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**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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More Domestic Violence Intervention Centres (DVIs) - Minister Chang

The handover of six (6) additional Domestic Violence Intervention Centres (DVIs) to the Jamaica Constabulary Force, sends a strong signal of the repositioning of the police in the society and gives hope to victims of domestic violence, declared Deputy Prime Minister and National Security Minister, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang.

The Minister, who was speaking at a virtual handover of the DVIs yesterday (October 7, 2021), said that the Government of Jamaica is mindful of the broad social impact of domestic violence and has committed to provide the requisite legislative, policy, and partnership support to curb this societal tendency towards violence.

“It is regrettable that in Jamaica domestic violence continues to feature prominently on the spectrum of acts of violence taking place in our society. Domestic violence is a societal issue. The long-term traumatic effects of domestic violence demoralize the family members who are directly involved,” Minister Chang opined.

He noted that as a fairly young democracy, Jamaica would have inherited institutions and systems that were founded on coercive practices which have resulted in what we see taking place in the society today. He noted for example that **“beating was considered by many to be the most effective means of disciplining a child; and during intimate partner disagreements, physical and verbal assaults were commonplace.**

The Security Minister stated that while domestic violence is often overshadowed by gun violence, which tends to receive greater visibility in the public space because of the sheer brutality it brings to the fore, domestic violence is no-less deplorable and repulsive. **“The Government is unequivocal in our opposition to all acts of violence,”** the Deputy Prime Minister added.

While pointing out that there is an established correlation between toxic stress, as a result of violence in the home and the rate of violence that occurs in our society, the Minister highlighted that societal scars have their genesis in violent homes so, **“we must therefore acknowledge and accept that the true cost of domestic violence is its long-term impact on our society”.**

“I am confident”, Minister Chang continued, **“that having these facilities will not only strengthen the capacity of the police to rescue and support victims of domestic violence and their families, but importantly, these centres will provide a refuge and beacon of hope for these victims”.**

Domestic Violence Intervention Centres which have been established by an agreement with the European Union and the United Nations through the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative are located at police stations in Negril, Santa Cruz, Hayes, Greater Portmore, Gayle, Alexandria, Constant Spring, Matilda's Corner Police Station, Yallahs and Morant Bay.

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