



**PRESS RELEASE
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Restorative Justice Works – Minister Mayne

Restorative justice is important in providing a pathway for transformation to a more secure, just and peaceful society says Minister of State in the Ministry of National Security, the Hon. Zavia Mayne.

The Minister was speaking at the 13th Annual Restorative Justice Conference which was held by the Ministry of Justice earlier today, at the Terra Nova All-Suite Hotel in Kingston.

“The Ministry of National Security considers the Ministry of Justice as a key partner in treating with Citizen Security and ensuring that the integrated approach to Crime Prevention and Management is effective, as we carry out our mandate of reducing crime and violence through varied modalities. With the aid of our Police and through the Department of Correctional Services, we have been able to utilise restorative justice as a catalyst for peace and community strengthening”, Minister Mayne explained during his address at the forum.

He noted that restorative justice practices tend to address lesser offences, but they also provide a framework for reducing recidivism and caseloads while helping victims, especially in matters stemming from domestic disputes.

In commending members of the Jamaica Constabulary Force who he claimed are the first responders to disputes, the Minister emphasised their **“instrumental”** role in addressing domestic feuds through the 10 Domestic Violence Centres. This he said will help to mitigate the need for vigilante or jungle justice.

“We have to promote restorative justice and in select communities we have to repel a culture of don-man-ship, where they will apply justice in accordance to their own value systems”, Minister Mayne added.

For young people to recognise that there are other ways of resolving disputes without violence, the State Minister recommended that restorative justice practices should be introduced in the Ministry of Education’s curricula.

“We anticipate more collaborative efforts for early interventions, coupled with additional improvements to the policy framework in support of new strategies that serve to bolster crime reduction and increase public order and public safety in Jamaica. We look forward to continued partnerships as we construct more Restorative Justice Centres and sensitise our citizens to the importance of restorative justice in providing tangible solutions in the fight against crime, which allows us to ‘Liv Gud’ ”, the Minister concluded.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner of Corrections, Dr. Marc Thomas, who also spoke at the conference pointed out that restorative justice has formed an essential component of the DCS' rehabilitation strategy and crime fighting mandate.

Dr. Thomas further explained the educational offerings and vocational skills training being offered to wards and inmates to bolster the rehabilitation process.

“Our number one goal is to reduce recidivism. We want the persons in our care to leave with a skill, educated and enlightened in terms of conflict resolution, particularly in preparation for their return to their respective communities”, he said.

Restorative Justice is described as a process whereby all the parties (victims, offenders and the community) with a stake in a particular offence come together to collectively resolve how to deal with the aftermath of the offence.

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