

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY  
SENATOR THE HONOURABLE DENNIS MOSES,  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AND CARICOM AFFAIRS  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE  
55<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE OF JAMAICA  
4<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2017**

Good evening,

It is my distinguished honour and privilege to be here this evening to address you on this special occasion of the 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Independence of Jamaica. Excellency, kindly accept heartfelt wishes of congratulations and continued success on behalf of the Government and People of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Our countries, small islands in the Caribbean Sea, are anything but minute in our achievements and contributions on the regional and international scale. Over the past year, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica have each made significant progress in advancing their economic and international agendas.

Ladies and gentlemen, national development demands a sustained effort and cannot be achieved overnight or without cooperation. It is in this regard, that I am happy to report that Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica have sought to enhance our bilateral cooperation in areas of trade, security, consular affairs, multilateral issues, transportation,

energy, tourism and regional affairs via the confirmation and adoption of an Action Plan. Through this instrument, a direct outcome of the Official Visit of Dr. the Honourable Keith Rowley, Prime Minister, to Jamaica in July 2016, both Governments have reaffirmed their commitment to a partnership based on shared mutual interests and open channels of communication. We have no doubt that this Action Plan will serve to drive further initiatives, consultations and dialogue, in the short and long term, to our mutual benefit.

Excellency, Trade Missions such as the one undertaken by the Jamaican Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO), in June of this year contribute to further strengthening the bond between our countries. We welcome such initiatives and look forward to even more joint actions between our two countries.

During the recently concluded Thirty-eighth Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community, we noted that there are many challenges to unity and development in the region. The matter regarding the intensity of environmental vicissitudes, as evidenced by the frequency and potency of weather systems which have been affecting our islands over recent times, must be aggressively addressed. The effects of climate change can not only be seen on the environment but, more so on economic sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and tourism. We must therefore commit to increasing our attempts at mitigation efforts at all levels so that

collectively, we may tackle this challenge as a united front. The establishment of the Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE) for instance, is a positive move in the right direction.

Our people must be assured that their Governments are committed to resolving these issues which are affecting their daily lives. The same can be said for a myriad of other issues currently plaguing our CARICOM people in the form of air and maritime transportation, free movement, non-communicable diseases, human resource development, information technology among others.

Excellency, I would want to highlight the upcoming Caribbean Premier League T20 games to be held throughout the region. In a spirit of camaraderie and friendship, and given that the teams consists of players from different countries in the region, allow me to wish the participating teams good fortune!

High Commissioner, I convey my best wishes for good health and success to the Government and People of Jamaica on behalf of the Government and People of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago as you celebrate 55 years of Independence. This year, as you know, is also a milestone for us and it affords us the opportunity for reflection and introspection as sovereign countries and as a region overall.

We must certainly unite and be our brother's keeper if we wish to progress at an accelerated speed. Channelling Mr. Usain Bolt when he says, "*For me, I'm focused on what I want to do. I know what I need to do to be a champion, so I'm working on it,*" let us strive to be champions in this game of development and growth. Let us work assiduously towards making this a reality.

Ladies and Gentlemen, kindly raise your glasses with me in a toast to this significant occasion.

I thank you.