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**PRESS RELEASE
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Private Security Contributing to Downward Trend in Crime – Minister Samuda

In the last three years, the Private Security Industry (PSI) contributed to a notable decrease in serious and violent crimes, robberies and break-ins says Senator the Hon. Matthew Samuda, Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of National Security.

“This downward trend is partly a result of the significant expansion of PSI, with an average annual growth of 6 per cent (6%) in the number of registered private security guards within the last ten years”, the Minister explained. He was speaking at a virtual general meeting convened by the Jamaica Chapter of ASIS, an international organisation for security management professionals which was established more than 65 years ago.

The Minister pointed out that last July, more than 200 private security companies with staff complements surpassing 21,000, were registered with the Private Security Regulation Authority (PSRA).

“Private security entities have become an integral part of the security landscape in Jamaica, providing a wide range of services that enhance the security of public places, residential areas, workplaces and critical national infrastructure, thereby maintaining an environment conducive for business across all sectors. The industry is not only critical to advancing our national security interests, but also in supporting the country’s economic growth and development”, the Senator said.

He noted that during the past 30 years, the island has experienced a surge in crime and violence, which can be closely linked to the illicit trafficking of firearms and ammunition, illicit drugs trade, financial fraud and extortion.

“Private security firms have diversified to offer a variety of services such as CCTV operation and monitoring, aviation and seaport security, risk mitigation and loss prevention, anti-harassment services for the tourism sector, executive close protection, and security analytics”, Minister Samuda added, noting that the PSI evolves with the security needs of the country.

He said by leveraging services offered by the PSI, the Government will be able to pursue national security goals more efficiently by streamlining and boosting the dynamism of the PSI, particularly in relation to its potential to contribute to national policy outcomes in the security architecture.

“Jamaica’s PSI lays the nucleus of what will develop into the country’s defence industrial base. The range of government services the PSI provides will continue to expand. As currently holds in the US, UK, Israel, and South Africa, private security firms have the potential to provide Jamaica’s national security agencies with consulting and research services, training, logistics, as well as cyber security and analytics”, Minister Samuda said.

He noted that through the PSRA, the Government will continue to rely on the industry for **“augmenting the state’s security forces and its ability to maximise the delivery of public security where there are constraints”**.

The PSRA is an agency of the Ministry of National Security that monitors and regulates the operations of organisations and individuals operating in the Private Security Industry nationally.

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