



# Integrated Country Strategy

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Jamaica

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## 1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Since gaining independence in 1962, Jamaica has maintained close ties with the United States. The United States was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with Jamaica, and the Peace Corps and USAID have been present since Jamaica's pre-independence days. As a former British colony, it has also maintained close partnerships with Commonwealth nations, particularly the United Kingdom and Canada, as well as the 15-member Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Jamaica's current government charts a pragmatic foreign policy, including a budding relationship with Israel and the Dominican Republic as well as working to sever energy reliance on Venezuela while simultaneously seeking to maintain friendly relations. Jamaica was among the first in the hemisphere to recognize China and has maintained close relations, which have included historic and current Chinese migration and significant Chinese loans and investment in key Jamaican sectors like infrastructure, sugar, and bauxite.

Jamaica is a successful democracy characterized by regular peaceful transfers of power and free, fair, and largely incident-free elections over the past several decades. It has historically weak state institutions, burgeoning numbers of at-risk youth, and a shortage of economic opportunities, all of which have contributed to extraordinary levels of narcotics and firearms trafficking, money laundering, organized crime, corruption, and other illegal activities across Jamaica and into the United States. Transnational crime and gangs fuel a homicide rate that consistently ranks among the highest in the world and the lack of institutional capacity means most crime reigns with impunity.

Despite the country's advantages – including an educated population, agricultural fertility, bauxite and limestone deposits, and a first-rate tourism sector – its economy has been stagnant for over three decades, with an average annual growth rate of less than 1%. Successive International Monetary Fund agreements have put Jamaica on a track towards self-sufficient macroeconomic stability. Although a middle income country, challenges with poverty, unemployment, and health remain. For sustainable success in addressing these issues, the government must achieve robust economic growth while maintaining fiscal discipline. Jamaica's vulnerability to and underpreparedness for natural disasters, coupled with high crime rates and widespread corruption, can potentially create a high risk environment for foreign investments.

The Mission's top priority is to harness an enduring U.S.-Jamaica partnership and advance our values and interests in the region. Maintaining a robust platform for people-to-people ties and diplomatic engagement with the government that would continue to look at the United States as its most important partner will serve our geopolitical and economic interests and enable the Mission to provide security for U.S. citizens.

The Mission's second goal is to provide safety and security for U.S. citizens and for Jamaica. To achieve this goal, the Consular Section will conduct regular outreach and provide immediate response to protect American citizens throughout Jamaica and the Cayman Islands while

enhancing the efficiency and integrity of its visa process. The combined efforts of the U.S. law enforcement agencies represented in the U.S. Mission will work to counter threats from transnational criminals including financial fraudsters (or lottery scammers), criminal gangs, and drug, arms, and human traffickers, among other issues that jeopardize the security of Americans at home and abroad.

Our third goal focuses on the need for accountable, transparent, and effective governance as the backbone of Jamaica's drive to sustain a thriving and stable democracy aligned to U.S. values and interests. This requires enhanced attention to anti-corruption measures and a strengthening of the rule of law. The goal includes enhanced opportunities and protection for Jamaica's vulnerable communities, particularly women and children who are at risk for violence or trafficking and an LGBTI community that faces continued discrimination and persecution.

The fourth goal is to establish a competitive edge for the United States to strengthen ties and contribute to a robust Jamaican economy that would enable increased U.S. exports and investment to the benefit the American people. To drive this goal, a healthy, educated, productive Jamaican population, aided by U.S. assistance, is essential and requires addressing the country's significant HIV burden. A developed Jamaican economy with reduced violence and improved social indicators and disaster preparedness, along with a population and government aligned to U.S. values and interests, will foster a favorable environment for U.S. businesses in Jamaica and commercial ties between the two nations.

## 2. Mission Strategic Framework

**Mission Goal 1:** Jamaica as a strong and enduring partner in advancing American values and interests

**Mission Objective 1.1:** Strengthened public and diplomatic engagement to secure Jamaican support for U.S. geopolitical interests and advance Jamaica's regional leadership

**Mission Goal 2:** Safety and Security for U.S. Citizens and for Jamaica

**Mission Objective 2.1:** Consular operations and cooperation with local partners strengthen protection of U.S. citizens in Jamaica and in the American homeland

**Mission Objective 2.2:** Enhanced bilateral and regional cooperation to disrupt and deter transnational crime and terrorism that threaten U.S. security

**Mission Goal 3:** Accountable, Transparent, and Effective Governance in Jamaica

**Mission Objective 3.1:** Strengthened institutions that uphold rule of law and deliver security through justice

**Mission Goal 4:** U.S. Competitive Edge in a Robust Jamaican Economy

**Mission Objective 4.1:** Increased trade and opportunities for U.S. investment

**Mission Objective 4.2:** Threats to the environment and citizen vulnerability reduced (USAID/Jamaica Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS Development Objective)

**Management Objective 1:** Mission Soundly Prepared for Potential Hurricanes, Earthquakes, or other disasters

### 3. Mission Goals and Objectives

**Mission Goal 1** Jamaica as a strong and enduring partner in advancing American values and interests

**Description and Linkages:** The Mission's top priority is to harness an enduring U.S.-Jamaica partnership and advance our values and interests in the region. Goal 1 links directly with goals 3 and 4 of the State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy, which respectively read "A democratic hemisphere," and "A hemisphere receptive to U.S. leadership and values." Maintaining a robust platform for people-to-people ties and diplomatic engagement with the government that would continue to look at the United States as its most important partner will serve our geopolitical and economic interests and enable the Mission to provide security for U.S. citizens.

**Mission Objective 1.1** Strengthened public and diplomatic engagement to secure Jamaican support for U.S. geopolitical interests and advance Jamaica's regional leadership

**Justification:** Outreach both in official channels and with the Jamaican public is critical to achieving goal 1 because the more Jamaican officials and influencers recognize and appreciate U.S. persons and positions the greater likelihood the Mission will have at succeeding in attaining Jamaica's support for U.S. interests.

**Mission Goal 2** Safety and Security for U.S. Citizens and for Jamaica

**Description and Linkages:** The Mission's second goal is to provide safety and security for U.S. citizens and for Jamaica. This goal links directly to goal 1 of the State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy, "A secure hemisphere." To achieve this goal, the Consular Section will conduct regular outreach and provide immediate response to protect American citizens throughout Jamaica and the Cayman Islands while enhancing the efficiency and integrity of its visa process. The combined efforts of the U.S. law enforcement agencies represented in the U.S. Mission will work to counter threats to Americans at home and abroad. These threats include lottery scammers and other financial fraudsters, criminal gangs, and traffickers of drugs, guns, and humans.

**Mission Objective 2.1** Consular operations and cooperation with local partners strengthen protection of U.S. citizens in Jamaica and in the American homeland

**Justification:** Assisting and helping protect U.S. citizens, who are largely dependent on host nation services and local dynamics, is the fundamental role of a U.S. Mission overseas. The provision of first-rate consular services is paramount to this endeavor.

**Mission Objective 2.2** Enhanced bilateral and regional cooperation that delivers increased results disrupting and deterring transnational crime and terrorism that threaten U.S. security

**Justification:** Transnational crime and terrorism based in and transiting through Jamaica presents a serious threat to U.S. citizens in Jamaica and at home. Enhancing cooperation, including breaking through institutional and political barriers to increased

cooperation, protects U.S. citizens and provides greater security and stability for Jamaica and the Caribbean region.

**Mission Goal 3** Accountable, Transparent, and Effective Governance in Jamaica

**Description and Linkages:** Our third goal represents the backbone of Jamaica’s drive to sustain a stable democracy aligned to U.S. values and interests. This goal links to State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy Goals 3, “A democratic hemisphere,” which includes objectives in combatting corruption, strengthening rule of law, and deepening respect for human rights. Achieving this goal requires enhanced attention to anti-corruption measures and a strengthening of the rule of law. The goal includes enhanced opportunities and protection for Jamaica’s vulnerable communities, particularly women and children who are at risk for violence or trafficking and an LGBTI community that faces continued discrimination and persecution.

**Mission Objective 3.1** Strengthened institutions that uphold rule of law and deliver security through justice

**Justification:** Strong institutions in Jamaica, often impeded by political and transnational influencing factors, would address the root cause of corruption and transnational crime here before it spills over onto U.S. shores.

**Mission Goal 4** U.S. Competitive Edge in a Robust Jamaican Economy

**Description and Linkages:** The fourth goal is to establish a competitive edge for the United States to strengthen ties and contribute to a robust Jamaican economy that would enable increased U.S. exports and investment to the benefit of the American people. This goal links directly to State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy goal 2: “A prosperous hemisphere.” To drive this goal, a healthy, educated, productive Jamaican population, aided by U.S. assistance, is essential and requires addressing the country’s significant HIV burden. A developed Jamaican economy with reduced violence and improved social indicators, along with a population and government aligned to U.S. values and interests, is an overarching vision for the Mission to achieve with the right strategy and effective implementation.

**Mission Objective 4.1** Increased trade and opportunities for U.S. investment

**Justification:** Increased economic ties, dependent on a plethora of positive global economic factors, support U.S. business at home as we enjoy a tremendous trade surplus with Jamaica, which is growing rapidly. Trade and investment also contribute to the stability of Jamaica, an important regional partner.

**Mission Objective 4.2** Threats to the environment and citizen vulnerability reduced (USAID CDCS Development Objective)

**Justification:** Effective interventions – which are impacted by myriad social, environmental, and geopolitical factors – would reduce these threats while also

improving the ability of the most vulnerable to withstand, alleviate and respond, fostering communities that will be more resilient and cohesive.

#### **4. Management Objectives**

**Management Objective 1** Mission Soundly Prepared for Potential Hurricanes, Earthquakes, or other Disasters

**Justification:** Two hurricanes devastated some of the region's islands last year, and in 2016, Embassy Kingston went on authorized departure in anticipation of Hurricane Matthew. Jamaica also sits on a faultline. A World Bank study indicated Jamaica is the third most at-risk country in the world for natural disasters. Our Mission's preparedness for any contingency, first and foremost a natural.