



Jamaica's Opposition Leader Mark Golding Hosts Historic Talks with Leaders of Maroon and Taino Communities

December 12, 2024, Kingston, Jamaica: Leaders of Maroon and Taino communities from across the island, led by Chairman of the The Yamaye Council of Indigenous Leaders (YCOIL), attorney at Law, Dr. Marcus Goffe, yesterday met with PNP President Mark Golding, MP at the Office of the Leader of the Opposition, at a meeting brokered by Opposition Spokesperson on Culture and Creative Industries, Dr. Deborah Hickling Gordon. The meeting was convened to examine the long-outstanding grievances of the Maroons and other indigenous groups in Jamaica and priority issues and actions that it wished to be addressed by the Jamaican government through “meaningful and constructive dialogue and transparent and mutually respectful communication...”.

Leaders of the five Maroon communities and the representative of Tainos in Jamaica, Colonel Lloyd Lattibeaudiere of the Scott's Hall Maroon community; Colonel Wallace Sterling of Moore Town; Colonel Richard Currie of Accompong; Colonel Jacko Cameron of Flagstaff; Acting Colonel Delano Padam Douglas from the Charles Town Maroons; Gaa-mang Gloria Simms, also known as Mama G, the Paramount Maroon Queen and Kasike Kalaan Yamaye Guani, Taino chief; represented their communities at the meeting.

Opposition Leader, Mark Golding made solid practical suggestions for probable ways and means to address the challenges presented by the Maroon communities. He committed to ongoing dialogue in the New Year to seek to develop plans for possible implementation that address the range of challenges for which the Maroon and Taino Communities have been seeking redress for many decades.

According to Mr Golding “I am approaching this meeting as a political leader, yes, but more so as a human being, to bring my bring to the table my experience in crafting sustainable, mutually beneficial solutions to the long-standing issues to do with land, autonomy, dignity, justice, rights, freedoms and responsibilities that currently remain unresolved,” the Opposition Leader told the Council. “This meeting today must be the beginning of a collaborative movement towards addressing these outstanding issues,” he said.

Mr. Golding welcomed the unified stance by the chiefs of the Indigenous Council. “It is important for all the Maroon and Taino leadership and people to work together to establish common principles on the range of issues you present, even as you hold fast to the unique and distinctive practices and systems within your respective communities,” he said.



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The Council of Indigenous Leaders, commended the dialogue, describing it as a pivotal step towards fostering stronger partnerships and advancing meaningful progress for Jamaica's indigenous communities. "This is the first time that a national leader has advanced such constructive, mutually beneficial and practical proposals in response to the challenges presented," one of the leaders noted. Mama G, Paramount Maroon Queen indicated to the Opposition Leader "you will probably never know the importance of this meeting in solidifying and perpetuating the unity that had recently been returned amongst the Maroon communities". In turn, the Opposition leader pointed to the necessity of maintaining the relationships that have now been strengthened amongst the leadership and communities of Maroon and Taino peoples.

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For more information, contact:

Dr Deborah Hickling Gordon, Spokesperson on Culture and Creative Industries
PNP Media Unit - Tel: 876-408-3160

Meeting Photos and Videos: ■ Meeting with Indigenous Leaders- December 11