



PERMANENT MISSION OF  
JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

**39<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION  
ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
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**General Debate on National Experience on Population Matters:  
International Migration and Development**

To be delivered by

Mr. Easton Williams  
Jamaican Delegation Member

Mr. Chairman, our delegation extends congratulations to you and to the other members of your team on being elected to the Bureau. We are confident that under your leadership the work of the session will be successfully executed.

Mr. Chairman, Jamaica is characterized mainly as an emigration country. In

19th century, Jamaicans migrated to Central America and other

indicate that Jamaica and other countries in the English-speaking Caribbean

In recent years, the Government has implemented a number of innovative measures for the mobilization of our diaspora for national development. Annual diaspora conferences involving representatives of Jamaicans in all our major destination countries have been conducted. Resulting from these conferences the Jamaican Diaspora Foundation and the Jamaica Diaspora Board have been established in Jamaica. The Governor-General has proclaimed June 16 as the official Jamaican Diaspora Day. A Jamaican Diaspora website was also launched with the specific aim at forging stronger linkages with Jamaicans abroad. The Jamaican diaspora has created niche markets in all its major destination countries. Reggae music, ackee and saltfish, Red Stripe beer, jerk seasonings, bun and cheese and patties are national staples available internationally. These markets have great potential for expansion.

Mr. Chairman, the volume of remittances channeled through official money transfer networks has been increasing progressively since the 1990's. It is currently estimated at about 1.5 billion US dollars annually or over 10

per cent of Gross Domestic Product. Remittance is currently the largest

current estimate of below 15 percent is also linked to the increase in the level of the flow of remittances. Remittances have played and continue to play a positive role in the economy and society in Jamaica.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.