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PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

Minister Chang urges unity in the fight against criminal terrorism

The government of Jamaica under the leadership of Prime Minister Andrew Holness, will continue to take strong and decisive action to contain, apprehend and bring criminal terrorists to justice, declares Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr Horace Chang.

He was speaking against the backdrop of the murder of two boys in Salt Spring, St James on Monday, November 6, at today's Post Cabinet Press Briefing at Jamaica House.

Minister Chang said it was unfortunate that the nation yet again had to contend with another brutal murder while urging the entire Jamaican population to **“respond kindly to the prime minister’s call for unity in attacking criminals who would seek to terrorise our communities”**.

In addition, he noted that before this latest flare-up in criminal activity, the community of Salt Spring enjoyed a significant decline in violence based on active work by the security forces, the Jamaica Social Investment Fund and other interventions by the private sector.

He stated, however, that those gains were dented by the outbreak of brutal violence in the community, which has seen several people killed including the two boys on Monday evening.

“This was an act of terrorism; it’s frightening and instils fear in our communities. This kind of activity despite reductions in other areas of crime seems to be increasing in certain communities,” Minister Chang said.

“These kinds of criminal activity, therefore, threaten the stability of our communities, incite fear and put at risk the social and economic gains we have made over the last six years,” he said while noting the changing character of crime locally.

Minister Chang said also that while there has been a significant reduction in turf wars, there is an increase in contract killings resulting from intra-gang and inter-personal conflicts, resulting in the injury and death of innocent bystanders and victims who were in the wrong place at the wrong time.

This, he said, amounts to criminal terrorism.

“They are murdering our children and our senior citizens; these are heartless, brutish criminals who are terrorizing our citizens,” the Minister stated.

He said further that as a government and as a society, the response to these acts of terror must be decisive and unified, adding **“We are sending a clear signal that Jamaica is not a safe haven for child murderers”**.

The security minister is assuring the public that the government remains mindful of the time constraints for the use of the State of Public Emergency, given the lack of support from the Opposition, noting, however, that the families, their community, the entire society, are depending on the government to take strong action against criminals.

“We will continue to make available to our security forces all the tools that will enable them to remove these heartless characters from society,” said Minister Chang.