



**PRESS RELEASE
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Citizen security is the most fundamental objective of national security – Minister Chang

Citizen security presents the most comprehensive approach to guaranteeing the delicate balance between the security of persons and their democratic coexistence, says Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang.

He was speaking at the launch of the Government of Jamaica (GOJ) – European Union (EU) Partnership to Support Citizens Security in Jamaica, held at Jamaica House earlier today (January 20, 2022).

Minister Chang said the launch signals more than the strengthening of the longstanding bonds of friendship between Jamaica and the European Union.

“It is not a mere formality to indicate the EU’s support for crime prevention in Jamaica,” he said, while adding that **“the partnership between the GOJ and the EU to support citizen security in Jamaica is a symbol of Jamaica’s maturity as a democratic society, evidenced by our prioritizing of the security of the individuals and groups who make up our society.”**

The programme is being financed to the tune of 20 million Euros, (approximately JM\$3.5 billion) through budget support.

In expressing appreciation on behalf of the Government and people of Jamaica to the EU, Minister Chang said the partnership is regarded as the concept that best lends itself to addressing the problems of crime and violence from a human rights perspective.

The funds are being directed in particular to the Zones of Special Operations in order to have measureable results, as it relates to reduced criminal activity, and improved opportunities for the residents to engage in self-improvement and empowerment initiatives.

“As we focus on citizen security, it is imperative that social transformation initiatives be designed to be sustainable and bring meaningful change to the lives of the people in the identified communities,” stated Minister Chang.

He further stated that Government’s investment in education, which is one of the largest social investment need, runs close to a trillion dollars, according to estimates of the past ten years, adding that less than 40 per cent of students graduating at the secondary level, do so with the basic three CXC subjects, or an employable skill.

“The failure of our education system, which itself leads to some of the things we're referring to, social apathy, some social distancing from a different point of view in terms of people feeling disconnected, lack of inclusivity in the society leads to violence,” he noted.

“The reality is that we spend huge amounts of funds and we are not getting the desired outcome and I think a fundamental shift is welcomed and important because the foundation that we build has to be the public institutions that serve the poor.”

-30-