WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

BY
Dr. Gladstone Hutchinson
Director General, PIOJ

GROWTH INDUCEMENT STRATEGY SYMPOSIUM

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I am extremely pleased to see so many new and familiar faces here today and to welcome you, on behalf of the Planning Institute of Jamaica, to this Growth Inducement Strategy Symposium. Your presence here, and the intense public interest which the draft document has provoked during its development phase, and especially since its unveiling on Friday March 4, are certainly indicative of the kind of public participation that we need going forward if we are to achieve meaningful, sustained, robust and broad-based economic recovery and growth.
Let me thank everyone who participated directly and indirectly in the public scholarship that informs this draft document.

To our International Development Partners, your collaborative and collegial partnership has been important to our exercise in the democratic pursuit of our aspirations. Thank you.

To Cabinet, the multiple presentation of our work before you was the ultimate exercise in grounding the growth strategy in realism. Thank you.

To the Loyal Opposition, thank you for making time for two substantive engagements on the importance of renewing communities, social justice and broad-based entrepreneurship as anchors in a new Jamaica. Your continued support of our effort is critical social capital.
To the organizations of the **Private Sector**, thank you for committing to creating an environment where capital understands its important role in the holistic development of all of us. Your YUTE program and other similar initiatives testify to your appreciation and commitment to broad-based entrepreneurial development and the promotion of agency among all Jamaicans, irrespective of social address or circumstance.

To the Members of the **Security and Justice Ministries** and Agencies, thank you for appreciating and acknowledging that human security and national security are flip-sides of the same coin of civil society. Your commitment to strengthening the link between your security efforts and the well-being pursuits and achievements of the residents in our most volatile and vulnerable communities is significant and welcomed.
To **Civil Society Groups and Organizations**, thank you for keeping our feet to the fire and ensuring that every exercise of ours strengthens our civil society. Your cause ultimately determines how good a society we become.

And to **fellow Jamaicans** of all walks of life who have openly embraced our efforts, thank you for the privilege of serving your cause. It is our transformation of your aspirations into real outcomes that ultimately determine our success. We appreciate your faith so far.

I look forward to this occasion continuing the collaborative knowledge making with, about, and for all of the communities and publics that make up all of us and Jamaica. The important task of reversing our economic downturn and creating a platform for meaningful and sustained economic and well-being progress that is dynamic, broad-based, inclusive, equitable, and embracing of all
of our reasonable aspirations, is the goal of this short-medium term growth inducement strategy.

Of important note, the Growth Inducement Strategy is aligned with the goals of Vision 2030 Jamaica.

As we explore the issues today, we will hear from some very distinguished speakers, including the Minister of Finance and the Public Service, the Honourable Audley Shaw, my esteemed colleague and lead consultant Professor Donald Harris, Professor Emeritus of Economics, Stanford University, who will be presenting the main elements of the strategy. Following these presentations you will be given an opportunity to express your views in a question and answer session.

Professor Alvin Wint, Pro Vice Chancellor for the Board of Undergraduate Studies, UWI, Mona, will Chair the late morning panel discussion. The Panel comprises Mr. Nicholas Scott, Vice
President of the PSOJ, Ms. Carol Narcisse, representing Civil Society, and Dr. Barbara Carby. They will offer initial presentations on the State of the Economy, Community Renewal Programme, and the Built Environment & Climate Resilience aspects of the proposed strategies, respectively. A technical resource team compromising of members from the PIOJ and the Bank of Jamaica will join in the discussions to follow.

I eagerly look forward to your discussion and thank you in advance for the vital role you will play in these proceedings. Please also feel free to give us your feedback on the document and offer suggestions for ways in which it might be improved. This is, after all, about your well-being and development and the PIOJ is your servant.

As I conclude, let me take this opportunity, once again, to extend my heartfelt gratitude to my colleagues at the PIOJ, those
individuals and organizations from the public and private sectors, the Opposition, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations who collaborated with the PIOJ to produce the Strategy document; and also for making this event possible.

I thank everyone here today for accepting our invitation, and look forward to our continued collaboration as we strive to make “Jamaica, the place of choice to live, work, raise families and do business”. 