

Statement to the Hague Forum 8-12 February 1999

As written

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND (UNFPA) INTERNATIONAL FORUM THE HAGUE, THE NETHERLANDS, 1999 FEBRUARY 8-12

PRESENTATION

INTRODUCTION: MR. CHAIRMAN, OTHER MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU, FELLOW MINISTERS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, JAMAICA IS INDEED GRATEFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE FORUM AND TO SHARE WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SOME OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS, CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT.

GEOGRAPHY AND CULTURE: BEFORE PROCEEDING, HOWEVER, LET ME SHARE WITH YOU SOME BASIC FACTS. JAMAICA IS ONE OF THE LARGEST ISLANDS IN THE CARIBBEAN, SITUATED CLOSE TO THE MAINLAND OF THE UNITED STATES AND MEXICO AND IN CLOSER PROXIMITY TO THE ISLANDS OF CUBA, THE BAHAMAS, HAITI, PUERTO RICO AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. JAMAICA IS KNOWN INTERNATIONALLY FOR ITS REGGAE MUSIC, REGGAE BOYZ, TRACK AND FIELD, BLUE MOUNTAIN COFFEE, BEACHES AND BOUNTIFUL HOSPITALITY. *and now for* IT IS A MULTI-
our outstanding young cultural group ASHF. ETHNIC AND MULTI-RACIAL SOCIETY COMPRISING A PREDOMINANT AFRICAN DESCENDANT POPULATION. ITS CULTURE IS HETEROGENEOUS MANIFESTING ELEMENTS OF AFRICAN, EUROPEAN,

AMERICAN, ASIAN AND OTHER ORIGINS. OUR MOTTO APTLY SUMMARIZES THE MEDLEY "OUT OF MANY, ONE PEOPLE".

ECONOMY: JAMAICA IS A SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATE VULNERABLE TO BOTH NATURAL DISASTERS AND EXTERNAL MACRO-ECONOMIC DISTURBANCES. WE HAVE BEEN PURSUING MODERNIZATION, STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT, AND LIBERALIZATION POLICIES GUIDED BY THE INTERNATIONAL MONITORY FUND (IMF) AND THE WORLD BANK FOR THE GREATER PART OF THE LAST THREE DECADES. OUR EXPERIENCE HAS DEMONSTRATED MARGINAL SUCCESS, IF ANY. POVERTY LEVELS ARE HIGH AND PERSISTENT, FAILURES OF CRITICAL LOCAL PRODUCTION, MARKETING AND FINANCIAL SYSTEMS AND INSTITUTIONS, UNPRECEDENTED INTERVENTIONS BY GOVERNMENT TO RESCUE PRIVATE ENTERPRISES, CONTINUING HIGH LEVELS OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDER-EMPLOYMENT, CRIME AND VIOLENCE ARE ONLY A FEW OF THE MANY COMPETING IMPERATIVES FOR FISCAL PRUDENCE.

DEMOGRAPHY: IN SPITE OF THE HARSH ECONOMIC REALITIES, JAMAICA HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN ITS DEMOGRAPHIC, SOCIAL AND HEALTH STATUS. JAMAICA IS CURRENTLY CLASSIFIED AT THE INTERMEDIATE STAGE IN ITS TRANSITION TO LOW BIRTH AND DEATH RATES. THE SIZE OF THE POPULATION

WAS ESTIMATED IN 1997 AT APPROXIMATELY 2.56 MILLION. THE RATE OF NATURAL INCREASE WAS 1.75 PER CENT WHILE THE ACTUAL POPULATION GROWTH RATE WAS 1.0 PER CENT. (THE DIFFERENCE IN THE TWO RATES REFLECTED THE RELATIVELY HIGH LEVELS OF EXTERNAL MIGRATION DESTINED TO THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA). THE CRUDE DEATH RATE (CDR) HAS REMAINED RELATIVELY LOW AT ABOUT 6 PER 1000 POPULATION FOR THE PAST 15 YEARS WHILE THE CRUDE BIRTH RATE (CBR) HAS DECLINED MARGINALLY FROM 26 PER 1000 POPULATION TO 23.4 PER 1000 POPULATION OVER THE SAME PERIOD. IT IS SIGNIFICANT TO NOTE THAT FERTILITY AMONG ADOLESCENTS HAS ACTUALLY INCREASED OVER THE RATE FOR 1989 REFLECTING RELATIVELY HIGH LEVELS OF UNWANTED FERTILITY, LOW CONTRACEPTIVE PREVALENCE AND HIGH RISK OF POVERTY TRANSMISSION.

BASED ON THE CHANGES IN BIRTHS AND DEATHS AND THE EFFECTS OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION, THE POPULATION OF JAMAICA HAS BEEN EXPERIENCING A MODERATELY RAPID PROCESS OF AGEING. THE MOST NOTICEABLE FEATURE IS A DECLINE IN THE PROPORTION OF CHILDREN (0-14 YEARS) AND A SIGNIFICANT EXPANSION OF THOSE IN THE REPRODUCTIVE, LABOUR FORCE AND RETIREMENT AGES. THE IMPLICATION OF THESE CHANGES FOR CONTINUING POPULATION GROWTH, JOB CREATION, HEALTH AND WELFARE PROGRAMMES AND POVERTY ERADICATION ARE IMPERATIVES FOR FUTURE POPULATION PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION. COUPLED WITH

THESE CHANGES ARE ALSO THE CONTINUING HIGH LEVELS OF INTERNAL POPULATION REDISTRIBUTION AND URBANIZATION RESULTING IN UNDESIRABLE CONCENTRATION OF POPULATION AND THE PROLIFERATION OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES AND THEIR ATTENDANT SOCIAL HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES IN OUR MAJOR CITIES

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ICPD PROGRAMME OF ACTION: MR. CHAIRMAN, AT A GENERAL LEVEL, JAMAICA CAN STATE CATEGORICALLY THAT THE ICPD PROGRAMME OF ACTION AND RELATED PROGRAMMES OF ACTION HAVE MADE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION AT THE CONCEPTUAL, ORGANIZATIONAL AND OPERATIONAL LEVELS, OF THE NATIONAL POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME. GREATER DEGREES OF INTER-AGENCY AND INTER-SECTORAL COLLABORATION AND COOPERATION HAVE BEEN DISPLAYED IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL POPULATION AND RELATED POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES. THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS HAVE BEEN, TO A LARGE EXTENT, INCORPORATED INTO MANY EXISTING AND NEWLY CREATED INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRAMME COORDINATION AND EVALUATION. THESE CHANGES ARE OCCURRING AT BOTH THE TECHNICAL AND POLITICAL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT. PROGRAMMES OF DECENTRALIZATION ARE ALSO PROCEEDING AT VARYING RATES OF SUCCESS IN A NUMBER OF MINISTRIES AND AGENCIES

INCLUDING HEALTH, EDUCATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT. THE NATIONAL POPULATION PROGRAMME HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT ADJUSTMENTS AND MODIFICATIONS IN LIGHT OF THE NEW PRINCIPLES, AGREEMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CAIRO PROGRAMME OF ACTION. HOWEVER, WE HAVE ENCOUNTERED NUMEROUS CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS.

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS

A. **NATIONAL POPULATION POLICY AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

MR. CHAIRMAN, IN 1994 AND 1995, JAMAICA REVISED ITS NATIONAL POPULATION POLICY AND FORMULATED A NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT. BOTH THE POLICY AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION HAVE BEEN MADE CONSISTENT WITH THE CAIRO PROGRAMME OF ACTION. SUBSEQUENTLY, POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES OF ACTION IN THE AREAS OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, SENIOR CITIZENS, FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION, AND POVERTY ERADICATION HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED. A POLICY ON DISABILITY HAS BEEN DRAFTED AND STEPS ARE CURRENTLY BEING TAKEN TO DEVELOP POLICIES ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND POPULATION INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION (IEC) AND ADVOCACY. ALL POLICIES ARE IN KEEPING WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF CAIRO, COPENHAGEN, BEIJING AND OTHER PLATFORMS OF ACTION.

B. **RECONFIGURATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT FOR**

POPULATION POLICIES AND PLANNING

POPULATION PLANNING IS UNDER THE PORTFOLIO OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND PLANNING. WE ARE CONVINCED THAT THIS LOCATION IS ESSENTIAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE NATIONAL POPULATION PROGRAMME. THE POPULATION POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEE (PPCC) IS MULTI-SECTORAL AND HAS OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION OF THE NATIONAL POPULATION PROGRAMME. SINCE CAIRO, CONCERTED EFFORTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO IMPROVE ITS EFFECTIVENESS PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO INCREASING ITS PRIVATE SECTOR AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS MEMBERSHIP. PROPOSALS ARE CURRENTLY BEING CONSIDERED FOR ITS FURTHER EXPANSION AND TRANSFORMATION INTO A COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT. ~~IT IS ALSO BEING PROPOSED TO RENAME THE HUMAN RESOURCE COUNCIL (MINISTERIAL LEVEL) AS THE POPULATION AND HUMAN RESOURCE COUNCIL TO WHICH THE COMMISSION WILL REPORT.~~ THIS NEW CONFIGURATION IS EXPECTED TO ENSURE GREATER LEVELS OF INTEGRATION OF POPULATION FACTORS INTO BOTH NATIONAL AND SECTORAL POLICY AND PLANNING. THE PERSISTENCE OF AGENCY-BOUND PLANNING AND OPERATIONAL SYSTEMS IS EXPECTED TO BE FURTHER ^{changed} ~~UNDERMINED~~ BY THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMMES FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR INCLUDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF EXECUTIVE AGENCIES.

C. **REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS**

HEALTH REFORM INCLUDING DECENTRALIZATION HAS TAKEN ON NEW IMPETUS SINCE CAIRO. A HEALTH REFORM UNIT HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED AND APPROPRIATE LAWS AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING DECENTRALIZATION HAVE BEEN ENACTED. THE INTEGRATION OF FAMILY PLANNING, MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH AND SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES INCLUDING HIV/AIDS PROGRAMMES HAVE BEEN REALIZED AT THE CLINIC AND COMMUNITY LEVEL. 'BABY FRIENDLY' AND 'MOTHER FRIENDLY' INITIATIVES AND SYNDROMIC MANAGEMENT HAVE ALSO PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN THE INTEGRATION PROCESS. THE MINISTRY HAS ALSO PLACED SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE INCORPORATION OF MALES IN THE PROVISION OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES. INITIATIVES AT THE WOMEN'S CENTRE OF JAMAICA FOUNDATION, THE NATIONAL FAMILY PLANNING BOARD, THE JAMAICA FAMILY PLANNING ASSOCIATION HAVE ALSO TARGETTED MALES IN THEIR REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH PROGRAMMES. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PRIVATE SECTOR DRIVEN "PERSONAL CHOICE PROGRAMME" IN COLLABORATION WITH THE NATIONAL FAMILY PLANNING BOARD HAS PROVEN VERY SUCCESSFUL. THE PROGRAMME INCORPORATES PRIVATE PROVIDERS IN THE PROVISION OF FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES AND PROMOTES PERSONAL CHOICE AS THE OPTION FOR PERSONS IN THE REPRODUCTIVE AGE. A MAJOR NEW THRUST OF THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH PROGRAMME IS THE TARGETTING OF ADOLESCENTS. ADOLESCENTS HAVE HISTORICALLY BEEN MARGINALIZED BOTH BY THE

STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS OF THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH PROGRAMME. MAJOR STEPS, HOWEVER, HAVE BEEN TAKEN SINCE CAIRO TO RECTIFY THIS DISCREPANCY. PROGRAMMES HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED WITH ASSISTANCE FROM UNFPA, USAID, UNICEF AND FAMILY HEALTH INTERNATIONAL AND OTHER RELEVANT PARTNERS. INDICATIONS ARE THAT AS THESE PROGRAMMES MATURE THEY WILL IMPACT POSITIVELY ON THE ISSUES AND CONCERNS AFFECTING ADOLESCENTS.

GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZES THAT ALTHOUGH MAJOR CHANGES ARE BEING INTRODUCED PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO THE ORGANIZATIONAL AND DELIVERY OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL, THERE IS STILL A GREAT DEAL YET TO BE DONE. FULL INTEGRATION OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AT THE STRUCTURAL, MANAGERIAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL LEVELS HAS NOT BEEN UNDERTAKEN. THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY ON REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH INCLUDING ADOLESCENT REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH IS AN URGENT NEED. ADEQUATE ORGANIZATIONAL MECHANISMS FOR COLLABORATION AMONG SECTORS, PARTNERS AND PROGRAMME AREAS BOTH IN THE DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH HAVE ALSO NOT BEEN SORTED OUT. RATIONALIZATION OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH COMPONENTS AND THE DETERMINATION OF REQUISITE RESOURCES FOR ADEQUACY AND EFFICIENCY ARE MAJOR PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE.

GENDER EQUITY, EQUALITY AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN:

MR. CHAIRMAN, GENDER PREFERENCE IDEOLOGIES, TO A GREATER OR LESSER EXTENT, FIND EXPRESSION THROUGH THE VARIOUS FORMAL AND INFORMAL INSTITUTIONAL AND ACTIVITY STRUCTURES OF SOCIETY. JAMAICA HAS COME A LONG WAY IN ELIMINATING OR CONTROLLING MUCH OF THESE BIASES AND PREJUDICES. THE RATIFICATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE **ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)**, THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A NATIONAL POLICY ON WOMEN AND THE ENACTMENT AND ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS HAVE CONTRIBUTED GREATLY TO THE IMPROVEMENT IN THE STATUS OF WOMEN. THE RECENT PASSING OF THE **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACT (1995)** AND PREPARATORY WORK RELATING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A **COMMISSION ON GENDER AND SOCIAL EQUITY ARE** POSITIVE STEPS FOR FURTHER IMPROVEMENT. IN ADDITION, PROGRAMMES BEING FACILITATED BY THE BUREAU OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS (B WA) FOR THE INTEGRATION OF GENDER INTO POLICY AND PLANNING IN THE MINISTRIES OF HEALTH; EDUCATION AND CULTURE; NATIONAL SECURITY AND JUSTICE; FINANCE AND PLANNING; LABOUR, SOCIAL SECURITY AND SPORT AS WELL AS GENDER DISAGGREGATED DATA COLLECTION AND RESEARCH, ARE ALSO MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION. MEASURES ARE ALSO BEING TAKEN BY THE WOMEN'S POLITICAL CAUCUS, AN NGO, TO ENHANCE THE LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN TOP POLITICAL DECISION-MAKING.

IN RESPONSE TO THE INCREASING RELATIVELY POOR PERFORMANCE OF MALES IN

THE EDUCATION SYSTEM, AND THE HIGH LEVEL OF MALE IRRESPONSIBILITY BEING DISPLAYED IN REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY LIFE, BOTH GOVERNMENT AND NGO'S HAVE BEEN INCORPORATING MALES INTO THEIR PROGRAMMES TO ADDRESS ROOT CAUSES. "FATHERS INCORPORATED", AND NGO'S, WAS ESTABLISHED PRIMARILY FOR THE PURPOSE OF INSTILLING MALE RESPONSIBILITY IN FAMILY AND SOCIETY. MAJOR CONSTRAINTS RELATE PRIMARILY TO A LACK OF A COMPREHENSIVE AND SYSTEMATIC POLICY AND APPROACH ON GENDER AS WELL AS INADEQUACIES OF RESOURCES TO FAST-TRACT THE PROCESS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMISSION ON GENDER AND SOCIAL EQUITY.

STRENGTHENING THE PARTNERSHIP WITH CIVIL SOCIETY

GREATER AWARENESS AND ACCEPTANCE AMONG RELEVANT PARTNERS AND MORE EXTENSIVE PARTICIPATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN THE POLICY AND PLANNING OPERATIONS OF GOVERNMENT HAVE BEEN EVIDENT SINCE CAIRO. CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THESE DEVELOPMENT OF POLICIES IN THE AREAS OF POPULATION, CHILDREN, YOUTH, SENIOR CITIZENS, FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION AND POVERTY ERADICATION. CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS HAVE ALSO BEEN INCORPORATED INTO THE MECHANISMS FOR THE COORDINATION AND EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICIES. TO ENSURE THE PARTICIPATION OF NGOS IN POLICY AND PLANNING, AN NGO DESK WAS ESTABLISHED IN THE PLANNING INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA. NGOS FACILITATED MAINLY BY THE UNITED NATIONS,

HAVE ALSO BEEN PARTICIPATING ON OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS. MAJOR CONSTRAINTS IN THIS AREA INCLUDE:

- A. INADEQUATE AND INSUFFICIENT RESOURCES AND CAPACITY AMONG CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS TO PARTICIPATE OPTIMALLY AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL; AND

- B. THE NUMBER AND DIVERSITY OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS AND THE LACK OF COORDINATION AMONG THEM TEND TO MILITATE AGAINST THEIR MORE EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION: THE EFFECTS OF BOTH GLOBAL AND INTERNAL FINANCIAL CRISES, COUPLED WITH THE VULNERABILITY AND INEFFICIENCY OF LOCAL PRODUCTION AND MARKETING SYSTEMS TO COMPETE INTERNATIONALLY, HAVE PLACED SEVERE CONSTRAINTS ON THE CAPACITY OF THE BUDGET TO MEET EFFECTIVELY **ALL** REQUIREMENTS. REALLOCATION OF RESOURCES FROM THE GOVERNMENT TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR AS EFFECTIVELY REDUCED FINANCIAL FLOWS TO POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES. A LARGE PROPORTION OF THE BUDGET TO THESE PROGRAMMES GOES TOWARDS MEETING PERSONNEL AND OTHER RECURRENT EXPENSES. CRITICAL PROGRAMMES HAVE EITHER BEEN SCALED DOWN OR PUT ON HOLD. THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF MANY OF THE GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION

ARE NOT ENCOURAGING.

GOVERNMENT AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTING A NUMBER OF MEASURES TO ALLEVIATE CRISIS. MODERNIZATION OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR INCLUDING THE CREATION OF EXECUTIVE AGENCIES IS ONE SEEMINGLY VIABLE OPTION BEING PURSUED. DECENTRALIZATION AND AMALGAMATION OF RELATED AGENCIES ARE ALSO BEING IMPLEMENTED. COST-CUTTING AND COST-RECOVERY MEASURES ARE BEING PURSUED. INDICATIONS ARE THAT FERTILITY, LIFE EXPECTANCY, POVERTY ERADICATION, AND RELATED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES MAY NOT BE ACHIEVED AS TARGETTED WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT ADDITIONAL EXTERNAL FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.