



**STATEMENT BY**

**JAMAICA**

**TO THE**

**50<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION ON  
POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

**ON**

**AGENDA ITEM 3: GENERAL DEBATE ON NATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN  
POPULATION MATTERS: "CHANGING AGE STRUCTURES AND  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT"**

**NEW YORK  
APRIL 3, 2017**

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## **Introduction**

Chair

The Jamaican delegation extends heartiest congratulations on your election as Chairman of the 50<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Population and Development. We also extend commendations to the other members of the Bureau. Under your leadership, we anticipate that the Session will achieve all its objectives and guide the continued effective integration of population variables in our global development efforts. We endorse the statements made on behalf of the Group of 77&China by Ecuador and CELAC by El Salvador.

Chair,

The theme of this session is timely as Jamaica is fast approaching a turning point in its demographic transition. We have been experiencing a demographic bonus for over three decades now but this is peaking and will start to decline in the very near future. This favourable demographic situation is a direct result of our successes in reducing fertility and mortality rates. The combined effects have resulted in a rapidly ageing population. The Caribbean is one of the fastest ageing regions in the world and also records one of the highest external migration rates. This has not only increased the population ageing process but is also contributing to significant shifts in the age and sex structures of our populations.

Jamaica is currently at an intermediate stage of its demographic transition, that is, the child population is declining; there are increasing proportions of the population in the working age group and elderly populations. In recognition of the importance



severely distorted. Concerted efforts will be therefore need to be implemented to minimize the unexpected imbalances.

Over the next 5 years, Jamaica will revise and formulate several critical policies and strategies to address the changing demographics of the country. These include policies on: Population; Youth; Older Persons; International Migration and Development; Sexual and Reproductive Health; and Poverty.

The revision of the National Population Policy will

private sector development; enhance labour market mobility, reduce barriers to female labour force participation, savings and investment; implement the national social protection strategy to address current needs and to meet the needs that emerge as ageing proceeds; improved justice systems and rule of law, and financial standards, must be in place for people to be willing to invest in the economy; and reducing corruption and improving efficiency.

Chair,

While these areas have been highlighted as strategic priorities over the past couple of years, there is still need for considerable focus on implementation and to ensure that the economic growth and social transformation which ideally should follow actually materializes. The pace of implementation has been slow while the demographic window of opportunity is closing. Our efforts have to be intensified to ensure that this does not become a missed opportunity.

Thank you