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**PRESS RELEASE  
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**Jamaica Crime Victimization Survey Essential to Jamaica's Evolving  
National Security Policies – Minister Chang**

Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang has described The Jamaica National Crime Victimization Survey (JNCVS 2019), as fundamental to the evolution of national security policies and the development of relevant security programmes. He says it provides the public with objective and factual information with which to engage in reasoned discussions about matters of national security.

Speaking at a virtual presentation of the JNCVS report this morning, Minister Chang urged citizens to **“review and interrogate the report, and to use the information to engage in robust, fact-based discussions about national security policies and programmes.”**

He said that the policies and programmes developed by the Ministry can be held to a higher level of public scrutiny and accountability on account of the survey. The findings provide the Ministry with updated data which informs evidenced based policies and evidence driven programmes.

The Survey which was commissioned by the Ministry and undertaken by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN), is used for measuring crime statistics and for generating relevant information for reporting on the three indicators of the 16<sup>th</sup> Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of the United Nations 2030 Agenda.

Key aspects of the survey are that 90.3 per cent of participants felt safe in their homes, and 97.5 per cent of residents in the urban areas felt safe in church.

**“Over the last year, we have seen a worrying uptick in the number of inter-personal and inter-family conflicts that have had brutal, violent public outcomes. With the advent of social media, and readily accessible smart devices, these vicious family-driven attacks are broadcast for wide public viewing almost instantaneously. This creates an additional level of public shock, horror, and fear,”** Minister Chang said.

He added: **“The fact that 90.3 per cent of persons felt safe in their homes, even with the homicide rate at over one thousand lives every year for more than a decade, indicates a dichotomous relationship between the reality of crime in Jamaica and the perception of**



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**victimization. This was further supported by the fact that 82.6 per cent of persons said they did not feel they would become a victim of crime within the next twelve (12) months”.**

The Jamaica National Crime Victimization Survey 2019 indicated that there were 25,500 incidents of bank fraud over the twelve (12) month period from September 2018 to August 2019. Of the 21,400 victims of these bank fraud incidents, only 48.3 per cent reported the incidents to the police.

Minister Chang said the COVID-19 pandemic has hastened the use of technology in banking services, however, that comes with an increase in bank fraud incidents, underscoring the national imperative of sustaining efforts to fortify cyber security defences.

Data derived from the Survey also indicated that the perception of corruption within the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) remains relatively high, with 65.2 per cent of persons perceiving there was corruption within the police force.

The National Security Minister reasoned that the data was high because police officers interfaced directly and routinely with the public, therefore their actions were more open to public observation and scrutiny.

While acknowledging that there are some areas in which the JCF needed to improve, Minister Chang reiterated that there **is ongoing work to reposition the organization into a highly professional, standards driven, law enforcement entity. Ultimately, a Force for Good that the people of Jamaica can be proud of.**

Meanwhile, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of National Security Courtney Williams in his remarks said that as the Ministry continues to remain agile by purposefully tailoring and reshaping its policies to effectively combat crime, the survey becomes a vital tool as it measures the incidence of crime from the perspective of the victim and also **“enables law enforcement officials to better understand major crimes by providing an insight into how they can be prevented”.**

This is Jamaica’s fifth Crime Victimization Survey; the first edition was done in 2006. This has been applauded by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

**“As we delve into the findings of how people perceive their safety in Jamaica as well as the reliability and effectiveness of the work of the authorities charged with protecting the people and upholding the the criminal justice system, the Ministry of National Security would like to use this opportunity to express gratitude to the Inter-American Development Bank as well as the Governments of Canada and the United Kingdom, for their noteworthy financial support for this 2019 Jamaica National Crime Victimization Survey,”** the Permanent Secretary said.

