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**PRESS RELEASE
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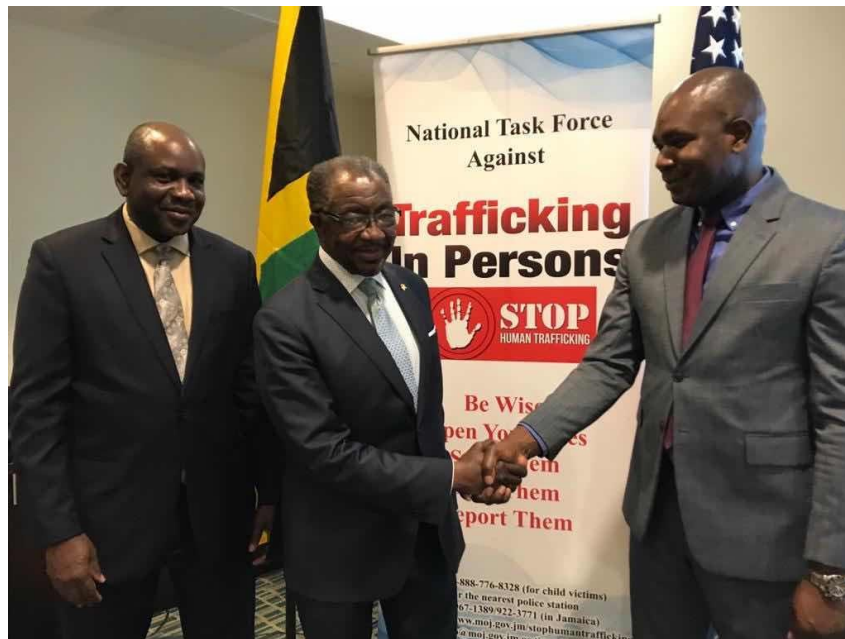


Photo Caption: Minister of State in the Ministry of National Security, the Hon. Zavia Mayne greets US Ambassador to Jamaica, His Excellency Nick Perry and is joined by Chairman of the National Task Force Against Trafficking in Person (NATFATIP) and Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of National Security, Mr. Courtney Williams at the US-Jamaica Child Protection Compact Partnership third Bilateral Dialogue at the Courtyard by Marriott hotel in Kingston on Wednesday (July 13, 2022).

Government moves to implement National Policy to combat human trafficking

Chairman of the National Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons (NATFATIP) and Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of National Security, Courtney Williams, says a National Policy to Combat Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and a National Plan of Action are underway.

“The Government of Jamaica is strengthening its legislative framework to combat human trafficking. It is against this backdrop that we are providing more comfortable and safer spaces for survivors of human trafficking, particularly for vulnerable groups”, said the Permanent Secretary while delivering remarks at the third Bilateral Dialogue for the US-Jamaica Child Protection Compact (CPC) Partnership, which was held on Wednesday, (July 13, 2022) at the Courtyard by Marriott hotel in Kingston.

He explained that following Cabinet’s approval, NATFATIP will benefit tremendously from the new policy frameworks, which will allow the Taskforce to gain greater support from other government ministries and agencies.

“The move to implement a National Plan of Action and Policy is a responsibility that we all share across Government. It is an extremely important one that requires all our support and every effort must be made to ensure that we can sustain the gains obtained from this partnership [The CPC].”

The aim of the National Policy to Combat Trafficking in Persons (TIP) is to strengthen Jamaica’s capacity to prevent human trafficking through public education that will reduce the vulnerability of at-risk groups, to provide protection and assistance to victims of TIP and to prosecute and punish those who violate the human rights of Jamaicans and foreigners who are trafficked in Jamaica’s jurisdiction.

Williams added that through the CPC Partnership, the Government of Jamaica is better equipped to combat human trafficking. He explained that the partnership facilitated the development and implementation of the island’s first child-friendly space and provided additional training to members of the security forces and the Judiciary.

Meanwhile, during his remarks, Minister of State in the Ministry of National Security, the Hon. Zavia Mayne, reassured the US partners of the Government’s commitment to the fight against human trafficking.

“There is perhaps no form of trafficking more heinous than that of children. Our Government is committed to making Jamaica inhospitable to this activity while ensuring that those who fall victim to human trafficking receive justice and adequate care,” the Minister explained.

He added that combatting human trafficking is not only a whole-of-government effort, but a fight that requires active participation from whole-of-society.

“We have been training and sensitising first responders including health workers, child protection workers, community advocates, law-enforcement officers, judges, port officers, and immigration officers to effectively recognise the signs that someone, especially a child, is being trafficked and how to treat with the issue.”

For his part, US Ambassador to Jamaica, His Excellency Nick Perry, during his remarks at the third bilateral dialogue, reaffirmed the US Government’s commitment to maintaining the CPC Partnership between both governments.

“With focused dedication, prioritisation and a whole-of-government approach, Jamaica has a real opportunity to emerge from this partnership as a regional leader in tackling child trafficking. That is my greatest wish for Jamaica’s children,” said Ambassador Perry, pointing out that Jamaica is the first Caribbean island to benefit from the CPC Partnership.

The purpose of the US – Jamaica Child Protection Compact (CPC) Partnership is to strengthen the efforts of the Government to effectively prosecute and convict child traffickers and to work with civil society to identify victims of child trafficking, to provide comprehensive trauma-informed care for child victims of these crimes, and to prevent child trafficking in all its forms. Under this partnership, Jamaica received its first child-friendly space which was established in March 2022 in Trelawny.