

Independence Message 2014

By Governor-General

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

6 August 2014

Fellow Citizens and Friends of Jamaica:

As we reflect on our journey as an independent people since 1962, we know that despite the problems and hardships we have faced, we have much for which to be thankful. The bedrock of positive energy in our national philosophy derived from our Flag, Our Motto, our National Pledge and our National Anthem explains why we have kept this ship Jamaica afloat, and why we shall attain our vision for our beloved country.

Our Flag reminds us daily that “the sun shines, the land is green and our people are strong and creative”. Our Motto reaffirms that regardless of our historic origins, our economic status, our religious and political beliefs, our gender and age, we are One People. Our National Pledge speaks to our destiny under God, to increase in beauty, fellowship and prosperity. Our National Anthem reminds us of the source of our strength, our wisdom and vision, our direction and our protection.

People often speak of the resilience and the indomitable spirit of Jamaicans, and we see that demonstrated time and again in:

- our response to natural disasters and personal tragedies
- our agricultural sector, which thanks to our courageous farmers, always strives to bounce back after being ravaged by disasters and human predators
- our business sector, especially the small and medium sized, which constantly seeks new ways to confront the varied challenges and remain committed for the long haul
- our public sector, which recognizes the importance of transforming itself to better respond to the changing needs of our country, despite the ongoing pressure they face
- our security forces, who constantly put their lives on the line in accordance with their mandate to serve and protect our people and defend our territory

- our judiciary which maintains its high standard against all odds
- our Media which gives Jamaica a high ranking globally for press freedom
- our Governmental, Non-Governmental and voluntary organizations which devote themselves to advancing the welfare and wellbeing of our people.

I acknowledge that in every sector there are issues which are yet to be resolved, but I am convinced of our core commitment to building a better Jamaica. This fuels my belief ***that there is nothing wrong with Jamaica that cannot be fixed by what is right with Jamaica!***

Today, as we celebrate our Independence Anniversary, I thank all Jamaicans who contribute to a better Jamaica at every level:

- in communities – in rural villages, towns and cities;
- in the leadership of churches, businesses and all sectors;
- in the Diaspora and in the leadership of our nation.

I encourage all of you to look beyond our present difficulties and work for the prize of which we dream: Jamaica, the place of choice in which to live, work, raise our families and do business. We can achieve that goal.

Let us believe in ourselves, remembering as our first National Hero Marcus Garvey said that: ***“If you don’t have confidence in yourself, you are twice defeated in the race of life. With confidence, you have won even before you have started.”***

I wish you a Happy Independence! May God bless Jamaica, Land we love!