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**PRESS RELEASE  
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**National Security Minister Urges Active Citizen Support in Tackling Crime and Violence**

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, says it will take time for the full effect of the government's crime fighting strategy to be realised, noting that defeating violence producers and organised crime is at the forefront of the government's efforts.

This, the Minister said, includes the unprecedented outlay spent on acquiring equipment and technology as part of the transformation of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF). He noted that, to date, there have been impressive successes and coupled with the massive social investment in particular zones across the country. He added that, the foundation is being laid for the Jamaican people to once and for all break free of the rampant violence that has plagued the country for more than forty (40) years.

Minister Chang pointed out that while the government continues its financial support of the crime portfolio, for the necessary change to have an effect, **"the citizens themselves must now stand up for what is right, good and wholesome."**

He continued that, **"as a government, which has shown a willingness to not only listen to the people but to also act strongly on their behalf, we will continue our social investment strategy, while at the same time impress upon every citizen that they too have a most significant role in helping the country in the fight against crime and violence"**.

He pointed out that historically, parishes such as Kingston and St. Andrew, Clarendon St, Catherine and St. James have been the leaders in violence producers, with a mushrooming of criminal activities and criminal enterprises comprising of violent gangs. Communities in these parishes are the majority of areas declared under a Zone of Special Operations (ZOSO) – the special security measure taken by the government to halt major crimes in certain communities.

Minister Chang said that while the government continues do its part, the key factor remains the role each Jamaican citizen must play, in not only reporting to the police what is known of criminals in their communities, but also in challenging some socially accepted norms that are providing funding and safe houses for criminal elements in the society.

**"No government on its own can sufficiently reduce crime and violence without the active support of the population, which bears the brunt of the negative impact of crime on a social, financial and security level. No amount of money spent on programmes can ever put an end to the problem, the people themselves must become active participants in tackling crime,"** Minister Chang said.

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