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**PRESS RELEASE
FOR
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ZOSOs continue to yield positive results – Minister Chang

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr Horace Chang, says the government remains confident that the Zones of Special Operations (ZOSOs) are transformative in communities where they are established and noted that, the government remains committed to providing opportunities for the most vulnerable citizens in the country.

He made these remarks while making his contribution to Parliament, where he brought the motion seeking a sixty-day extension to the Zones of Special Operations in seven communities - Mount Salem, Denham Town, Greenwich Town, August Town, Norwood, Parade Gardens and Savanna la Mar.

The Motion was approved.

The Minister said that the transformative change in these communities is real and that the Zones of Special Operations are bringing about lasting, meaningful and impactful change to the lives of the residents.

“As we move into the next phase of extension, let me reiterate that the Zones continue to yield positive results. As of December 4, 2022, for the period prior to and during the declaration of the respective ZOSOs, areas under the ZOSO continue to record reductions in all major crimes,” Minister Chang said.

He said that the whole-of-government approach being implemented is critical and reasoned that the government must continue to utilize all available legitimate resources to disrupt criminal gangs, apprehend the killers and transform the life outcomes of our most vulnerable.

The Minister made it known that activities in the ZOSOs have continued to transition along the established Clear-Hold-Build model, adding that activities in the seven Zones of Special

Operations are at various stages of development, with about \$760 million already committed in five of them.

The Deputy Prime Minister pointed out that so far, the Social Intervention Committee (SIC) has managed the implementation of over J\$300 million in investment in the Mount Salem community, adding that in Denham Town, capacity building of the Community Development Committee (CDC) has resulted in investments of over 20 million dollars being directly managed at the community level, creating greater job opportunities for residents.

The Minister said that the Social Intervention Committee (SIC) continues to engage and provide critical guidance to the sustainable build-out of interventions within the Denham Town ZOSO. With over J\$450 million invested, the ZOSO has had a tremendous impact. He stated that the overall work plan remains on track, and the Social Intervention Committee will continue to monitor and provide updates. Greenwich Town, he said has had the single largest period of public investment.

He noted that the Social Intervention Committee (SIC) continues to monitor the implementation of key social investments within the community. The current investments which are under active implementation are Enterprise Grant – Phase III; ICDP Solid Waste Management Cycle II; Infrastructure Upgrade and Safe Passages. The Work plan for the community, as well as the community priority plans, indicate there is a need for additional investments. These are being identified, and the required allocations are being considered.

Minister Chang added that the Norwood ZOSO is earmarked for significant build-out of needed infrastructure, including supporting the rehabilitation of road and water supply.

“In the interim, several short-term initiatives are being executed. Currently, there are approximately J\$300 million in approved projects to be implemented in that community. These investments are projected to be implemented over the next 12-24 months,” he said.

The Parade Gardens and the Savanna-la-Mar ZOSOs are still in the pre-development phase with activities largely focused on identifying community needs for prioritization.