

Independence Message 2010

By Governor General

His Excellency the Most Hon. Sir Patrick Allen, ON, GCMG, CD

6 August 2010

My fellow Jamaicans at home and abroad:

Our Independence Anniversary allows us another opportunity to reflect, renew and recommit ourselves to the ongoing task of nation-building. We pause on our journey, as we do each year, to celebrate, and then we continue, pursuing our objective of achieving the preferred future for our country. This 48th Anniversary celebration of Independence must also be viewed as a demonstration of our commitment to, and our belief in Jamaica.

This past year, our journey was interesting, with its highs and lows, its cliffs and valleys, rugged mountains and undulated plains. Interestingly, these challenges and opportunities simulate the physical landscape that we call Jamaica. It is easy to navigate with the right guide, even though the adventure appears ominously forbidding.

The faith of some of our people may have been shaken by the turbulence in our country, but better yet, we have seen the collective will of our leaders and people to stand together when it matters, and with the help of the Almighty, still the storm. We see positive strides in repairing, reconstructing, and rebuilding the damage; we must now look with hopeful foresight as we seek solutions to our problems.

This Independence has given us another opportunity to think, internalize, personalize and actualize the theme “I Believe”. If we do not believe in ourselves and in our country we are defeated, but if we go forward together and with confidence, we will overcome the obstacles and successfully navigate the path to development.

I believe Jamaicans are committed to doing what is right to secure and safeguard options for the peace and prosperity of our nation. As one of our National Heroes, once advised and I quote: “Let us in shaping our destiny, set before us the qualities of human justice, love, charity, mercy and equity; on this foundation we must build our nation.” (Rt. Excellent Marcus Mosiah Garvey)

Our Independence must never be taken lightly. Our Founding Fathers made tremendous sacrifice so that we may enjoy the social, cultural, political and religious freedoms that we have today. We must honour their sacrifice, redefine our purpose and, as a Nation, seek to fulfill it.

As a Small Island State and a young nation, we have accomplished much – in sports, culture, the arts, health, science and technology, and other areas. However, as we begin our 49th year, we still face many daunting prospects: The global economic situation continues to haunt us, but the valiant attempts to surmount this problem appear to be bearing fruit. We are acutely conscious of the need for restoration and healing as we continue our quest for justice, unity, peace, and prosperity. It will require great courage and moral fortitude from each of us to stand against what is wrong within our nation and within ourselves, and to stand for what is right. But we must do so! Our children and youth are resources that we have to protect, socialize and train, to be worthwhile persons and valuable citizens.

This is a task that we must perform well no matter the cost, for it is the only way that we can safeguard the existence of our nation. In this way we can be proud to be Jamaicans always believing in Jamaica. We have the ability to change our nation and the world. Let us seize the day and resolve that we will not give in to despair and hopelessness. Let us unite and build our country and show the world that the bonds that unite us are far greater than the issues that divide us. Let us pray for the peace and prosperity of our country.

Happy Independence! God bless you, and God bless Jamaica.