

11th Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference

14 – 18 June 2026

Montego Bay Convention Centre (MBCC)

DIASPORA PARTNERSHIPS: RE-BUILDING A MORE RESILIENT JAMAICA

Overview

The 11th biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference convenes members of the Jamaican diaspora, government leaders, private sector partners, academia and civil society to advance a shared national priority, building a more resilient Jamaica. This year's staging is particularly significant in light of recent events, including the impact of Hurricane Melissa which has underscored Jamaica's vulnerability to geological hazards.

These disruptions have affected communities, infrastructure, and livelihoods, reinforcing the urgency to ensure that building systems are more resilient, adaptive, and sustainable. The Conference therefore provides a strategic platform to mobilise the expertise, investment and innovation of the global Jamaican diaspora in support of national recovery and long-term resilience.

Under this theme, the Conference will focus on strengthening climate and disaster resilience through improved national preparedness, mitigation strategies and coordinated emergency response systems. It will also prioritise agriculture and food security by advancing smart practices, enhancing local production and building more resilient food supply chains.

In addition, attention will be given to housing and infrastructure, with a focus on developing sustainable, disaster-resilient communities and modernising critical national infrastructure. The Conference will also explore the role of technology, education and healthcare in building resilience and innovation to improve access, quality and responsiveness across these sectors.

A key priority will be deepening youth and diaspora engagement, ensuring that younger generations and diaspora networks are actively involved in national development and innovation ecosystems. Discussions will also centre on trade, investment and economic confidence, with a view to unlocking diaspora-driven investment opportunities and strengthening Jamaica's economic resilience.

Delegates will discuss the needs of returning residents and their reintegration, focusing on creating enabling frameworks and support systems to facilitate their successful transition and contribution to national development.

Through high-level dialogue, technical sessions and investment-focused engagements, participants will explore practical pathways to align diaspora contributions with Jamaica's development priorities, including Vision 2030 Jamaica and national climate adaptation strategies.

The Conference will reaffirm the critical role of the diaspora, not only as ambassadors of Jamaica globally, but as active partners in rebuilding stronger, safer and more resilient communities.

Pre-Conference

SUNDAY, 14 JUNE 2026

TIME	SESSION	VENUE
10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	11 th biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference Thanksgiving Worship Service	Calvary Baptist Church, 5 Corinaldi Avenue, Montego Bay, St. James

Conference Day One

MONDAY, 15 JUNE 2026

DAY ONE MONDAY, 15 JUNE 2026 MC: Dr. Terri-Karelle Johnson				
TIME	DUR	SESSION	OVERVIEW	VENUE
8:00 AM – 4:00 PM		Registration and Information Desk		Block C
8:00 AM – 7:00 PM		Marketplace/Government at-your-Service	One-stop venue where diaspora members can directly engage with government agencies and partners to access services. Participants will also have the opportunity to visit booths and stalls from a variety of public and private sector companies.	Exhibition Hall
9:30 AM – 10:00 AM	30 mins.	Conference Commencement Welcome Remarks: Hon. Earl Jarrett , OJ, CD, JP CEO, The Jamaica National Group and Conference Chair Opening Remarks: Hon. Alando Terrelonge , MP, JP Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade	Opening segment featuring welcome and remarks from key stakeholders, setting the tone for the Conference and outlining its strategic focus.	D1 & D2
10:00 AM – 11:15 AM	75 mins	PLENARY SESSION Mobilising Diaspora Trade and Investment for a Resilient Jamaica Moderator: Ms Kathryn Silvera , President, Jamaica Manufacturers & Exporters Association JAMPRO Presentation: Investment project opportunities in Jamaica	This plenary examines how diaspora trade, investment and partnerships can be strategically mobilised to strengthen Jamaica's economic resilience, advance climate adaptation and drive sustainable growth, while showcasing investment opportunities for the diaspora.	D1 & D2

		Panellists: 1. Hon. Delano Seiveright , MP, Minister of State, Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce 2. Mrs Shullette Cox , President, JAMPRO 3. Ms Tiffany Sullivan , Founder and CEO, Green Carib Limited 4. Mrs Sharon Roper , Chief Operating Officer, MScale and Director, Turner Innovations Limited [Diaspora Returnee, UK]		
11:15 AM – 12:00 PM	45 mins	COFFEE BREAK Visit the Marketplace/Government- at-your-Service	Delegates visit the Marketplace	Exhibition Hall
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM	60 mins	Governor-General's Diaspora Achievement Awards	The Governor- General's Diaspora Achievement Awards recognise and celebrate outstanding Jamaicans in the diaspora who have made significant contributions to national development and the global advancement of Jamaica.	D1& D2
1:00 PM – 2:00 PM	60 mins	LUNCH		Exhibition Hall
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	60 mins	CONCURRENT SESSION 1 Diaspora and Returnee Business Success Stories Moderator: Mr Oliver Mair , Consul General, Consulate General of Jamaica, Miami Panellists: 1. Mr Levi Roots , Jamaican British businessman, celebrity chef, musician and television personality [Diaspora UK] 2. Mrs Jewel Daniels Radford , Entrepreneur [Diaspora Returnee, US]	This session spotlights inspiring journeys of diaspora and returnee entrepreneurs who have successfully built and scaled ventures in Jamaica. Through real-world insights, speakers will explore opportunities, challenges and the role of global diaspora networks, innovation and resilience in driving business success. Participants will gain practical lessons on investment, market entry and leveraging international experience to create sustainable impact locally.	C4
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	60 mins	CONCURRENT SESSION 2	This breakout session provides practical guidance for diaspora members interested in investment in	C9

		Investing in Jamaica's Property Market: Opportunities for the Diaspora Moderator: Ms Lisa Rutty, Member, Global Jamaica Diaspora Council, (Canada) Panellists: 1. Mr Dwayne Berbick, Assistant General Manager, Corporate Communications and Public Affairs, National Housing Trust 2. Mr Leighton Smith, Vice President, VM Building Society, Overseas Offices and CEO, VM Finance Limited 3. Mr Dave Hanson, Senior Manager and Chief Product Officer, Mortgages, JN Bank Limited	Jamaica's property market. It will cover key steps, legal considerations, financing options and emerging opportunities, helping participants make informed and confident investment decisions.	
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	60 mins	CONCURRENT SESSION 3 Empowering Entrepreneurs and Communities through the Jamaica Stock Exchange and the Jamaica Social Stock Exchange Moderator: Prof. Neville Ying, Chair, Jamaica Social Stock Exchange Panellists: 1. Mr Livingstone Morrison, CEO, Jamaica Stock Exchange 2. Mr Christopher Issa, CEO, S Hotel 3. Ms Antoinette Hamilton, President, MSME Alliance 4. Ms Charmaine Marie Brimm, Technical Specialist - Socio-Economic Development, Planning Institute of Jamaica 5. Mr Rezworth Burchenson, CEO, VM Investments Limited and VM Wealth Management Limited	This plenary explores how the Jamaica Stock Exchange and the Jamaica Social Stock Exchange are expanding access to capital for businesses, social enterprises and community initiatives. The discussion will highlight investment opportunities, impact financing and the role of the diaspora in driving sustainable economic and social development in Jamaica.	C6

3:00 PM – 4:00 PM	60 mins	PLENARY SESSION Return, Rebuild, Thrive: Unlocking Opportunities for Returning Residents Moderator: Mr Kwame McPherson, First Jamaican to win the prestigious global Commonwealth Short Story Prize 2023 [Diaspora Returnee, UK] Panellists: Mrs Camille Didier, Country Manager, Island Car Rentals [Diaspora Returnee, USA] Ms Jacqueline E. Baker, Community Builder and Relocation Consultant, Creator of the YouTube channel, <i>JET Setting with Jackie</i> [Diaspora Returnee, USA] Mrs Charlene Fagan-England, Educator, Health Coach and Facilitator/Speaker [Diaspora Returnee, Canada] Mr Mark Davy, Founder and CEO, Northwood Consulting Group [Diaspora Returnee, UK]	This session explores the opportunities, challenges and support systems for returning residents, with a focus on successful reintegration and meaningful contribution to Jamaica's development.	D1 & D2
4:00 PM – 4:30 PM	30 mins	Coffee Break		
4:30 PM – 5:30 PM	60 mins	PLENARY SESSION Building a Resilient Education System in Partnership with the Diaspora Moderator: Dr Kevin Brown, President, University of Technology, Jamaica [Diaspora Returnee, UK] Panellists: Sen. the Hon. Dana Morris Dixon, Minister of Education, Skills, Youth and Information Mr Andrew Lee, CEO, eLearning Dr Anthony Munroe, President, Borough of Manhattan Community College, USA	This plenary examines how education can be strengthened and reimagined to build human capital, enhance national resilience and support Jamaica's long-term development. It will also address the reconstruction and recovery of schools impacted by Hurricane Melissa. This is to be considered alongside the role of innovation, digital transformation and diaspora engagement in improving access, quality and relevance across the education system while preparing learners with the skills needed for a rapidly changing world.	D1 & D2

		4. Ms Kay Green , Education Consultant specialising in STEM curriculum, UK		
5:30 PM – 6:30 PM		Marketplace		Exhibition Hall
5:30 PM – 6:30 PM	60 mins	SIDE EVENT 1 Reintegration of Involuntary Returned Migrants Organiser: Ms Antonette Richards Civil Registration and Migration Unit, Social Policy Planning and Research Division Planning Institute of Jamaica Mr Alvin W. McLean, Jr. , Programme Director, Family Unification Resettlement Initiative	This session will examine the reintegration of Involuntary Returned Migrants (IRMs) as an important national development and social policy issue. Discussions will focus on the challenges faced by returnees, including access to employment, housing, documentation and social support. Additionally, it aims to examine the role of coordinated national strategies and diaspora engagement in supporting successful reintegration.	C4
5:30 PM – 6:30 PM	60 mins	SIDE EVENT 2 Meeting of the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council and the Global Jamaica Diaspora Youth Council Dr Sandra Colly-Durand , Vice-Chair, and Education Sector Lead, Global Jamaica Diaspora Council and Managing Director of Jamaica Diaspora Mentorship Academy [Diaspora France] Professor Patrick Vernon , OBE, Member, Global Jamaica Diaspora Council (UK South)	This interactive session brings together members of the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council (GJDC), the Global Jamaica Diaspora Youth Council (GJYDC), and other stakeholders to strengthen connections, foster collaboration and explore opportunities for partnership in support of Jamaica's development. Participants will engage in dialogue, knowledge sharing and collective action to enhance diaspora engagement and impact.	C6

Conference Day Two

TUESDAY, 16 JUNE 2026

DAY TWO - TUESDAY 16 th JUNE 2026, MC: Debbie Bissoon				
TIME	DUR	SESSION	OVERVIEW	VENUE
8:00 AM – 4:00 PM		Registration and Information Desk		Block C
8:00 AM – 5:30 PM		Marketplace/Government at-your-Service	One-stop venue where diaspora members can directly engage with government agencies and partners to access services. Participants will also have the opportunity to visit booths and stalls from educational institutions, as well as public and private sector companies	Exhibition Hall
9:00 AM – 10:30 AM	90 mins	Ceremonial Opening Moderator: Ms Debbie Bissoon • Flag Ceremony • National Anthem • National Pledge • Opening Prayer Remarks: • Hon. Earl Jarrett, OJ, CD, JP CEO, The Jamaica National Group and Conference Chair	This ceremonial opening features a keynote address by the Prime Minister, setting the strategic vision and national priorities for the Conference, and highlighting the role of diaspora engagement in Jamaica's development and resilience.	D1 & D2

		• Hon. Alando Terrelonge, JP, MP, Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade • Mr Mark Golding, MP, Leader of the Opposition Remarks and Introduction of the Prime Minister: Sen. the Hon. Kamina Johnson Smith, JP, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Keynote Address: Dr. the Most Hon. Andrew Holness, ON, PC, MP Prime Minister		
10:30 AM – 11:00 AM	30 mins	COFFEE BREAK <i>Prime Minister tours Marketplace</i>	Delegates visit the marketplace	Exhibition Hall
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	60 mins	PLENARY SESSION Securing Jamaica's Future: Building National Climate, Tourism and Disaster Resilience Moderator: Ms Danae Peart, Sector Lead – Development, Global Jamaica Diaspora Council Presenter: Hon. Edmund Bartlett, OJ, MP, Minister of Tourism Panellists:	This plenary examines strategies to strengthen Jamaica's preparedness, response, and recovery systems in the face of climate, tourism and disaster risks. It will explore the role of policy, infrastructure, technology, and diaspora engagement in enhancing national resilience and protecting communities and livelihoods.	D1 & D2

		Amb. Major General (Ret'd) Antony Anderson, CEO, The National Reconstruction and Resilience Authority (NaRRA) Mrs Lesley-Ann Ennevor, UNDP Assistant Resident Representative Mr Dwayne Smith-Alexander, Architectural Designer [Diaspora USA] Mr Donovan White, Director, Tourism, Jamaica Tourist Board Mr Wayne Robertson, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Water, Environment and Climate Change		
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM	60 mins	PLENARY SESSION Security and Public Safety: Working Together as We Continue to Build a Safer Jamaica Moderator: Senior Superintendent Dennis Brooks, Senior Communication Strategist, Jamaica Constabulary Force Panellists: Dr the Hon. Horace Chang, OJ, CD, MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security and Peace Mr Richard Stewart, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Jamaica Constabulary Force Dr. Patrick Linton, Chief Cyber Security Expert, MOCA, Jamaica Constabulary Force	This plenary explores Jamaica's progress in reducing crime, including the significant decline in homicides, and examines ongoing police transformation efforts and government investment in national security as outlined in the budget. It will highlight how modernisation, technology, and strategic reforms are strengthening public safety, while exploring the role of diaspora engagement in supporting safer, more secure communities.	D1 & D2

		4. Ms Shauna Trowers , Chief Technical Director, Crime Prevention, Ministry of National Security and Peace		
1:00 PM – 2:00 PM	60 mins	LUNCH Marketplace/Government at-your-Service		Exhibition Hall
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	60 mins	PLENARY SESSION Advancing Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security through Diaspora Partnership Moderator: Ms Debbie Bissoon , Broadcaster and Co-host, Farm Chicks with Debbie and Becky Panellists: Hon. Floyd Green, MP, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining Mr David Neil Crum-Ewing, Operations Executive, GK Foods & Services - Manufacturing Division Dr. Derrick Deslandes, President, College of Agriculture, Science and Education (CASE) Ms Menen Ross, 2025 National Farm Queen	This plenary explores how diaspora partnerships can strengthen agriculture and food security in Jamaica by promoting sustainable practices, increasing local production, and supporting innovation across the agricultural value chain.	D1 & D2
3:00 PM – 4:00 PM	60 mins	PLENARY SESSION Connecting, Engaging and Empowering the Youth Diaspora for National Development	This session explores how young members of the Jamaican diaspora can be mobilised as drivers of innovation, entrepreneurship, and national development, strengthening Jamaica's future through global talent and local impact.	D1 & D2

		Moderator: Mrs Abigail Brady Rhoden, Media and Global Youth Advocate and Chair, Global Jamaica Diaspora Youth Council, UK Panellists: 1. Hon. Rhoda Moy Crawford MP, Minister of State, Ministry of Education, Skills, Youth and Information 2. Ms Ananda Francis, Data Science and AI Researcher 3. Mr Rodain Richardson, Attorney-at-Law and Chair, Youth Advisory Council of Jamaica 4. Ms Reccarnei Phillipson, Global Jamaica Diaspora Youth Council (UK North)		
4:00 PM – 4:30 PM	30 mins	COFFEE BREAK		
4:30 PM – 5:30 PM	60 mins	PLENARY SESSION Diaspora Role in Transforming Healthcare for Improved National Well-being Moderator: Mrs Shani McGraham Shirley, Director, Yahsuh Fitbox and Ms Jamaica Universe 1998 Panellists: 1. Hon. Dr Christopher Tufton, CD, MP, Minister of Health and Wellness (MOHW) 2. Mr Courtney Cephas, Executive Director, National Healthcare Enhancement Foundation, MOHW 3. Dr. Binzie Roy Davidson, Midwest USA Rep., Global Jamaica Diaspora Council and Healthcare Entrepreneur 4. Ms Suzette Buchanan, CEO, Bellevue Hospital	This plenary explores how Jamaica’s healthcare system can be strengthened to improve resilience, access, and quality of care. It will examine the role of innovation, infrastructure, workforce development, and diaspora engagement in building a more responsive and sustainable healthcare system.	D1 & D2

5:30 PM – 6:30 PM		Marketplace		Exhibition Hall
7:00 PM – 10:00 PM		Jamaica Night Street Vibes: Musical Tribute to the Greats Joint Legacy Partners' Signature Event	The event dubbed, Jamaica Night <i>Street Vibes: Musical Tribute to the Greats</i> , will be the highlight of Jamaica Diaspora Day. It will provide delegates with an immersive and nostalgic Jamaican cultural experience featuring legendary musicians who passed away since 2020, iconic 'yaad' games, and authentic Jamaican cuisine. Conference delegates are encouraged to dress in Jamaican themed outfits for an evening to remember.	

Conference Day Three

WEDNESDAY, 17 JUNE 2026

DAY THREE – WEDNESDAY DAY 17 th JUNE 2026, MC: Archibald Gordon				
TIME	DUR	SESSION	OVERVIEW	VENUE
8:00 AM – 12:00 PM		Registration and Information Desk		Block C
8:00 AM – 2:00 PM		Marketplace/Government at-your-Service	One-stop venue where diaspora members can directly engage with government agencies and partners to access services. Participants will also have the opportunity to visit booths and stalls from educational institutions, as well as public and private sector companies	Exhibition Hall

9:00 AM - 10:15 AM	75 mins	PLENARY SESSION Leveraging the Creative Economy to Build Stronger Cultural Industries Moderator: Ms Kimberly Patterson, Actor Presenter: Hon. Olivia Grange, OJ, CD Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport Introduction of Guest Speaker: Mr Frank James, Group CEO, GraceKennedy Limited Guest Speaker: Hon. Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, OJ, CD Jamaican Ambassador-at-Large and internationally renowned track and field sprinter, widely regarded as one of the greatest sprinters of all time. Panellists: 1. Mr Storm Saulter, Filmmaker and Multidisciplinary Artist 2. Mr Joe Bogdanovich, Owner and CEO of DownSound Entertainment and Promoter for Sumfest 3. Ms Naomi Cowan, Singer and Songwriter	This plenary explores how Jamaica's Creative Economy can be leveraged to drive economic resilience, innovation, and sustainable growth. It will highlight opportunities for diaspora engagement, investment, and global market access to strengthen the country's creative industries.	D1 & D2
10:15 AM – 11:15 AM	60 mins	PLENARY SESSION	This plenary explores how Jamaica can leverage the expertise, networks, and experience of its diaspora to accelerate the development of AI and digital innovation. It	D1 & D2

		Harnessing Diaspora Talent to Build Jamaica's AI and Digital Future Moderator: Ms Simone Pasmore, CEO, Webstylze [Diaspora Barbados] Panellists: 1. Hon. Dr Andrew Wheatley, MP Minister Without Portfolio, Office of the Prime Minister 2. Mr Christopher Reckord, Chair, National AI Taskforce and Deputy Chair, Caribbean AI Taskforce 3. Dr Daphne Simmonds, Associate Professor, Information Systems, Metropolitan State, University of Denver	will highlight opportunities for talent exchange, mentorship, research collaboration, and investment to build a robust digital ecosystem, strengthen local capacity, and position Jamaica as a competitive player in the global digital economy.	
11:15 AM – 11:45 AM	30 mins	COFFEE BREAK		
11:45 AM – 12:45 AM	60 mins	PLENARY SESSION Expanding Diaspora Engagement across borders: Global Market Access, Global Networks and Foreign Trade Moderator: Her Excellency Deidre Mills, Ambassador of Jamaica, Brussels Panellists: 1. Sen. the Hon. Kamina Johnson Smith, JP Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade	This session explores strategies to deepen and expand diaspora engagement across regions, including Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, Asia, and Europe. It will highlight opportunities to strengthen global networks, foster collaboration, and leverage diaspora expertise, investment, and partnerships to support Jamaica's development and international connectivity.	D1 & D2

		2. Hon. Gary ‘Butch’ Hendrickson, OJ, CD CEO, National Baking Company 3. Mr William Mahfood, Chairman, Wisynco Group 4. Mr Morris Sinclair, Founder and CEO, AfriCaricom Alliance [Diaspora Ghana]		
12:45 PM – 1:45 PM	60 mins	LUNCH		Exhibition Hall
1:45 PM – 2:45 PM	60 mins	PLENARY SESSION Mobilising Diaspora Volunteerism for Social Impact and National Development Moderator: Mr Elon Parkinson, Manager, Communications, Petrojam Limited Panellists: 1. Ms Donna ‘Aunty Donna’ Gowe, Fundraiser and Humanitarian 2. Ms Angelia Christian, Angel Foundation, UK 3. Ms Michelle Tulloch-Neil, NE USA Council Member 4. Ms Claudine Allen, General Manager, JN Foundation	This plenary explores how volunteerism and social impact initiatives can be mobilised to strengthen communities and support national development, particularly in the aftermath of Hurricane Melissa. It will highlight the role of the diaspora in contributing time, skills, and resources to recovery efforts, community building, and long-term resilience across Jamaica.	D1 & D2
2:45 PM – 3:45 PM	60 mins	CLOSING SESSION AND DECLARATIONS Closing Remarks: ▪ Hon. Earl Jarrett, OJ, CD, JP CEO, The Jamaica National Group and Conference Chair ▪ Hon. Alando Terrelonge, JP, MP		D1 & D2

		Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Conference Outcome Declaration: • Sen. the Hon. Kamina Johnson Smith, JP Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade		
4:00 PM – 6:30 PM	3 hrs	Day of Empowerment	Buses to shuttle delegates to empowerment location at Craft Market, Harbour Street and back to conference hotels	

Please note that session times may be adjusted slightly to allow for transitions between plenary sessions.

Conference Day Four
THURSDAY, 18 JUNE 2026
Day of Service