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**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Thursday, September 22, 2022

I am not telling the police not to fire back – Chang

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang remains firm on remarks made last Friday in Frome, Westmoreland, where he urged police officers to use all means necessary to preserve their own lives and the lives of bystanders when confronted by gunmen.

The response comes amid misleading editorialising by the Jamaica Gleaner in an article published on Friday, September 16, 2022, under the headline: **“Shoot to kill, Chang, tell cops”**. The headline conveyed the erroneous idea that the Minister urged police to kill with impunity.

Nowhere, in the Minister’s nearly hour-long speech did he state or imply such actions by the police.

While addressing the gathering at the ground-breaking ceremony for the construction of a new police station in Westmoreland, Minister Chang made the point that the police are not in the business of extrajudicial killings as **“that was a historical thing”**.

His exact statement reads, **“they have had fatal shootings because men with illegal weapons engage the officers in gun battles. I am not telling a policeman not to fire back and I’ll say it here in Westmoreland ... anytime a man takes up a gun after the police, I expect the Commissioner to train them, so that when they fire he must not miss”**.

He urged gunmen to surrender when confronted by the police.

“They [the gunmen] are entitled to a fair trial, that is why I emphasize that we are providing the Courts what they require to run an efficient system”.

Minister Chang noted that his remarks last week were rooted in the standard Use of Force Policy and carried with it no semblance of hate towards anyone. He said, when people choose to disregard the law, then as a matter of course, the police whose job it is to maintain law and order, must always be trained to respond most effectively and appropriately.

He reassured the country, that the police are being equipped with the necessary tools to effectively respond to the high crime environment.

Minister Chang maintains that the Government is committed to ensuring a safer and more prosperous Jamaica.