

**CRIME PREVENTION,  
SECURITY & JUSTICE**

## Reducing crime - A national imperative

Making the nation safe and secure is our most urgent priority. Too much of our energy is being devoured by the ever-present fear for our own safety. The goals we outline in this Manifesto for economic growth and job creation can only be achieved if there is a drastic reduction in crime and a return to a peaceful, orderly society.

### Our Pledge

#### 18.1 Strengthening the capability of the Police Force

- Increase the strength of the Police Force to 12,000
- Launch an intensive recruitment drive especially among CXC graduates to bring complement to full establishment.
- Expand the Mobile Reserve and have contingents based at strategic locations across the island to more effectively respond to outbreaks of crime and violence.
- Provide special training in civilian

law enforcement for members of the Jamaica Defence Force to better equip them to assist the Police when called upon and to be able to do so with full regard for the rights of citizens.

- Establish a cadre of Police Auxiliaries to undertake clerical, administrative and light-security duties at police stations to enable police personnel to concentrate on law enforcement
- Establish a Traffic Corps made up of civilians to relieve the Police of traffic duties and enable them to focus on law enforcement.
- Establish a Police Reserve similar to the JDF Reserve drawn from civilians whose character and suitability have been verified to assist the Police especially at the community level.

- Intensify the graduate entry and accelerated promotion programmes to improve the quality of management of the Force.
- Improve training in investigation techniques and crime scene management.
- Improve forensic capability by providing appropriate technology and training and recruiting the necessary expertise.
- Establish a National Intelligence Agency with appropriate technology and expertise to collate, analyze and disseminate intelligence data as a critical tool in the prevention and detection of crime and apprehension of criminals. Appropriate levels of intelligence information must be accessible online or by radio or telephone contact to police stations and mobile police.
- Establish a National Identification System to improve police surveillance and detection capabilities and protect law-abiding citizens.
- Design a 5-year programme for the rehabilitation of police stations islandwide.
- Make annual budgetary provisions for the timely replacement of police vehicles and equipment.
- Construct residential complexes at strategic locations for police personnel to ensure that they are within commutable distance of their station assignment.

### **18.2 Improved management and accountability**

- Strengthen the powers of the Commissioner of Police to discipline (including dismiss) members of the Force to enable him or her to weed out corrupt and non-per-

forming members and then hold him/her responsible for their conduct and performance. Provision will be made for appeals to the Police Service Commission against the decisions of the Commissioner of Police.

- Restructure the Police Public Complaints Authority into an independent investigative authority to investigate all cases of police abuse or excess. The PPCA will refer matters as it deems fit to the Director of Public Prosecutions or the Commissioner of Police for appropriate action and will be required to report annually to Parliament.
- The Commissioner of Police and the Chairman of the Police Service Commission will be required to report twice per year to Parliament on the management and operations of the Police Force.
- Strengthen the human rights component of the curriculum of the Police Academy to ensure that police graduates are sensitized to their duty to respect the rights of citizens and are fully aware that they will be held responsible for their actions.
- Provide more intensive on-duty supervision of new recruits to ensure that their conduct conforms to the training received.

### **18.3 Transforming political garrisons**

- Enact into law the relevant provisions of the Code of Political Conduct with appropriate criminal penalties.
- Amend Section 40(2)(g) of the Constitution to include provision that any person convicted under the above enactment will be auto-

- matically disqualified for such time, as determined by the Court, from contesting any election or continuing to hold any elected office.
- The Political Ombudsman will be required to monitor the conduct and activities of political representatives especially in garrison constituencies and report to Parliament. He will also be entitled to refer any matter to the Director of Public Prosecutions.
  - Any report made to Parliament by the Political Ombudsman which reflects negatively on the conduct of any elected official may constitute grounds for impeachment and removal from office.
  - Contractors to be registered with the National Contracts Commission will be required to produce satisfactory criminal records. Contractors who engage subcontractors with criminal records involving conviction for gun-related or violent crime will be removed from the register of contractors.

#### **18.4 Detection of illegal guns**

Increase surveillance at our ports of entry and along our coastline to detect and stop the inflow of illegal guns. Research being undertaken in the United Kingdom is well-advanced in developing a portable device capable of detecting concealed weapons. The research project is expected to be completed by December 2008. If it proves successful, we will employ this technology on a large scale to enable the Police to more effectively recover illegal guns.

#### **18.5 Building community support for law enforcement**

- Intensify programme of community policing to build strategic partnerships between communities and the Police in ridding the communities of crime.
- Prioritize crime-affected communities for targeted inner-city renewal projects as a critical support measure to reduce crime and enhance law enforcement measures.
- Establish a Police Cadet Corps to enlist young potential community leaders to strengthen the alliance between the Police and the communities.
- Strengthen the current initiatives to promote conflict resolution by the provision of increased training and opportunities.
- Re-energize the Neighbourhood Watch and Police Youth Club programmes to mobilize communities against criminal activity.



## Healing our ailing justice system

The justice system is indispensable to a free and democratic society. It is the ultimate source of protection of the rights of the citizen, holding the scales between one citizen and another and between the citizen and the State. How efficiently and fairly it functions defines the quality of our democracy and, indeed, the quality of our lives.

Our justice system is creaking from years of neglect resulting in a pile-up of more than 400,000 cases. Poor physical facilities, shortage of personnel and archaic judicial and administrative procedures have rendered our justice system an obstacle – not a facilitator – to our development. We are committed to changing that.

### **Our Pledge**

#### **19.1 Commitment to Justice Reform Programme**

We are committed to a 10 year Justice Reform Programme supported by the necessary policy decisions and allocation of resources as recommended by the Jamaica Justice System Reform Task

Force.

#### **19.2 Use of technology for speedier disposal of cases**

- Provide computer-based audio and text recording in the Appeal Court, Supreme Court and all Resident Magistrates Court to facilitate real-time production of testimonies and submissions.
- Provide for computerization of and online access to transcripts, notes of evidence and judgements.
- Expand the Justice Training Institute to train existing Court staff and as well as those required to operate new procedures.

#### **19.3 Rehabilitation and modernization of Court Houses**

Establish a 5-year programme for the rehabilitation and modernization of all Court Houses to better accommodate the case load and the introduction of the appropriate technology.

#### **19.4 Better utilization of Court facilities and elimination of case backlog**

- Improve the utilization of court facilities by having Courts operate two shifts where necessary and sit for more days where possible and necessary.
- Increase the number of Family Courts to facilitate greater access and allow for sittings to be held at locations which do not carry a “court house” atmosphere.
- Establish special Courts to deal with cases involving domestic violence.
- Increase the number of Resident Magistrates, prosecutors and Court staff
- Recruit on a temporary basis from among retired judges and the private Bar persons to serve as Resident Magistrates and prosecutors to assist in disposal of the huge backlog of cases in the RM Courts.

#### **19.5 Better management of cases**

- Introduce an efficient case management system in RM Courts to track and expedite the trial of cases or, where possible, refer for mediation.
- Require that objective timelines be set for the various stages and eventual disposal of each case with the ultimate aim being to have cases disposed of within 6 months.

#### **19.6 Better provision for witnesses**

- Provide better facilities for witnesses to attend Court
- Expand the Witness Protection Programme
- Increase the number of shelters for victims of domestic violence especially women and children.

#### **19.7 Improved jury selection**

- Improve the jury selection process by providing better facilities and remuneration.
- Launch a public education programme to sensitize the public as to the critical importance of jury service to the justice system.

#### **19.8 Law Reform**

- Establish a Permanent Law Reform Commission to conduct a review existing statutes and make recommendations for changes.
- Repeal offences that are no longer necessary or appropriate.
- Enact the necessary amendment to make certain minor crimes ticketing offences.

#### **19.9 Review of Court jurisdictions**

Review and restructure the existing jurisdiction of the Lay Magistrate’s Court, the RM Court and the Supreme Court to achieve optimal allocation of responsibilities consistent with the required level of jurisprudence.

#### **19.10 Appointment of Judges**

- Increase the number of Judges of the Appeal Court from 7 to 11 and appoint additional Judges of the Supreme Court
- Provide a more transparent process for the appointment of Judges

#### **19.11 Constitutional protection and security of tenure for Resident Magistrates**

Amend the Constitution to recognize Resident Magistrates as part of the judiciary and provide them security of tenure in furtherance of the principle of the independence of the judiciary.

### **19.12 Restorative Justice**

Enact the necessary legislation to enable Courts to order convicted persons to compensate victims who have suffered personal loss or damage as a result of the offence.

### **19.13 Community Justice Tribunals**

Establish Community Justice Tribunals to be conducted by Justices of the Peace to resolve disputes between citizens that do not involve criminal

offences, and which are heard with the consent of the disputing parties. Settlements agreed on would be enforceable by the Courts.

### **19.14 Judgement debts owed by the government**

Enact provisions to make it a statutory requirement similar to provisions for payment of public debt, for the government to pay to a citizen such amounts as have been ordered by the Courts.



## Transforming our prisons into rehabilitation centres

Prisons ought to be more than places of punishment. They must serve to rehabilitate offenders who will someday return to society to live among us. The reform of our prison system is critical in establishing a safe and peaceful society.

### **20.1 Increase prison capacity**

Construct a new modern prison facility to ease the severe overcrowding existing at the Tower Street and St. Catherine Adult Correction Centres which currently house 75% more prisoners than they were designed to accommodate.

### **20.2 Comprehensive programme of rehabilitation**

- Establish a full-time multi-grade school at Tower Street and St. Catherine Adult Correction Centres to upgrade the academic skills of all inmates who have not achieved Grade 9 certification.
- Assess the skills possessed by inmates and devise work pro-

grammes to utilize these skills with a stipend being paid to purchase approved personal items and accumulate savings to be paid over at time of release.

- Unskilled, low-risk inmates will be deployed on public works projects, e.g. drain cleaning, under supervision of the JDE.

### **20.3 Increased use of non-custodial sentences**

Courts will be urged to increase the use of non-custodial sentences for convicted persons who have no record of violent crime or behaviour. Sentences should include engagement on public works projects.

### **20.4 Enforcement of discipline**

Stricter measures will be enforced to prevent indiscipline and the abuse of inmates.

### **20.5 Adequate counseling for inmates**

- Provision will be made in collaboration with Churches and NGOs for adequate counseling services to assist inmates to prepare themselves to return to society as reformed, productive citizens.
- Non-denominational Church services will be encouraged as a means of assisting in the rehabilitation process.

### **20.6 Parole and furlough decisions to be informed by assessment of progress toward rehabilitation**

Care will be taken to ensure that parole and furlough decisions are based on an objective assessment of the inmate's progress toward rehabilitation

### **20.7 Mentally-ill inmates**

Special facilities to be provided at the Bellevue Hospital for mentally-ill inmates.