



**CARICOM ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION TO
JAMAICA 2016 GENERAL ELECTIONS
25 FEBRUARY 2016**

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

At the invitation of the Honourable Mrs. Dorothy Pine-McLarty OJ, Chairman of the Electoral Commission of Jamaica, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) mounted an eleven (11) member CARICOM Election Observation Mission (CEOM) to observe the General Elections of Jamaica held on 25 February 2016. The team arrived in Jamaica over the period 21 to 22 February 2016.

Prior to Polling Day, the team monitored the preparations for the Elections and held meetings with various stakeholders. The Mission met with Prime Minister, The Most Honourable Portia Simpson-Miller; Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Andrew Holness, MP; Dr. Carl Williams, OD, JP, PhD, Commissioner of Police; Commissioners of the Electoral Commission of Jamaica; Professor Trevor Munroe CD, Executive Director, National Integrity Action; Mr. Warren McDonald, President, Jamaica Chamber of Commerce and Bishop Galbraith, Chairman of the Jamaica Umbrella Group of Churches.

On polling day, five (5) teams were deployed to observe the elections in several constituencies. The teams monitored the day's activities by observing the Opening of the Poll, the Voting process, the Closing of the Poll and Counting of Ballots.

The Mission noted that all materials and supplies needed were present at the stations in the required quantities. For the most part Polling Stations were opened on time and voting commenced promptly at 7:00 a.m. at the Stations in which the opening was observed. All Stations were fully staffed and most had representatives of all the Political Parties contesting in the various constituencies. The teams noted that representatives of the two major Political Parties were present in all areas observed. For the most part, Polling Stations were conveniently located and accessible to the electorate.

Adequate security was in place at all locations with the Officers displaying a very professional approach which contributed to the level of calm which accompanied the day's activities. Throughout the day the poll workers remained resolute and steadily carried out the required procedures ensuring that electors who turned out were able to register their vote.

The Mission's general assessment of the day's activities is that the voters were able to cast their ballots without intimidation or harassment, and that the results of the General Elections of 25 February 2016 reflected the will of the people of Jamaica and reinforced their commitment to the democratic process.

Congratulations to the hard working and dedicated staff of the Electoral Commission, the Poll Workers, the Political Parties and their Candidates, the Security Forces and the People of Jamaica for the mature way in which the Elections were conducted and the high level of discipline displayed throughout the process. Jamaicans must be commended for the conduct of a peaceful elections process.

The Mission's full Report will be prepared and submitted to the Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), H.E. Ambassador Irwin LaRocque. This Report will include the findings of the Mission and its recommendations and suggestions for continued strengthening of the electoral process in Jamaica.

The CARICOM Election Observation Mission wishes to thank the Leaders of the Political Parties, Civil Society Groups, other Stakeholders, Media and the People of Jamaica for their warm welcome and cooperation which contributed to the success of this Mission.

JOSEPHINE TAMAI
CHIEF OF MISSION
CARICOM ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION
26 FEBRUARY 2016