

Independence Day Message 2018

From Governor-General

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

6 August 2018

Fellow Jamaicans and our friends at home and abroad, I greet you warmly as we mark the celebration of our fifty-sixth year as an independent nation.

Our journey since Independence has been eventful, challenging at times, exhilarating at other times, but always enriched by the proud achievements of the past and the promise of a brighter future.

We were spared any major disaster this past year, but our people rose up and helped others in the region who suffered from the disastrous effects of nature. I commend the government and private individuals who willingly gave of their skills and resources to assist our neighbours in their time of adversity.

We continue to face the future with optimism, noting areas of improvement in our national economy, while being conscious of the need to build our country on a foundation of sound values; caring for one another and ensuring the protection of the most vulnerable in our communities.

This year, we are moved to take particular note of events in our Diaspora communities, particularly in the United Kingdom, where steps were taken to recognize their historically significant contribution to the development of their country of residence.

The attention on the issues there, reminds us that wherever our people have settled, they have generally applied the dynamism, energy and creativity which are critically important characteristics rooted in our Jamaican heritage.

Our people, despite the challenges of postmodernism and eroding values, continue to demonstrate the spirit of enterprise, creativity, neighbourliness and care for the needy, which have been visible in our history, here at home, for generations. We must treasure both the sound foundations laid in our past and the impact we are increasingly making in countries near and far.

In today's world of global interconnectedness, we have to draw on, and promote those principles and values which are indispensable to us as Jamaicans.

Despite being a small nation, our reach and our influence are both significant.

That is a cause for pride.

It must also cause us to increase our commitment to building a future which is shaped by the best of our proud heritage.

In that spirit, let us celebrate our Independence with:

- thanksgiving in our hearts,
- confidence in a sustaining faith, and
- a sense of purpose,

as we work diligently and creatively, to make our country and the world better for our effort.

Happy Independence and may God bless all of us, in Jamaica land we love.