

A portrait of Anthony Hylton, a man with short grey hair and glasses, wearing a dark blue suit, white shirt, and orange patterned tie. He is smiling slightly. The background is a yellow and black halftone pattern with a faint image of a modern building.

CHAMPIONING CHANGE

**in Investment, Trade, Global
Logistics and Technology**

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Investment, Trade & Global Logistics

Contribution to Sectoral Debate

by

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Championing Change for Sustainable Economic
Development and Growth - Jamaica 4.0 – Global Logistics
Hub Implemented: A Brighter Future for Trade, Industry,
Investment & Logistics

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Salutations

Madam Speaker, today I rise in this Honourable House for the 27th time to participate in the annual Sectoral Debate. None of the others has been as urgent and consequential as this one. Madam Speaker, the time has come for Jamaica to champion transformative change.

Jamaica is at a crossroads. We are at a moment of choosing and we are confident, Madam Speaker, that the people of Jamaica will, as they have done in the past, choose the People's National Party to lead that change.

Imagine a Jamaica, where our ports (sea & air) are humming with trading activities and where ships light up the harbours like a city on the sea (a' la` Singapore), where industries flourish on innovation, and where every hardworking Jamaican—from the farmer in St. Elizabeth to the e-commerce entrepreneur in Montego Bay—has access to high-quality opportunities in a booming economy. Imagine a country that doesn't just follow global trends but sets them,

where "Brand Jamaica" stands for excellence, ingenuity, and opportunity.

We must dream big... think big... act big, and let no one call our vision a distant dream. Let no one place a limit on our capacity to achieve. We have done it in other areas like sports and music.

This is Jamaica 4.0 the global logistics hub and resilient supply chain future we must build together. Jamaica 4.0 is designed to align a whole of nation strategy, with the advancements of Industry 4.0. technological revolution.

This transformative agenda aims to position Jamaica as the 4th node in the global trading system, and a premier hub for business, trade flows, and logistics within the Americas. By prioritizing innovation, leveraging cutting-edge digital technologies, and championing sustainable development, Jamaica 4.0 will accelerate economic growth and redefine the nation's role on the global stage.

Jamaica has always been blessed with potential—strategic geography, a resilient people, and a culture of creativity that influences the world. Yet, for too long, we have been held back by outdated systems, bureaucratic inertia, and missed

opportunities. The logistics hub initiative, positioned to be the heartbeat of the Americas, remains shackled by inefficiency and a lack of focused implementation.

Why else would it take almost ten (10) years, after first being announced, for the scheduled ground breaking of important logistics projects, such as Caymanas Special Economic Zone, or the Raintree Logistics & Commercial complex for that matter?

Madam speaker, industries capable of competing on the world stage, struggle with outdated infrastructure, limited access to cutting-edge technology, and appropriate competitive financing. And while some are content with slow, incremental progress, we believe Jamaica deserves more—no, Jamaica **demands** more.

Madam Speaker, the recent Budget Debate offers a sobering reminder of this government's priorities. Instead of presenting a visionary plan for Jamaica's future, the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance offered a retrospective analysis that emphasized past achievements but lacked substantive proposals.

They ignored the looming threat of a global economic crisis triggered by escalating trade tensions—an omission both reckless and revealing. How credible, then, is the 2025/2026 Budget they've passed?

Jamaicans deserve more than political theatre. They deserve a forward-looking economic strategy—rooted in resilience, growth, and inclusion—not another cycle of flashy headlines and electioneering. After nine years economic stagnation has ossified. What we need is a clear strategy.

Madam Speaker, let us confront the truth with courage. In 2024, Jamaica's economy did not grow—it declined. Our nation experienced an economic contraction, with real GDP falling by **0.9%**. This is not mere statistics. It reflects real hardship—declines in output and productivity, lost income, and missed opportunities across both the **Goods Producing** and **Services sectors**. The picture grows even grimmer when we examine the final two quarters of the year.

Madam Speaker, in the fourth quarter of 2024, Jamaica's economy contracted by **0.8% year-on-year**, following a steep **3.3% decline** in the third quarter. This is not just economic turbulence—it is the **first back-to-back quarterly**

contraction since the global pandemic. That fact alone should ring alarm bells in the consciousness of every policymaker, every business owner, and every Jamaican family.

The decline was not isolated. It was systemic. It spanned critical pillars of our economy:

- **Agriculture, forestry, and fishing** fell by **10.6%**, following an even sharper decline of **12.5%** the quarter before.
- **Mining and quarrying** dipped by **2.3%**, after a staggering **17.4% collapse** in Q3.
- **Utilities** shrank by **1.4%**, hotels and restaurants by **0.3%**, and manufacturing by **0.5%**.
- Even **construction**, once a beacon of employment and capital formation, continued its descent—declining by **2.7%**.

Madam Speaker, growth is not a luxury—it is a necessity. For every tenth of a percent we lose in GDP, jobs are lost. Public revenues shrink. Investment dries up. Hope recedes. A nation that does not grow is a nation that stagnates. And a nation

that stagnates cannot feed its people, cannot protect its future, and cannot compete on the global stage.

This economic downturn did not occur in a vacuum, nor was it inevitable. It is the result of chronic inaction and a failure to seize the very opportunities that could have transformed our economy.

The government failed to stimulate local production, protect key industries, or implement a cohesive growth strategy. Where was the investment in value-added agriculture? Where was the push for innovation in manufacturing, or the support for our vibrant creative sector?

There has been no real support to help MSMEs scale up, improve quality, and enter new markets. No serious effort to develop a bold, recognisable Country of Origin Brand that would position Jamaican products globally. No strategic pivot to diversify trade routes or secure new market access agreements. And no plan to reposition our mining industry to meet the demands of the new green economy. These were not just missed opportunities—they were critical turning points, wasted by a government lacking in vision or strategy.

Madam Speaker, let us not sugar-coat it. **Jamaica is underperforming.** And while our people continue to work hard and persevere, they are being let down by an administration that governs with excuses instead of vision.

The economic contraction of 2024 should be a wake-up call. But more than that—it should be a call to action.

It demands new leadership. It demands a bold, future-ready vision. It demands **Jamaica 4.0 – Global Logistics Hub Implemented.**

We stand at a unique geopolitical crossroads. Jamaica lies adjacent to the Panama Canal and sits at the heart of international shipping routes. This is not just a coincidence of geography—it is a divine opportunity. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the fragility of global supply chains, and in the wake of climate change, armed conflicts, trade wars and geopolitical tensions, the world is crying out for reliable logistics and supply chain alternatives. The evolving conflicts between major economies forecast to reduce growth in the global economy and in Jamaica, is a clarion call to action.

Jamaica must answer that call.

Madam Speaker, let us not forget that the foundation was laid by the People's National Party administrations. The PNP has a proven track record of implementing transformative policies that have laid the foundation for Jamaica's economic growth. The previous PNP administration secured a historic 30-year concession with the CMA CGM Group, ensuring that the Port of Kingston would play a pivotal role in global and regional logistics.

Paternity of the Global Logistics Hub Initiative (GLHI) is not in doubt, as the record is clear that the foundation for Jamaica to become a leader in global trade was laid by the PNP. It was the PNP that established the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) regime, creating opportunities for economic growth that this administration has failed to capitalize on. The PNP also revitalized the public transportation network through the

Jamaica Urban Transport Company (JUTC), driving productivity improvements.

By liberalising the telecommunications sector, the PNP enabled the enhancement of the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) and Knowledge Process Outsourcing (KPO) industries, which are now integral to the economy and the Global Logistics Hub Initiative (GLHI).

Furthermore, the PNP's liberalisation of motor vehicle import policies has positioned Jamaica as a regional logistics hub for vehicle distribution, just to name a few. These strategic decisions have not only diversified the economy but also created sustainable employment opportunities.

The Prime Minister often claims that the PNP articulates ideas, and he implements. But after nine years, why are we just now breaking ground when we should be cutting ribbons for these developments?

Give us vision lest we perish

Let there be no doubt: the next PNP government will breathe new life into the logistics hub strategy. We will implement a robust and modern trade strategy—one grounded in new

realities and backed by concrete actions. We will expand our network of trade agreements and modernize existing agreements to include digital trade, trade in services and supply chain cooperation. These agreements will be transformative, not only attracting investments, but also providing the legal certainty businesses need to thrive and to grow.

Madam Speaker, the Holness administration has failed to grasp this moment. They have minimized Jamaica's role in CARICOM, failed to exercise its leadership of external trade negotiation within CARICOM to conclude any new trade agreement, and squandered valuable opportunities. We are now caught in the turbulence of changing U.S. foreign and trade policies—unprepared and exposed.

The administration's refusal to engage with potential partners such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AFCFTA) and the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) is not only short-sighted but detrimental to our economic sovereignty and National well-being.

The across the board 10% tariff on global and domestic exports to the United States, as well as the threatened further increase of tariff on specific sectors, will shortly see price rising on raw materials, intermediate and finished goods to Jamaica and the CARICOM region. The prospects for import-driven price inflation looms large, as a result of tariff-driven policies, Madam Speaker.

Jamaica has abandoned CARICOM and is focused exclusively on its own interest over the strategic and collaborative benefit that is possible through regional cooperation. Pursuing, it seems, not simply a Jamaica first strategy, but a Jamaica alone strategy.

The European Union is a prime example of regional cooperation in action, the African Union is finding common ground, and this Government is into Jamaican exceptionalism.

Madam Speaker, while the Holness Administration fiddles, there is a fire burning in the distance which cannot be seen by a Government that lacks vision.

The question remains: why was nothing done to safeguard our economic interests? Not a single mitigation strategy

shared with the Jamaican people. Instead, the Minister of Industry, Investment & Commerce boasts of his many foreign jaunts, with businesspersons in tow, was destined to fail to generate the investments he said he went in search of.

This was predictable, as the necessary groundwork to prepare for these visits were never done. No new Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT); no new Double Taxation agreement; nor any new Trade agreement were entered into with those countries whose markets he was targeting, either before or after those visits. No new route to market or market opening agreement was achieved by the Minister and his touring party, or the government.

The Minister has responded with excuses. **Madam Speaker**, excuses do not protect jobs. Excuses do not build resilience. And the Opposition is **again**, demanding an accounting for the trips taken and the cost-benefit to the Jamaican taxpayers.

As Jamaica faces pressing economic and social challenges, the JLP government has been prioritizing its own interests over the welfare of the nation, reminiscent of the ancient Roman Empire's internal decay while the city of Rome burned.

It is time for bold transformational action.

PART TWO.

Time Come to Champion Change - The Road map to Jamaica 4.0 – Global Logistics Hub Implemented: Building the Future, Seizing the Moment

Madam Speaker, our task here today, is not just to critique the failings of the present administration—but to chart a new course. A course that recognises the magnitude of Jamaica's potential, and the cost of ignoring it. A course built on a foundation of purpose, clarity, and conviction.

Jamaica 4.0. is more than an idea—it is our lifeline to true prosperity.

Madam Speaker, let me be clear: the old playbook no longer works. The global economy has changed, the regional dynamics have shifted, and the future will not wait for Jamaica to catch up. We must lead. And to lead, we must act.

The past has offered us hard lessons. The present demands accountability. But the future—**ah, the future**—that belongs to those who prepare for it.

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Madam Speaker, my portfolio strategy for economic transformation is underpinned by four pillars: Trade, Industry, Investment, and Logistics integrating science, technology and innovation. Together, they form the architecture of what we call Jamaica 4.0—a future-ready economy that prioritises sustainability, innovation, and inclusivity.

First, **Trade**. We will implement a comprehensive, modern trade policy—one that reflects Jamaica's potential and secures our place in the global economy.

A PNP led-administration will restore and deepen engagement with CARICOM, rekindle South-South cooperation, and forge new partnerships in Africa, Mexico, Asia, and Latin America, while seeking to improve our trade agreement with the EU, Canada and the US. Our vision is to transform Jamaica into the **region's global supply and value chain powerhouse**, that it is destined to become.

Second, **Industry**. No nation has achieved prosperity without a thriving industrial base. We will revitalise legacy industries and foster new sectors—digital services, creative industries, clean manufacturing, and renewable energy. Industrialisation engenders scale, productivity, and above all, jobs. Jobs for our youth, Jobs for our women, Jobs that pay well and are career oriented. We will embrace an industrial policy and strategy.

Third, **Investment**. We must project a new image of Jamaica. A future PNP administration is committed to repositioning the country's Promotions Agency (JAMPRO) to focus on its core function, to include spearheading a global investment campaign. This initiative aims to rebrand Jamaica not only as a premier tourist destination but also as a hub for innovation, entrepreneurship, driving local and multinational business prosperity.

The campaign, Madam Speaker, will focus on launching a new country-of-origin brand that underscores Jamaica's quality and preference, expanding mutual recognition agreements, streamlining bureaucratic processes, and building a reputation for innovation, productivity, creativity,

and reliability. By leveraging these strategies, the PNP seeks to attract sustainable investments, stimulate job creation, and drive inclusive economic growth that benefits all Jamaicans. **Not just a few.**

Fourth, **Logistics**. The Global Logistics Hub Initiative, first conceived and articulated by the Simpson Miller administration, will be fully realised under our stewardship. We will modernise logistics infrastructure such as ports and airports, establish special economic zones, and create an integrated air & sea transport network that enhances connectivity across the Caribbean, the Americas and beyond to Asia and Africa. As logistics has emerged the frontier of Industry 4.0. technologies, we will leverage AI technology to reshape industries, including in the logistics and supply chain industry where AI is optimizing workflows, increasing productivity, cutting costs and building agility and resilience.

Madam Speaker, these are not mere aspirations. These are imperatives.

Our people are our most valuable resource—and under a future PNP administration, we will invest and equip them to

become better prepared to compete globally. This is why we will implement a game-changing **Workforce Capacity Development** programme, to equip Jamaicans with the skills required to thrive in high-value industries such as logistics, advanced manufacturing, digital trade, and the green economy. We will also modernise access to post-secondary education, diversify the curriculums to reflect emerging sectors, and ensure that no child is left behind. This is about more than jobs—it is about building a globally competitive workforce, empowering communities, and securing higher-paying opportunities right here at home. That is how we pivot the country. That is how we deliver real, people-centred growth.

We will also prioritise infrastructure—both physical and digital. The success of the logistics hub depends not only on cranes and cargo but also on codes and connectivity.

We will expand broadband internet access, data protection, data analysis, promote smart infrastructure, and ensure that no community is left behind in the digital age.

Madam Speaker, we must diversify. We must build resilience.

To that end, the next PNP government will:

- Review and update the 2018 national trade policy that encourages growth and innovation.
- Finalize the logistics hub in Jamaica to strengthen connectivity not only to the CARICOM Single Market & Economy (CSME), but to global supply chains linking Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas.
- Diversify our economy to promote **inter-dependence** and to reduce **over-dependence** on tourism and mining.
- Invest in digital and physical infrastructure, as logistics **is** the frontier of digital technology.
- Reform education to align with the industries of the future, and to develop the workforce with competencies required to build and sustain these industries.
- Reform and modernize the Scientific Research Council to play an enhanced role in applied research in collaboration with the private sector.

Madam Speaker, these are not abstract policy/strategies. These are meaningful, tangible solutions to the pressing problems we face.

The PNP understands that successful economic transformation requires both the hardware and the software. That's why our approach is holistic, integrated, and forward-looking.

Importantly, we cannot build a logistics hub without the "software"—the trade agreements, bilateral investment treaties, the workforce training, the regulatory frameworks and relevant institutions, including the previously mentioned Logistics Council comprising key stakeholders.

Madam Speaker, the logic of transformation is not new. The Simpson Miller administration understood the perils of climate disruption and the fragility of global supply chains, hence the creation of a Ministry of Environment & Climate Change, along with the articulation of the Global Logistics Hub Initiative by a PNP administration. But what followed?

A deafening silence; a wasted decade; a grand vision reduced to political soundbites.

The recent announcement by the administration of a future date to finally break ground at Caymanas for the Special Economic Zone, is another painful reminder of how far behind we are. They have taken our blueprint but cannot read it properly. What is a hub without a network? What is a zone without a strategy? What about the trade agreements that enable trade? What is the new arrangement for competitively priced energy in the SEZs? Infrastructure, without supportive ecosystems, is not likely to succeed, as the targeted investors will quickly assess these shortcomings and keep their money safe, until these binding constraints are addressed.

Madam Speaker,

The Logistics Hub is not just about buildings. It is about power grids and data networks, about skilled workers and digital services, about trade agreements that open doors and firms that benefit from them by penetrating markets. **It is also the software, not only the hardware that will make the Jamaica logistics hub a node in the global trading system.**

While neighbouring countries moved swiftly to diversify markets and forge new agreements, Jamaica did nothing. No new bilateral or regional trade agreements. No modernisation of the trade apparatus. And—shockingly—no leadership in a portfolio where Jamaica holds a critical CARICOM mandate: that of external negotiations.

This is not merely mismanagement. It is self-sabotage.

Madam Speaker,

The question before us is not whether the global trading system is changing. It already has. The question is whether Jamaica will change with it—or be left behind.

The Caribbean needs a trading hub. The Americas need a new centre for trade. And the World needs a fourth node in the global trading system. Jamaica can and must, answer the call!

This is not a dream deferred—it is a dream re-ignited.

Our ports operating 24/7, linked to cutting-edge industrial parks, powered by renewable energy, and connected to global markets. High-value industries, from green tech to AI logistics flourishing on our shores.

A new generation of Jamaicans trained in data analytics, supply chain management, artificial intelligence, robotics, procurement manager, transport analyst, logistics coordinator, demand planner, distribution manager, inventory coordinator, just to name a few career opportunities, ready and working in the jobs of the future.

This is not a fantasy. It is policy with purpose. It is ambition backed by action.

PNP leadership will include empowering Jamaica's MSMEs: A National Imperative for Sustainable Growth

Madam Speaker, both the Opposition Leader and the Spokesman on Finance and Planning have outlined key plans for the MSME sector in the Budget Debate. I want to delve a little deeper into this vital area, as most of our businesses fall within this category. MSMEs are not just the backbone of our economy—**they are a driving force for job creation and a catalyst for significant economic growth.** Their success is integral to the prosperity of our nation, and it is

crucial that we continue to support and empower this sector to unlock its full potential.

At the heart of any thriving economy lies a vibrant and empowered Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSME) sector. **In Jamaica, MSMEs are not just businesses—they are the heartbeat of communities, the engine of job creation, and the lifeblood of innovation.** And yet, too many of our MSMEs continue to struggle—underfunded, underrepresented, and underprepared to fully seize the opportunities of a rapidly changing global economy.

This is why, Madam Speaker, we present a bold, transformative vision: to empower Jamaica's MSMEs to harness the full potential of our Nation's enviable geographic position—indeed a gateway connecting the Americas to the world. As we seek to establish Jamaica as a dynamic trade and logistics hub, our MSMEs must not be left behind. **They must be central to this vision, not peripheral to it.**

Indeed, the PNP's plan to build the logistics hub is most urgent, as many of our entrepreneurs currently engaged in e-commerce, some working from home, are desperately trying to find new routes to markets in order to avoid new tariffs, and

the elimination of the USD 800 de minimis tariff exemption on small shipments.

Madam Speaker,

The programme we propose is not off-the-shelf, nor is it borrowed from foreign blueprints. It is uniquely **Jamaican crafted** with the understanding of our economic realities, our cultural strengths, and our global aspirations. It is tailored to meet the needs of Jamaican MSMEs operating within Jamaica's unique economic context.

Our vision is clear: to create a vibrant ecosystem of competitive, innovative, and sustainable MSMEs.

Our mission is resolute: to dismantle the barriers that hinder growth, productivity, and innovation, and to replace them with pathways to opportunity, resilience, and scalability.

Our goal is ambitious, but necessary: to foster the sustainable growth and global competitiveness of Jamaican MSMEs, through tailored programmes, that address the critical gaps— appropriate financing, market access, digital capacity, and skills development.

This is not mere rhetoric—it is a strategy grounded in action.

We are committed to enhancing the capabilities of 10,000 Jamaican MSMEs over the next five years.

Ten thousand businesses will become more bankable, more competitive, more digitally savvy, and more integrated into the global economy. This is not just an economic imperative—it is a national mission.

Let us consider the core objectives that will drive this transformation:

- **First**, we will enhance access to affordable and appropriate financing. Far too many entrepreneurs have dreams that die in the queue for a loan. We will not allow capital to be the enemy of innovation. We will revisit the use of **dormant funds** in financial institutions, in consultation with our financial institutions and our MSME stakeholders. This could liberate upwards of J\$40 Billion of low cost concessionary or grant funds for use in support of the MSME sector.

- **Second**, we will build capacity through enhanced technical assistance and targeted training programmes—because knowledge is power, and every MSME deserves the tools to thrive. We will strengthen the capacity of the MSME Department within the parent ministry for driving policy, while enhancing JBDC's central role for orchestrating and delivering technical assistance to MSMEs, across various industries and sectors.
- **Third**, we will expand access to markets—locally, regionally, and internationally. Jamaican products must not only serve corner shops in Clarendon—they must be in the stores in Canada and cafés in Colombia. We will negotiate a network of trade agreements to facilitate not only market access, but market presence for our MSMEs. This will be complemented by an enhanced role for the Exim Bank, in making available trade financing at competitive rates.
- **Fourth**, we will promote the adoption of innovative technologies. For in today's digital age; a business that is offline is a business needing a lifeline. In implementing

Jamaica 4.0., we will integrate the suite of Industry 4.0 technologies in the planning and operations of our MSMEs across industries, including the adoption of AI in logistics and supply chain management, and digital twins in architecture for example.

- **And fifth**, we will foster sustainable business practices. Madam Speaker, the economy of tomorrow will reward those who build responsibly today.

The outcomes we expect are profound: MSMEs that are more competitive, more innovative and advanced, more resilient, and more sustainable. We expect job creation. We expect stronger communities. We expect measurable economic growth.

A future PNP administration will take bold steps to reposition our economy for inclusive and transformative growth. As one of our strategies include repurposing of JAMPRO— it will be set to become not just a passive promoter, but as an active enabler of investment, brand building, and sector diversification.

We will provide direct support to help our MSMEs to scale up, build globally recognised brands, and penetrate niche

export markets where Jamaica can lead. By targeting industries where we can compete on quality, innovation, and identity—not solely on price—we will attract multinational companies and foster a more resilient, value-driven export economy. This is how we empower local businesses, attract strategic foreign investment, and pivot Jamaica towards a new era of prosperity.

In the Manufacturing and Services Sector, we will **introduce tax rebates, subsidised loans for machinery, and skills development schemes**. MSMEs will gain access to industrial clusters and benefit from technology upgrades—enhancing their global supply chain integration.

In the Agribusiness Sector, we will support rural entrepreneurship through targeted subsidies and incentives from the special economic zone for sustainable farming, grants and concessional loans for agro-processing, and cold storage infrastructure. This is not just agriculture—it is agro-innovation, Madam Speaker.

In the Orange Economy, Jamaica's creative industries will receive funding, incubation support, and Intellectual

Property protection. From reggae to film, from fashion to digital design, we will foster a new generation of cultural entrepreneurs.

In the Logistics and Supply Chain Sector, infrastructure funding, training, and digitisation support will help reduce operational costs and improve service efficiency. We are not just building warehouses—we are orchestrating a world-class logistics ecosystem.

In the Digital Economy, grants for technology adoption, digital cashback incentives, and broadband expansion will drive our digital transformation. Every MSME, regardless of size, must be connected to compete.

Madam Speaker,

This strategy is bold—but it is not impossible. It is ambitious—but it is achievable. And most importantly—it is urgent.

Let us empower our MSMEs not as an afterthought, but remembering that when MSMEs thrive, Jamaica's economy grows.

Future-Ready Jamaica: Building the Infrastructure for a New Economic Era

Madam Speaker, there are moments in the life of a nation when opportunity meets preparation—when the decisions we make today shape the prosperity of generations to come. We are standing at such a moment now. The question before us is not whether Jamaica can compete in the global economy, but whether **we have the courage and vision to build the infrastructure and orchestrate the supportive policies that will make us truly future-ready.**

Madam Speaker, let us remind ourselves of what the World Bank-funded consultants, after more than two years of rigorous analysis, have declared—**not what I am saying, but what they concluded.**

*“Jamaica holds the potential to unlock over **US\$28 billion in infrastructure development.** We can build **new towns**, craft **economic zones**, and catalyse the creation of **over 100,000 direct jobs** and an astonishing **400,000 indirect quality jobs** in the medium to long term.”*

This is not fiction. This is fact. The Holness administration accepted the study in 2017 and did very little with it since then.

According to these experts, our emergence as a global logistics hub would also spur the settlement of over **200,000 new residents** and the development of **75,000 new households**, strategically located around world-class logistics infrastructure. This is not simply about economic development. It is about **nation-building**—building cities, creating communities, and empowering Jamaicans with purpose, employment, and dignity.

Madam Speaker, at the heart of this transformation lay the **Jamaica Special Economic Zone Authority (JSEZA)**—not merely as a regulator, but as a **catalyst for economic development**, with a mandate to plan, to facilitate, and to ensure compliance with both **local and global standards**, including Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) principles.

Madam Speaker, the current Minister of Industry—one of many in recent years—has taken actions which could have the effect of undermining the JSEZA, removing critical guardrails that protect both investors and the Government.

Yet, this organisation under a PNP Administration will remain as it was envisioned, as both the architect and the steward of Jamaica's emerging new economy. It is tasked not only with oversight, but with **empowering Investor Developers**, expanding the SEZ footprint across the island, and **diversifying our industrial base** by integrating traditional sectors with **new and emerging industries**.

This will not happen by chance. It requires deliberate planning, strategic investment, and bold vision.

We envision a **network of Industrial and Business Parks** purpose-built to attract investment, spur job creation, and integrate Jamaica into global value chains. These parks will be strategically designed and located, each one tailored to specific sectors that offer high growth potential and economic impact.

A future PNP administration will deliver a transformative **National SEZ Infrastructure Plan** designed not as **ad hoc** projects, but as an integrated national blueprint for real growth. This plan will identify strategically located, investment-ready sites across Jamaica—from St. Thomas to

Westmoreland—ensuring regional balance, industrial clustering, and equitable participation in the logistics economy.

These SEZs will be master-planned around contiguous or logically networked parcels of land, supported by upgraded infrastructure—road networks, port access, utilities, digital connectivity—to drive efficiency, scale, and synergy across sectors. Whether it is agro-processing in St. Elizabeth, digital services in Kingston, or light manufacturing in Clarendon, this is how we will attract high-quality investments, build resilient supply chains, and make Jamaica the logistics gateway of the Americas.

Advanced Manufacturing & Technology Parks: Building the Economy of the Future

Madam Speaker, innovation is not an accessory, it is the engine of prosperity. Our proposed manufacturing and technology parks, spanning 300 to 500 acres, will anchor high-value, knowledge-intensive sectors such as ICT, electronics, green technology, and digital industries. With up to 67,600 projected jobs, and a strong emphasis on research,

development, and sustainability, these parks will become launch pads for Jamaican ingenuity—turning ideas into export-ready solutions.

They will unlock careers for software engineers, data scientists, electronics technicians, AI developers, renewable energy specialists, robotics engineers, cybersecurity analysts, and network architects. These hubs will also cultivate roles in product design, digital marketing, 3D printing, and clean energy systems integration—preparing our workforce to compete in a modern global economy.

Madam Speaker, this is not just about investment zones—it is about building the infrastructure for innovation and empowering Jamaicans to shape the technologies of tomorrow.

Automotive Innovation Parks: From Raw Materials to Regional Leadership

Madam Speaker, these parks of between 500–600-acre will serve as industrial powerhouses—anchoring automotive parts manufacturing, aluminium-based consumer goods,

and partial vehicle assembly. Seamlessly connected to modern logistics and port infrastructure, they will not only drive foreign direct investment but also create over 20,000 skilled jobs across Jamaica.

These parks will support careers in automotive engineering, aluminium fabrication, industrial design, logistics coordination, quality control, welding technology, and robotics operation, among others. We will see new opportunities for maintenance technicians, supply chain analysts, safety inspectors, and vehicle testing specialists.

Madam Speaker, the road to economic transformation runs through these innovation parks—where industry meets ambition and Jamaica takes its place in the global manufacturing race.

Electronics & Appliances Parks: Contributing to a Made-in-Jamaica Manufacturing Brand

Madam Speaker, spanning 500 to 650 acres, our Electronics and appliances parks will power a new era of Jamaican industrial capability—manufacturing refrigerators, electrical equipment, and household appliances for local use and export. With up to 36,000 projected jobs, these parks will ignite sector-wide skills development and firmly position Jamaica within the global supply chain.

These facilities will generate careers in electrical engineering, appliance assembly, circuit board design, quality assurance, machine operation, electronics testing, and product design. We will also see the rise of industrial electricians, maintenance technicians, robotics programmers, packaging specialists, and supply chain managers.

Madam Speaker, this is how we build a **“Made-in-Jamaica”** manufacturing brand that stands for quality, sustainability, and innovation. It is about creating jobs not just for today—but for a generation.

Specialised Industrial Parks: Sector-Focused, Future-Ready

Madam Speaker, if we are to transform Jamaica's economy, we must also invest boldly in industries of the future—not

anchor ourselves to the past. Our specialised industrial parks are designed to catalyse innovation, attract investment, and create high-value careers across the island.

From **Sports Parks** (300–400 acres), offering 8,000–12,000 jobs in physiotherapy, apparel design, logistics and sports medicine. **Creative Industry Parks** (300–400 acres), generating 10,000–15,000 jobs in film, animation, music, and digital content. **Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices Parks** (550–850 acres), creating up to 25,000 jobs in biotech, clinical research, and advanced manufacturing. To **Aluminium Innovation Parks** (200–400 acres), producing clean-tech components and aerospace-grade materials, adding another 6,000–9,000 skilled roles.

Madam Speaker, these parks are not mere facilities. They are strategic engines for export growth, youth employment, estimated to be over 200,000 direct jobs, and national resilience. Jamaica must build where the world is going.

- **Diversification** from over-reliance on traditional sectors towards green energy, advanced manufacturing, and digital services

- **FDI** driven by modern regulation, world-class infrastructure, and investor confidence
- **Sustainability**, through low-carbon technologies and circular economy integration

Madam Speaker, this vision is not about figures—it's about people. It's about a Jamaica where every parish, every community, every citizen has access to jobs, opportunity and dignity. Where supply chain management lowers costs, raises living standards, and create competitive SMEs. Where transformation is no longer a promise but a reality.

Let us not drift along with history—we must *make* it. Jamaica is not too small to matter. Jamaica is too important to be ignored. Let us build a country that will make our children proud. Let us make Jamaica 4.0 the moment that changed everything.

The time to champion the change is now. The future is waiting. The PNP leadership is ready.

Conclusion: Madam Speaker, the Time Is Now

In closing, Madam Speaker I am forced to conclude that Jamaica is not at a crossroads; Jamaica is at a precipice, not a crossroads. We can choose continuity, or we can choose to step boldly into a new era. An era defined not by what we inherited, but by what we build. The PNP is choosing Transformative Change.

Let us also be clear, corruption is not a side issue; it is a central threat to our nation's progress. This is a crisis that erodes investor confidence, undermines public trust, and stalls real growth and development. If we are to truly pivot our country and unleash our full potential, we must first restore credibility, accountability, and good governance at the very top.

At a moment of great economic uncertainties, countries and regions are strengthening connectivity to regional and global markets, in order to build resilient supply chains and ensure their economic survival and growth. We have no choice and very little time in which to diversify our route to markets, and access to new markets for the critical supplies we need, or the exports to earn the foreign exchange to keep our economy growing. Wait and see is not a strategy, it is merely condemning the Jamaican people to further suffering.

Action to safeguard Jamaica's interests under CBI legislations, by seeking an exemption to the 10% tariff imposed, must be done on a CARICOM level. The logic of CARICOM cooperation, which at times escapes this JLP administration, is inescapable in this and other matters affecting the region.

The PNP leadership of CARICOM is best able to unite the region around this and other critical developmental issues facing the region. The JLP go it alone tendency, exemplified by its historic and current stance on regional integration is simply not helpful in this moment of looming crisis. What we need is a government with vision, a government that cares for the people, a government that has the **political will**, **strategic focus**, and competence to inspire **regional unity**.

Let us choose the right government for the moment, one that has the proven ability to rally the country and region, to overcome the immediate and strategic challenges facing Jamaica and the region.

Critical to addressing the needs and hopes of our people; the economic growth and development challenges facing Jamaica, CARICOM and the Americas is the implementation

of **Jamaica 4.0: The Global Logistics Hub: Implemented**, the gateway to the Americas and the fourth node in the global trading system, digitally connected, economically diversified, and socially inclusive.

Madam Speaker, the future is calling. Let us rise to meet it.

Time Come to Champion Transformative Change!!

Thank you.