

**Remarks**  
**Jamaica Alternative Energy Expo**  
**April 7, 2016**

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**Introduction**

The Jamaica Alternative Energy Expo has become a standard feature on the country's calendar of events, and certainly a much anticipated occasion for those of us in the energy sector.

And rightly so, as this affords one opportunity for technocrats, regulators, policy makers, suppliers and consumers to interface in the same space and collaborate in the search for alternative energy solutions that will benefit us as individuals, and our nation, as a whole.

Alternative energy sources are of great value, particularly as the global conversation on energy is taking a more serious look at issues related to climate change and cleaner energy sources.

As this conversation advances, there are greater opportunities for the creative application of alternative energy sources to generate electrical power for residential, commercial and institutional consumers as well as to fuel transportation systems. There are increasing opportunities for uninterrupted power supply, off-grid power systems, and many other innovative applications.

**Current status of the Energy sector**

It is no secret that Jamaica imports in excess of 90% of our energy needs. The bulk of this supplies our energy intensive sectors, like transportation and electricity generation. Consumption for electricity generation stands at in excess of 5.4 million barrels of oil per annum, and accounts for approximately 28% of fuel consumption.

As many of you are aware, household consumption stands at over 900,000 MWh.

Within the local energy environment, we have noted the number of entities and individuals who are expressing an interest in alternative energy.

The Government is pleased with the advances and the initiatives that a number of businesses and householders are taking to advance the use of renewable energy.

From the Government's perspective, we expect these to move even further ahead with the Caribbean's largest solar facility, Content Solar in Clarendon which is to be opened later this year and which will have a 20MW capacity.

### **Plans for the Sector**

Our national development plan, Vision 2030, places priority on energy and we are committed to moving this sector forward by advancing a policy, legislative and regulatory framework that enables sustainability and the creation of acceptable returns for all stakeholders.

A critical component of our objective for the energy sector is to minimize the long term impacts of fossil fuel by reducing its importation and consumption over time.

We aim to:

- Reduce electricity consumption in the Public Service through an energy efficiency programme.
- Work with relevant agencies and distributors to ensure an adequate supply of energy efficient appliances
- Encourage the most efficient type of electricity generation alongside alternative energy sources

- Enforce energy efficiency standards and codes for appliances and buildings, with the goal of reducing energy consumption in new buildings by 50% by 2020 and ensuring that all new buildings use zero net energy by 2025.

We are taking a multifaceted approach to this business of energy and the energy sector so that a more competitive energy environment can be created and facilitated. Our plans include:

- Modernising the electricity generation infrastructure.
- Diversifying the fuel mix by increasing the use and development of renewable energy sources
- Strengthening regulations and institutions
- Promoting energy efficiency and conservation - A new Electricity Act which replaces the 1890 Electric Lighting Act which takes into consideration the use and implementation of renewable energy technologies

Government recognizes that with the inroads already being made, there is still much work to be done to further advance Alternative Energy in Jamaica, and we encourage more research in this area, particularly in the area of biofuels.

There are a myriad of opportunities that can be explored and which have the potential to progress the alternative energy market. I use this opportunity therefore to encourage greater innovation within the sector.

### **Closing**

With this in mind, I am therefore hopeful that over the next two days, there will be a sharing of ideas that will propel innovation, and drive more persons to pursue alternative energy solutions. And that through this effort, Jamaica's move towards greater energy security will be enhanced.

I wish for the organizers, sponsors, exhibitors and patrons all the very best.