefits of growth remain locked at the top, leaving too many Jamaicans behind. And even that is now contracting!
- **A cost-of-living crisis:** Rising prices for basic goods have forced families to make impossible and unhealthy choices. And it is getting worse as we hear the word ‘recession’ bandied around.
- **Stagnant wages:** Wages have not kept pace with inflation, eroding the purchasing power of working Jamaicans. And they continue to increase!
- **Economic inequality is pervasive.** The wealthiest 10% of our population control more than 40% of our nation’s wealth, while the poorest struggle to survive. It is all about scale. Even as things get worse for them too... they have the buffers many don’t have.
- **The job market stagnates.** Youth unemployment hovers around 15% (October,2024), however, many jobs fail to provide a livable wage... or even a job after investing in their education.
- **Small farmers are floundering:** They face insurmountable odds. Despite being the backbone of our food system, they struggle with limited access to financing, outdated infrastructure, and climate-change related risks. And we offer them more of the same.
- **Debt looms large.** Though we tout fiscal discipline, it often comes at the expense of social investments, leaving schools, hospitals, and communities underfunded.

This is not the vision we were sold in 2015. We were sold a dream of prosperity, yet for many, that dream is deferred and the promised prosperity keeps escaping the grasp of the ordinary Jamaican.

Mr Speaker, the poet Hughs asks us of a dream deferred:

Maybe it just sags like a heavy load. Or does it explode?

I can see the paid trolls on YouTube now... “the opposition always a talk ‘bout the negative.” If the positive was outpacing the negative we would not have to. We would be silenced! But many Jamaicans' lives exist within the realities I describe. I am only echoing the thoughts of thousands of Jamaicans who are hoping someone will speak on their behalf.

Worst of all, this government over the past five years has attempted to govern by gaslight!

- You deny our lived reality
- You turn a blind eye to our challenges,
- You revel in the expediency of telling our people that these challenges do not exist, or are not as bad as they seem,
- You continue to blame the opposition for your failures

The closer we get to the election, the more you gaslight. The Prime Minister has been going around begging for a third term. Promising that this term will be about the people. I dare ask then, what were the other two terms about. The writing is on the wall, you have been weighed and found wanting. With every instance dreams are further deferred! It sounds good to the ear but it is not fooling all the people all of the time. I turn again to the poet Hughes, who must have heard the gaslighting efforts:

Does it stink like rotten meat?

Or crust and sugar over—

like a syrupy sweet?

That disingenuity has been witnessed in this House today. That a medical doctor, a psychiatrist, trained with the capacity to direct and redirect mindfulness and to alter thought processes through MENTICIDE, would deliberately craft an argument that brings dishonesty, divisiveness and manipulation related to the sensitivity of race to this House, is DISGRACEFUL. It is the lowest, most distasteful and most egregious act of mind control I have ever witnessed. Do no harm Doctor!

Shame!!! Shame on you! And shame on you all for perpetuating these falsehoods. You stand in the international light and speak against discrimination. Yet this hatefulness rests at the core of your communication, the core of your being. You share it across this country... a country you say you want to see grow and flourish. It will not amidst your hateful rhetoric. That is why Jamaicans will reject it.

The image shown represents an incident that spoke to the continued betrayal of our nation through repeated reports of corruption, graft and illicit enrichment that forms a chain around all our necks - and you, Senator, have refer to the perpetrators as leader... as leaders?

It is that which should embarrass you Senator. I would urge you to teach your son to navigate the sensitive iconography of our history with truth not with lies and manipulation.

We reject your diatribe of hatred! For us, and in particular for Mark Jefferson Golding who you continuously impugn, the word remains LOVE...

Jamaica is about to evaluate what you present as progress. We are now deeply contemplating the route our people are being led on in the name of nation building. We must not give you the opportunity to perpetuate this *governance by gaslight*. Jamaica will not!

I raise this, and listen to me carefully because what your lies and insincerity do to an already insecure nation is dangerous. It erodes the fabric of our nationhood. It breeds mistrust. All the lazy excuses do is keep you in denial. You fail to face up to your shortcomings. Not facing up to them will only cause you to move more slowly than is necessary, to solve them. That is exactly what is happening.

62 years into the project of Independence, we are called upon to contemplate our choices... to remain in the bowels of 'tinkerhood' - to move towards real CHANGE.

It is now time, yes, Mr President, NOW is that time for the lip-service towards and about national development to stop.

Mr. President,

I was not in the chamber for Senator Hill's presentation, but I took the time to watch his attempt to wax lyrical in defense of his party's legacy. As I listened, I couldn't help but cringe. It was filled with blame-shifting and rhetoric that seemed disconnected from the realities facing our nation.

Senator Hill, like many Jamaicans, I am tired of the blame game and the endless tit-for-tat.

Corruption is not a matter of political spin—it is a deeply rooted issue that threatens the very foundations of our democracy. It undermines trust in our institutions, weakens our social fabric, and stalls our nation's progress.

The Leader of the Opposition captured it perfectly: Corruption siphons resources from where they are needed most. It steals from our children's education, deprives hospitals of critical supplies, and ensures our roads remain broken. It widens inequality, diverting taxpayers' money to enrich a privileged few instead of benefiting the many.

Let us be clear: corruption is not a new issue in Jamaica, but it remains persistent and pervasive. Eradicating it requires more than just lip service; it demands bold, uncompromising action.

The Prime Minister himself, in a 2017 video, eloquently emphasized the importance of accountability. He declared that we cannot be serious about tackling corruption unless we are equally serious about identifying the *WHO*—those alleged or proven guilty of corrupt acts. I urge the Prime Minister to reflect on his own words and to act with the integrity those words demand.

Senator Longmore and Senator Hill, no matter how you spin it, Jamaicans deserve a Prime Minister whose declarations can stand up to scrutiny and certification. Our people deserve leadership they can trust.

It is now time, yes indeed, Mr President, **NOW** is the time for real **ACTION** to begin, once and for all, to move in the right direction.

PEOPLE TIME COME NOW. Very soon the people will get a chance to decide their destiny for the next five years. It is clear that people want change. They are tired of the piecemeal policies handed out by this government to sweet up the electorate on the eve of an election. They are tired of empty promises. **THAT** is the state of our nation right here... right now.

The Jamaican people deserve a real mix of fiscal discipline, economic development, productivity, social equity and environmental sustainability. Today's debate provides a welcome opportunity to take stock of our circumstances, to assess the impact of our policies, initiatives and actions, and to chart a course for the future that will enable us to overcome the challenges we face. This ground must be ideological; we must assess our belief systems at their core.

Jamaican people are tired. Many have lost their way. Some simply “drop hand”. We hear the sentiments all the time, “We nuh inna the politics ting” “Nothing nah change”. We face the reality of seeing Jamaican’s ‘stand still’ in this upcoming election. Why? Because many have LOST FAITH. After years of dashed hopes, contending with a system that seems to work against them, they have come to believe that all that is possible is growth that is low-and-slow; approaches that are wrong-and-strong; and systems that favour might-over-right. This is what we have become accustomed to in the last nine years. This is the state of our nation.

Time Come for a government that will focus on the implementation of policies that bridge the gap between the privileged and the marginalised. Jamaicans deserve a government that will ensure that every Jamaican has a fair shot at success, and Time come for that!. This is what we believe. Our plans move the needle forward to the benefit of all, not just some. Moving our plans definitively from the principles of trickle-down economics, which have failed to deliver prosperity to the masses, is our aim. Time has come for implementation of the policies and plans that we have at hand, that promote an economy that encourages research and development and the deeper use of technology, accelerating productivity and growth.

The trouble is that these are seemingly not the priorities of this administration. They talk about it. They tinker around it. They say it is so... but the people know what they know; feel what they feel; and live the realities they live.

So today, we will look at some practical ways in which the right direction can become manifest in the lives of Jamaican people. Let us embrace an approach to national development that signals that we are serious about sustaining the livelihoods of our people. An approach that shows that we are serious about achieving vision 2030 with just five years to go. **TIME COME NOW**

In the next few minutes, I will explore some aspects of this plan of transformation that is necessary for Jamaica to move in the right direction.

TIME COME: THE RIGHT DIRECTION FOR JAMAICA

Jamaica is known for its vibrant culture and resilient spirit. Every speaker who comes to this house has acknowledged this in one way or another. Time come to stop giving our cultural value lip service. Time come to begin to give it real service and support. We have to acknowledge the cracks that have begun to erode the foundation of our national identity. The values that once defined us—hard work, integrity, independence, and respect—have been overshadowed by troubling norms such as scamming, the normalization of violence, and the glorification of the “dunce culture.” These shifts threaten not just our social fabric but our economic and national development.

And all of this is grounded in strengthening, promoting and protecting Jamaican culture. This is where many of our young people work and operate. The plan for culture on this side is grounded in solidifying who we are and who we want to be. To do this we must invest in our culture and its

expressions - nurture greatness, use cultural norms to achieve our sustainable development goals and to go for growth. We will present good governance for the culture sector. Most of all we will grounding our culture locally and take it further, globally. How then, can we fail?

These are the plans we have that will take us to where we want our state of the nation to be!

If we want to build a Jamaica where every citizen has the opportunity to thrive, we must reset our values and attitudes. A society rooted in hard work and independence fosters productivity, innovation, and resilience. Respect and integrity build trust and collaboration, essential for a thriving democracy and economy. Changing the values and attitudes of a nation is no small task, but it is critical to unlocking Jamaica's full potential.

The eternal question to this is HOW? This requires a multifaceted approach anchored in education, engagement, and leadership to reignite discipline, accountability, and a collective commitment to progress. The plans and programmes in Social Transformation, Culture and Citizens Security that we have been engaged in provides the answer to that question. We all know 'what' needs to be done. We are now focussed on 'how' and will share that with Jamaica at just the right time. One of the critical pieces of that puzzle is the engagement of our young people.

Renewing Deferred Dreams for Our Youth

Mr. President, one of the greatest disservices we have done to our youth is selling them a dream that hard work, good behavior, and education alone will guarantee success. The reality for many of our young people is far different. Yes,unemployment remains a challenge even with its

manipulated measurement. BUT it is underemployment—working hard but barely earning enough to survive—that is robbing our youth of dignity, hope and thriving.

This reality is felt acutely in industries like the BPO sector, where workers endure long hours, precarious contracts, and limited job security, only to see job cuts erode what little stability they had. Time Come for a renewed focus on workers' rights, ensuring that all Jamaicans have access to fair wages, safe working conditions, and opportunities for advancement.

It is not enough to create jobs; we must create meaningful, sustainable employment that allows our youth to build lives of independence and prosperity. In particular a framework for independent workers and those in the gig economy, those seen as 'informal' in the changing world of work must be implemented. These are mainly young people who are moving away from traditional ways of working.

Young workers often find themselves in precarious positions with seasonal contracts and limited career development opportunities. Advocating for fair employment practices, including secure contracts and structured career advancement pathways, would ensure that their contributions are valued and their rights respected. Similarly, the current minimum wage in the hospitality sector often fails to meet the rising cost of living. Implementing a livable wage policy tailored to the sector would uplift workers, reduce economic disparities, and foster a more motivated and productive workforce.

Moreover, the lack of access to comprehensive benefits, such as health insurance, pensions, and paid leave, further exacerbates the vulnerabilities faced by young employees. Requiring employers to provide these benefits would not only improve the quality of life for workers but also contribute to long-term economic stability for their families. Additionally, ensuring that young people have

a platform to voice their concerns and advocate for change is essential. Establishing youth advisory councils within hotel and tourism organizations would give young workers a meaningful role in shaping the policies that affect them.

Investing in the rights and well-being of young workers in the hotel sector is not just a social justice issue—it is an economic imperative. Higher wages and better working conditions will boost local economies, reduce turnover, and enhance Jamaica's reputation as a leader in sustainable and ethical tourism. Empowering young people in this critical sector will drive positive change, setting the stage for a more equitable and prosperous future.

A New Path for Youth Development

Mr. President, the youth of Jamaica are not looking for handouts; they are looking for opportunities. They want a fair chance to succeed, to live in dignity, and to build lives they can be proud of. These interconnected initiatives—rooted in values, community, inclusion, and empowerment—will not only address the immediate challenges facing our youth but also renew their faith in the promise of Jamaica.

By investing in their development, protecting their rights, and fostering an environment of opportunity, we can ensure that their deferred dreams become realized ambitions. This is the direction Jamaica must take, and Time Come to make it a reality.

The time for empty promises is over. Our youth need bold, comprehensive action to address the challenges they face. My repeated calls for a national Values and Attitudes Campaign has reached its use-by date. No more time to wait for the government to do its job. We have developed the

policies, plans and programmes to once again instill respect, integrity, and civic pride among young Jamaicans, emphasizing the importance of hard work, accountability, and community building. This campaign will be complemented by robust safe sex and sexual education initiatives in schools and communities, addressing issues like teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections to equip our youth with knowledge to make responsible choices. This intervention will also take into account conflict management.

Focus on Communities

Community-based interventions are the cornerstone of our vision. In North West St. Ann, we want to become a model constituency for community engagement. As I walk through our towns and villages, the message from our people is clear: they want better opportunities for their children and youth. Far too many young people in North West St. Ann are searching for purpose, while too many community centers remain closed and underutilized. This cannot continue. Things will change—they must change.

Our program of re-engagement will focus on revitalizing youth clubs and reestablishing community homework centers. These centers, ideally located in schools and churches, will provide critical educational support for children in need.

We are also committed to continuing the transformative Second Chance Initiative, introduced by then-MP Dayton Campbell in 2012. This program will give individuals, both young and old, the opportunity to achieve certification through HEART, along with the attainment of five CSEC subjects. It will also offer grants for young entrepreneurs along with capacity building. This

initiative represents our deep commitment to advancing lives and creating new pathways for success.

Another pressing priority is affordable and accessible housing. While it was announced that steps were taken to reserve housing solutions for young contributors under age 35, we will go further. We have innovative plans and approaches, such as rent-to-own programs and housing cooperatives, to make homeownership an achievable dream for more young Jamaicans.

Education and Inclusion: Building a Foundation for All

Inclusive education is the bedrock of a thriving society. To truly embrace this principle, we see the importance in expanding schools to accommodate students with disabilities, equipping them with the resources, teacher training, and assistive technologies necessary to unlock their full potential. But inclusion goes beyond infrastructure—it requires a commitment to identifying and addressing the unique challenges faced by every student.

Too often, our education system fails to serve those who need it most. Consider the absurdity of labeling schools as “failing” when they are tasked with supporting a disproportionate number of underperforming students, often without adequate resources. If the Ministry of Education clusters students with the greatest challenges in one place, how can those schools ever be expected to succeed? This is not a reflection of the students' capabilities but a systemic failure to allocate resources equitably.

We must ensure every school is equipped with the tools to meet diverse needs. This includes affordable and accessible assessments to identify learning disabilities, mental health issues, and

trauma. It also means placing qualified special education teachers in schools across the country and providing ongoing training for all educators to better support their students.

Additionally, students' basic needs must be met to give them a fair chance at success. Hunger, for instance, is a barrier to learning that no child should have to face. A few weeks ago, I moved a motion for the implementation of a National School Nutrition Policy, advocating for healthy, affordable food options for students most in need.

To make this vision a reality, we see value in a partnership between the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and local farmers. By collaborating with CASE and other agricultural stakeholders, we can roll out a National School Feeding Programme that ensures every child receives a nutritious meal daily, bridging the gap between classroom learning and healthy living.

An inclusive education system is not a luxury—it is a necessity. Whether it's rural students, students with disabilities, or those facing economic hardships, no one should be left behind. Let us build a foundation for all, where every child is empowered to thrive.

Rural Development: Unlocking the Potential

Mr. President, rural Jamaica has long been the backbone of our nation's economy, culture, and identity, yet it remains underserved and overlooked. In North West St. Ann, the challenges are glaring: poorly maintained roads, limited access to water, and insufficient support for farmers who continue to work tirelessly to feed the nation. If Jamaica is to move forward, rural development must be a national priority, and I am proud to affirm that it will be central to the vision of the next PNP government.

Good roads are the lifelines of rural communities, connecting farmers to markets, children to schools, and residents to essential services. In North West St. Ann and other rural communities across the country, crumbling infrastructure has left too many communities isolated and opportunities out of reach. Our people bitterly complain of thousands spent repairing vehicles and of lack of reliable public transportation and exorbitant taxi fares due to the state of the road

The next PNP government has committed to re-establishing a road maintenance fund that will support rehabilitation of the road network across the country. Yes, the same road maintenance fund that was shut down by our current Prime Minister. This fund should also prioritize communities that have been neglected for far too long. We will not simply patch roads but ensure they are built to last, designed to withstand weather conditions, and are maintained over time.

Agricultural development is the key to unlocking economic growth in rural Jamaica, and we must do more to empower young farmers and women farmers, who often lack the resources and support to thrive.

The next PNP government will provide training, access to modern farming technologies, and affordable financing to encourage innovation and sustainability. Women farmers, who are critical to food production and rural resilience, will benefit from targeted programs that provide grants, technical support, and access to land. Additionally, we will work to strengthen agricultural cooperatives and expand opportunities for rural farmers to access local and international markets, ensuring they receive fair prices for their produce.

Access to water remains one of the most pressing challenges for rural communities. In fact in North West St. Ann, I hear the cries far too often. Too many families still rely on inconsistent water supplies, forcing them to purchase water at exorbitant costs or go without. The PNP has

committed to investing in modern water infrastructure such as reservoirs, wells, and rainwater harvesting systems. We will also work with community organizations to ensure sustainable water management practices, so every resident has reliable access to this most basic of necessities. Healthcare is also a major concern.

Many rural communities rely on clinics as the primary source of healthcare. In North West St Ann for example I have lamented the state of the clinics especially those in Runaway Bay and Bamboo. The promised upgrades have still not come! Another suggestion I wish to place on the table that is ideal especially for rural communities is to adopt the preventative care model practiced in Cuba. Let us increase the number of community health aids and provide mobile clinics that can facilitate healthcare and hope being brought to those in remote areas.

Mr. President, the future of Jamaica depends on unlocking the potential of our rural communities. By investing in roads, agriculture, and water, the next PNP government will not only improve the quality of life for its people. Rural development is not an afterthought; it is a necessity for building a more inclusive, prosperous, and resilient Jamaica.

CONCLUSION: DREAMS REALIZED, NOT DEFERRED

Mr. President,

We stand at a defining crossroads in our history. For far too long, the dreams of our people have been deferred. Far too many families have struggled in silence, yearning for a better tomorrow. That time is over.

PEOPLE TIME COME

The young woman in Brown's Town who dreams of opening her own business, the farmer in Hazelwood working tirelessly to feed his family, the child in Trysee who dreams of becoming the first in the family to get a University Education. The Taxi operator in Retirement who is overwhelmed by the cost of front end parts and dreams of better roads. These are the people who drive my commitment, and they deserve better.

Hope and help are on the way. A new dawn is rising for North West St. Ann and for Jamaica. It is a dawn where every child will have access to opportunity, every youth will feel empowered to pursue their dreams, and every elder will rest easy knowing they are cherished.

I believe in the strength and resilience of our people. I believe in the creativity that lives in our young minds, the perseverance of our workers, and the unyielding spirit of our communities. Together, we will transform dreams deferred into dreams fulfilled.

We must dare to imagine a future where no child goes to bed hungry, where no youth feels their potential is wasted, and where no elder is left wondering if their contributions mattered. This is the Jamaica we can and will build.

Let us rise as one people with one vision, determined to fulfill the promise of independence. Let us step boldly into the future, guided not by fear but by the hope and certainty that our best days are ahead of us.

The time is now. The hour is here. Together, we will move forward, leaving no one behind. Let us change the state of our nation today to the one we want for ourselves. That choice for CHANGE rests with us. Together, we will make it.

Mr Speaker, I move from Poet Hughes to Poet Laureat, Lorna Goodison who responds to the question, “How far is it to Heartease?”.

*Believe, believe
And believe this,
The eye know how far
Heartease is.*

Mr. President, Heartease is right around the corner. With good choices, Heartease Time Come. I thank you.