

Message from the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Mark Golding, MP for Jamaica's 64th Independence Anniversary

It is with great pride that I extend greetings to Jamaicans at home and across the diaspora as we celebrate the 64th Anniversary of Jamaica's Independence under the theme, *"United in Celebrating Resilience."*

This year's theme speaks to the enduring spirit of the Jamaican people. It reflects not only our ability to overcome adversity, but also our capacity to remain united in purpose, hopeful in outlook, and confident in our ability to build a brighter future together.

Over the past sixty-four years, Jamaica has earned the admiration of the world far beyond the size of our island. Our athletes have inspired millions. Our music has transformed global culture. Our scholars, entrepreneurs, healthcare professionals, artists, and public servants have distinguished themselves across every continent. Wherever Jamaicans have gone, they have carried with them a spirit of excellence, resilience, and innovation that continues to enhance our nation's reputation.

Our diaspora remains one of our nation's greatest strengths. Generations of Jamaicans abroad have remained deeply connected to the homeland through their investment, expertise, advocacy, philanthropy, and unwavering love for the land of their birth. In the aftermath of Hurricane Melissa, that bond was once again evident as Jamaicans across the diaspora mobilised to provide financial assistance, relief supplies, technical expertise, and steadfast support to affected families and communities.

I express my sincere gratitude for this remarkable demonstration of compassion and solidarity. Your response embodied the very essence of this year's theme, *"United in Celebrating Resilience."* Your contribution has strengthened families, supported communities, expanded opportunities, and continues to shape Jamaica's development. You are not simply ambassadors of our culture; you are valued partners in our nation's progress.

As we celebrate this Independence Anniversary, let us remember that resilience is not only about overcoming hardship. It is also about working together to create a Jamaica that is more just, and more inclusive. The relationship between Jamaica and its global family must therefore continue to evolve beyond sentiment into enduring partnership. By drawing on the talent, experience, and innovation of Jamaicans everywhere, we can strengthen our institutions, expand economic opportunity, deepen democratic values, and build a nation that truly reflects the aspirations of all our people.

As our Embassies, High Commissions, Consulates General and other diplomatic missions gather to mark this historic occasion, we also recognise their work in advancing our national interests, supporting our citizens abroad, promoting our culture, expanding trade and investment, and deepening the partnerships that contribute to Jamaica's development.

May these celebrations reaffirm the bonds that unite us across oceans and generations. Though separated by distance, we remain one people, bound by a shared heritage, common purpose, and an abiding love for Jamaica.

Happy 64th Independence, Jamaica.

May God continue to bless our beloved land and all her people.

Mark J. Golding, MP
Leader of the Opposition