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**PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FLA Receives Technical Assistance from IDB**

The Firearm Licensing Authority (FLA) is now better placed to trace firearms, through the acquisition of two Laser Engraving Marking Machines from a US\$9,000 Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) intervention.

National Security Minister, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, said the procurement represents an important development in the country's national security apparatus and crime fighting strategies.

The marking of firearms will enable adequate tracing, as weapons will bear an alphanumeric code unique to Jamaica, identifying country of import, the importer, user and the year of importation. Approximately 80 per cent of crimes committed in Jamaica are through the use of a firearm.

**“Importantly, the marking of firearms will support broad crime fighting efforts, as the relevant state agencies will now be able to track weapons that are used to commit criminal offences and those that have been seized and/or recovered, to the importer or owner. This will also allow the ready identification of licit firearms and those that have been illicitly trafficked into the country”**, said Minister Chang during an unveiling ceremony at the FLA's Kingston Offices yesterday (Thursday, January 28).

The machines will facilitate the Authority's commencement of the marking of civilian firearms, which will be mandatory under the new Firearms Act. **“We want to give the police the requisite legal tools to deal with our nation's crime problems and so we are reviewing the anti-gang legislation as well”**, Minister Chang explained.

Meanwhile, Shane Dalling, Chief Executive Officer at FLA, said the IDB has allocated some US \$400,000 to improve infrastructure and technology under its Security Strengthening Project.

**“So far, we have acquired a Bullet Track Machine, which will be able to test all bullets that have been fired by a licensed firearm. We have received two laser engraving machines which support data concentration to improve the database and network, which has vastly assisted us in terms of the timeline in which we are able to process from the application to the point of testing of firearms”**, he added.

He further noted that **“ballistic testing for all firearms are uploaded immediately to the forensics unit within the JCF, which assists with crime scene investigations and the tracking of firearms”**.

The FLA was established in 2005. It streamlines and standardises the granting, renewal and revocation of firearm licences, while striving to modernise and regulate the licensing of firearms in Jamaica in keeping with international best practices.

