

**CONTRIBUTION TO SECTORAL DEBATE
PARLIAMENTARY YEAR 2015/2016**

by

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April 21, 2015***

A: INTRODUCTION

1. I am pleased to have this opportunity to contribute to this year's version of the Sectoral Debate, reporting on some aspects of the work of the Ministry of Transport, Works & Housing.
2. Before I get into the heart of the presentation, let me publicly express appreciation for the work of my two political colleagues, my Minister without Portfolio and the Minister of State. The reality is that, without their support, it would be impossible to manage the range of sectors covered by this mammoth Ministry. In addition to carrying out the assignments for which they have main responsibility, each has willingly assumed responsibility for whatever new assignments either the Prime Minister or I give to them.
3. Must also take the opportunity to publicly express appreciation to the administrative head of the Ministry, our Permanent Secretary, Mrs Audrey Sewell, as well as Mr E G Hunter, the CEO of the National Works Agency and the officers serving in both the central Ministry and the NWA. Similarly, I publicly express thanks to the Chairmen, Board Members, CEOs and staff of the full range of public entities which are grouped under our Ministry. As I have said to them on various occasions, these organizations are, for the majority of Jamaicans, the point of interaction between the GOJ and the citizens. Consequently, the extent to which they execute their tasks efficiently and with sensitivity has a major impact on the quality of life of the population.
4. The revamped structure of the debate this year – particularly the time limits which have been set – demands that less time be allocated to the usual tributes to my Constituency Executive and those who support me in terms of projects within the constituency. Suffice it to say that their work keeps me in contact with the “real people” and so to them I say, thank you.
5. Despite limited time, I must indicate that our educational programmes continue to grow. The results of these initiatives demonstrate that it is possible to radically change the profile of communities within a generation.
6. I made reference earlier to the new structure of the debate and I have assured the Leader of the House that he has my full support. The time limit forces us to focus on the main aspects of our Ministerial or shadow responsibilities. Against this background, whilst I

attempt to keep abreast of the work of all the entities in my Ministry, let me apologize as it is obvious that not all entities can be addressed in a time slot of 45 minutes.

7. The Minister without Portfolio will be making a presentation later in the debate and in addition to his main area of responsibility, Housing, he will also speak to one of our significant achievements of the last Parliamentary Year - the completion of the review by the Joint Select Committee of the Road Traffic Act.
8. Today, I will address a number of issues grouped under the following four headings:
 - (i) Infrastructure development using the PPP model
 - (ii) Improvements to the public transportation system
 - (iii) Works
 - (iv) Meeting the HR challenge

B: CONTEXT

1. Let me indicate that even before the assumption of office by this Administration just over three years ago, it was apparent that we would be called on to implement a most austere fiscal programme. I believe that everyone in this Honourable House, even though we may sometimes differ, accepts this point.
2. However, at the same time, we also recognize that there was, and still is, need to promote and initiate economic growth in the national economy leading to an improvement in the standard of living of all our citizens – an improvement in all senses of the word.
3. The Prime Minister refers to this as “balancing people’s lives even as we balance the books.”
4. Our Ministry has a unique role in this regard, in that economic and social development in this era requires improved world-class infrastructure. Such infrastructure, as we all have learnt, does not come cheaply. Consequently, we have had to adjust our minds to finding ways of securing financing for the development and improvement of our physical infrastructure, other than from the Consolidated Fund.
5. As we are seeing, improved infrastructure not only promotes additional investments for productive activities, but, in and of itself, provides employment and facilitates improved efficiency in the social sectors such as Education and Health.

C: DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES

1. My Ministry has been working on several fronts in terms of improving physical infrastructure, utilizing for the most part the Public Private Partnership model. I will summarize the main achievements over the past fiscal year and indicate planned achievements over the medium term.

I. North/South Leg of H2K

1. The House is aware of the investment being made by CHEC of an amount in excess of (US)\$600 million to construct the North/South leg of Highway 2000. This investment, being made over a three-year period, is by far the single largest investment from which the country has benefitted in decades.
2. Section 2 of the Highway – (the section from Linstead to Moneague) was opened in August of last year. Already it has radically changed travel patterns between the two urban centres and has made the overall journey between Kingston and the North Coast not only shorter, but of more predictable duration.
3. The two remaining sections – Section 1 (Ferry to Linstead) and Section 2 (Moneague to Drax Hall) are more than two-thirds completed and our confident projection is that the entire highway will be opened for business in the first quarter of 2016.
4. The completion of this Highway will open up possibilities for new developments in a range of sectors which could not have been contemplated a few years ago. The possibilities are almost limitless with prospects for new housing developments which will ease the rural/urban drift, as persons can comfortably live in the centre of the island, even whilst working on either the North Coast or in the Kingston to Spanish Town region.
5. The completed Highway will also open up possibilities for the spread of the tourism product more uniformly across the country. The long-standing vision of Kingston developing as a centre for tourism can become a reality. For example, Cruise ship passengers arriving at Ocho Rios can easily build in a visit to the historical and cultural sites of Spanish Town and Kingston in their programme. Similarly, tourists whose destination is the Ocho Rios area will now have the option of either landing in Montego Bay or Kingston as the journey from the Norman Manley International Airport will now be shorter than that from Montego Bay.
6. I should add that, as part of the Concession Agreement with the developers of the North/South link, CHEC, the GOJ is obliged to provide them with approximately 1,200 acres of land contiguous to the highway for development. CHEC has already placed before us their plans for the development of the lands which they will receive. The proposed developments include, in the first instance, the construction of three hotels with nearly 2,400 rooms as well as nearly 600 housing units.
7. In short, expenditure on the Highway and the associated developments will be well in excess of (US)\$1 billion, in the first instance.

8. Mr Speaker, in recent days I have been bombarded with requests from media houses asking about the alleged “withdrawal” of CHEC from Jamaica. Last night I spoke with CHEC’s manager of the Caribbean, Central America and the Americas, who is based in Panama.
9. I repeated the rumour to him and he laughed. Why? He said that it would be strange “winding down” when CHEC is about to complete an apartment complex to house staff, when their plans to build 2,400 hotel rooms are being finalized, when they are working on plans for developing the rest of the land to be provided – and they are seeking other opportunities.

II. Kingston Container Terminal

1. This Honourable House would be aware of the decision of the Administration to seek a Public/Private Partnership for the expansion and modernization of the Kingston Container Terminal (KCT).
2. Mr Speaker, on different occasions, questions have been raised, both in this House and in the media, as to whether the Administration would “miss the boat” in terms of having the Port of Kingston ready for the post-Panamax era.
3. It is now well known that the Concession Agreement between the Port Authority and the Terminal Link Consortium was signed on Tuesday, April 7, 2015. In the interest of time, I have tabled a Ministry Paper providing details on the Concession Agreement.
4. In a nutshell, the Concession is for a 30-year period with the concessionaire being obliged to carry out significant improvements to the facility, thus putting it in a position to accommodate post-Panamax vessels. Further the Agreement provides for the Concessionaire to be responsible for dredging the ship channel, turning basin and the berths. The Concession will see the Consortium making an up-front payment of (US)\$75 million with an annual fixed fee of (US)\$15 million plus a variable fee of 8% of gross income.
5. Mr Speaker, whilst the Concession will be mutually beneficial, the most important benefit for Jamaica is that the expenditure required to make the KCT ready for regional and international competition, will be undertaken solely by the Concessionaire with no debt guarantee being provided by the GOJ and no additional debt assumed by the GOJ.
6. I should add further that the Terminal link Consortium has indicated that it plans to make Kingston its regional hub, thus increasing throughput of the KCT while at the same time providing jobs for skilled Jamaican workers.
7. As we speak of workers, I wish to state categorically that the present workers employed by KCT will be treated fairly and consistent with all the provisions of the relevant Labour

Laws. The President/CEO has already met with the representatives of the workers to provide this assurance.

8. I must place on record my appreciation for the work of the Enterprise and Negotiating Teams, chaired by the Hon Derick Latibeaudiere, as well as to Professor the Hon Gordon Shirley and the Board and officials of the PAJ. Their technical work must be credited for the successful conclusion of this PPP.
9. Mr Speaker, this transaction will not only allow the Port Authority to service its existing stock of debt, but will facilitate its ability to become involved in new areas of business within the maritime sector and in particular, the development of Port Side Logistics. In the near future, we will be outlining specific plans which will show the diversification of PAJ in the medium term.

III. AIRPORTS

(A) Norman Manley International Airport

1. The Public/Private Partnership model will once again be utilized in identifying and selecting a partner for the modernization and expansion of the NMIA.
2. With the assistance of the IFC, a subsidiary of the World Bank, the Government has been seeking to identify a suitable partner for this venture. I am pleased to announce that after rigorous analysis, the Enterprise Team which has been established to supervise the privatization efforts has identified and shortlisted five potential bidders who will be invited to participate in the RfP stage.
3. These five firms are drawn from Europe, Asia and South America. We take particular pleasure in the fact that two shortlisted consortiums include Jamaican partners. I have also been informed that a third is actively seeking collaboration with Jamaican firms involved in the aviation industry.
4. Bidding documents will be issued at the beginning of June and it is anticipated that the transaction will be completed by early 2016.

(B) Donald Sangster International Airport

Mr Speaker, I wish to use this opportunity to provide some information concerning recent developments at the Donald Sangster International Airport.

5. Albertis Airports, the Spanish entity which held three-quarters of the shares in MBJ Airports - the company which operates the Donald Sangster Airport - has taken the decision to exit the airport management business. Consequently, it has sold its shares in

MBJ Airports (as well as its minority shares in a Chilean airport operator) to a Mexican firm, Grup Aeroportuario Del Pacifico (GAP).

6. The remaining 25% of MBJ shares continue to be owned by Vantage Airport Services, a Canadian airport operator.
7. Mr Speaker, GAP is the largest privately-owned airport operator in Mexico. Their willingness to make a significant investment in MBJ is yet another testament to the positive investment climate perceived by the international investment programme at the Sangster Airport.
8. Mr Speaker, last year I outlined plans for the expansion of the Donald Sangster Airport with financing for the capital works to be provided from the Airport Improvement Fee (AIF). Mr Speaker, I should indicate that implementation of the expansion programme was delayed largely because Albertis was carrying out the bidding process for sale of its 75% stake in MBJ.
9. Now that this has been settled, the AAJ/MBJ team will move rapidly to conclude the arrangements to get the additional capital works underway in the shortest possible time period.

IV. THE JAMAICA RAILWAY CORPORATION (JRC)

1. Colleagues would be aware of the long-running deliberations on how best to utilize the assets of the JRC.
2. Cabinet in December 2013 approved the removal of the JRC from the Public Private Partnership (PPP) list of opportunities and recommended that the JRC Enterprise Team (JRCET) pursue a process to allow both Herzog Contracting Corporation and Railmark Holdings, both of whom had expressed an interest in acquiring the entity, to submit additional information that would clarify their business and financial models.
3. Updated proposals were submitted and evaluated and it was agreed to enter into discussions with Herzog Contracting Corporation, which submitted the more responsive proposal.
4. At Herzog's request they were given an additional six months to complete their due diligence and provide additional information on their financial and business models. This proposal is currently being reviewed by the Enterprise Team and they are expected to provide their recommendations to Cabinet shortly.
5. In the event that the proposal does not satisfy the GOJ's requirement for the entire railway, a **Break up Strategy** that delineates the packaging of sections of the railway will be pursued.

D: PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

1. Mr Speaker, a universal measure of the quality of life for the ordinary citizens of any country is its public transportation system.
2. Over the years, our track record in this regard has been less than acceptable – not only with regard to the service provided in the KMR but island-wide. Consequently, significant improvements in this area were identified as a major priority when this Administration assumed office three years ago.

(A) JUTC

3. Mr Speaker, the reality is that three years ago, the JUTC had a run-down fleet which enabled a maximum run-out of 250 buses each day. Repairs could only be executed by cannibalizing parts from vehicles which themselves had been parked because of the lack of spare parts.
4. In these three years the fleet has been increased to a total of over 600 buses, thus facilitating a daily run-out of over 440 buses. There is a planned programme to acquire buses and spare parts so that the service will not only be maintained at the present level, but improved in the medium term.
5. The ability to increase daily run-out has allowed the company to attract adults back to the system. The distribution now stands at 58% adults and 42% concession, improving from a 45/55 split two years ago.
6. The JUTC is anticipating that it will transport 64 million passengers for the fiscal year 2015/2016 and plans to increase and sustain the number of buses dispatched to 460 in 2015/2016.
7. The Company is putting strategies in place to increase annual revenue from \$5.1 billion to \$7.4 billion over the next three years. Two of the strategies to increase revenue will be revenue preservation and increasing new business through internal and external bus advertising and the offering of a Public Sector SmarterCard service.
8. A critical element in the drive to increase revenue is the uncompromising stance against corruption which permeated all aspects of the operations of the company.
9. Their continued introduction of technology is expected to assist the JUTC in providing real-time information in relation to its service and operations and allow for improved all-round efficiency, including decision-making and service delivery.

(B) Transport Authority

1. In keeping with the drive towards modernization and rationalization of the land transportation sector, the Authority is pursuing a number of strategic goals. These include:
 - Designing and implementing a responsive demand and supply model that would determine the issuance of Road Licences;
 - Improving enforcement mechanisms to reduce illegal activity; and
 - Continuously aligning Information Technology with the organization's goals.

(C) Rural School Transportation System

1. Mr Speaker, traditional discourse on public transportation tends to focus on the KMR and on the operations of the JUTC. Consequently, the discussion about the level of subsidy which should be granted on JUTC fares, invariably dominates the debate with little reference to the challenges faced by rural commuters – in particular students.
2. The Administration has decided that this imbalance should not continue and with that objective, much needed attention has been focused on this issue.
3. There have been numerous concerns raised about the manner in which students in rural areas, have to resort to travelling to school in conditions that are less than desirable. These shortcomings have been highlighted by a number of accidents involving school children over the recent past – some with fatalities. The Ministry has therefore sought to develop **a rural school bus system** that would guarantee a safe public transportation option for students in rural Jamaica while being cost effective.
4. In 2012, the Ministry undertook research, utilizing a consultative process, with the view to developing a Pilot Study and School Bus Implementation Plan for the entire island of Jamaica.
5. Phase 1 of the programme was rolled out in Clarendon through a partnership between the Transport Authority and the Clarendon Parish Council. It was implemented at three (3) schools in May Pen - Denbigh, Foga Road and Glenmuir High; operating between the hours of 6:00 – 8:30 a.m. and from 2:00 – 6:00 p.m.
6. There were sixteen (16) approved operators in the system at the start of this phase. The Transport Authority implemented a number of behavioural change strategies targeted at the operators in the school bus system. These included a formal orientation session which included bus owners, drivers and operators.
7. Following the success achieved, it was decided that the Ministry would move quickly to implement the other two (2) phases.

8. Phase 2 was implemented in February 2015. This has seen the expansion of the current school bus services being provided in May Pen. The schools that are included in this phase of the project are - Vere Technical, Garvey Maceo, Bustamante and Kemps Hill High Schools.
9. Phase 3 is planned to be implemented in September 2015. This phase will be implemented in Manchester with an application of the lessons learnt being factored into improving this phase.
10. To date, in excess of 3,500 students in Clarendon have benefitted from this programme.

(D) Other Initiatives

1. There are two other important initiatives which are being pursued aimed at improving the efficiency of the public transportation system in the KMR. They are (i) the construction of a transport hub in Portmore, and (ii) a radical reorganization of the public transportation operations in downtown Kingston.

Portmore Transportation Hub

2. The plan for the hub is based on the premise of enhancing public transportation throughout the Portmore area, and improving its linkages with Downtown Kingston and Half-Way-Tree. It is anticipated that this will serve to encourage some commuters who now use private transportation to use the public transportation system instead.
3. The Ministry has signed a conditional Build-Design Contract with a Belgium consortium comprised of the firms – Transurb Technirail, Euro Immo Star and Besix – to construct the Portmore Transport Hub. This is the same consortium which constructed the Half-Way-Tree Centre.
4. It is estimated that the project will cost approximately €47,312,093.00, with construction over a period of twenty-four (24) months. The associated Credit Agreement is currently being reviewed by the Ministry of Finance and Planning and the Attorney General’s Chambers, prior to the agreement being finalized.
5. The anticipated benefits of the establishment of the Hub will include:
 - a. The rationalization of the Public Transport System in Portmore to ensure that commuters will be able to access and utilize public passenger vehicles and private vehicles with ease and convenience.
 - b. Traffic management in the location will be greatly improved and synchronized to ensure the efficient and effective movement of vehicles and people, including pedestrians, pedal cyclists and other vulnerable groups.

- c. The facilitation of better service planning for the JUTC, which currently operates fifty-four (54) routes from various communities in Portmore either to Half-Way-Tree or downtown Kingston.

Downtown Transport Arrangements: The central business district of downtown, Kingston is the busiest commercial area in the country. Consequently, there is a high demand for public transportation, especially at peak periods. The area serves a high percentage of the JUTC fleet as well as the buses of private operators serving areas outside of the KMR.

6. The demand by both traffic and pedestrians for manoeuvring through the downtown area and the facilitation of spatial connections with other transportation nodes have resulted in the need to rationalize the use of the space earmarked in downtown, Kingston for transportation and attendant facilities.
7. The new arrangements will see improvements in the operations of JUTC buses and the PPV vehicles regulated by the Transport Authority at the following locations in downtown, Kingston:
 - Pechon Street
 - Darling Street
 - Water Lane North and South – Downtown Transportation Centre
 - North and South Parade
8. The arrangement will also create a reduction in the number of JUTC buses parked in the Parade area, as the buses will be located away from the site and dispatched to Parade on an “as-needed basis”. This reorganization will facilitate the programmed resuscitation of the cultural attractions of downtown Kingston.
9. This initiative involves the collaborative efforts of the Ministry and its entities (JUTC and Transport Authority), as well as the Urban Development Corporation (UDC), the Kingston and St Andrew Corporation (KSAC), and the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF). I wish to indicate that the MP for Western Kingston – the location which is the focal point of much of the activity – is an important partner in this initiative.
10. Plans for the reorganized flows are far advanced and were initially aimed to be implemented in March. However, there have been some unforeseen delays but ‘roll out’ will take place by June 2016.

E: WORKS

1. The main construction activities to be carried out by the Ministry during this fiscal year will be through the **MIDP (Major Infrastructure Development Programme)**.

2. The rate of implementation of MIDP has been, and continues to be, affected by the limited “fiscal space”. Consequently, whilst funding has been secured for the full MIDP on a concessional basis, the target for reduction of the fiscal deficit limits the amount which can be expended on capital programmes.
3. Under the Road Rehabilitation component of MIDP in FY 2015/16, (J)\$1.5 billion has been earmarked to finance the rehabilitation of approximately 60km of roadway across the network, while (J)\$127 million has been allocated to bridge rehabilitation. To date, six road works contracts have been sent for letting, while two others, namely Chovey via Clemont to Highgate – St Mary, and Mandeville – Spur Tree via Swaby’s Hope – Manchester, will be carried out by CHEC in this fiscal year.
4. Repairs to six bridges are now being targeted for 2015/2016. Engineering designs have been completed for four (4) of the six (6) bridges, and the tender processes are in progress. The main bridges to be targeted under the MIDP are:
 - Silent Hill, Clarendon – Sent to CHEC for award
 - Jacob’s River 1 and 2 , Portland – Retendering
 - Latium, St James – Retendering
 - Vanity Fair, St Catherine – tender in process (to commence in 2015 with completion scheduled for 2016/2017).

JEEP:

1. Thanks to Mrs Brodber; welcome Mrs Gardner.
2. JEEP remains one of the key strategies implemented by this Administration to respond to both the unemployment challenges as well as the objective of facilitating improvement in physical infrastructure at the community level through small capital projects
3. One of the projects being managed under JEEP is the Food for the Poor (FFP) Wooden Houses project. The construction period has been from October 2012 to present, with the construction cost per unit being (US)\$6,400, the costs are met 50:50 – GOJ \$3,200: FFP \$3,200. Expenditure to date is \$839.3million, with a total 5,962 persons being employed and 2,054 wooden units completed.
4. Some Members of Parliament have provided names of beneficiaries, however, the supporting documents have not been as forthcoming as we would like. One of the main issues relates to proof of ownership of the lands.
5. Only beneficiaries with valid documents (ID, TRN, up-to-date tax receipts with owner’s name/copy of land title, and/or proof of legal tenure to the land for construction of unit,

permission letter from owner and/or lease with a minimum of 10 years tenure) are included in the total.

6. The main expenditure under JEEP is directed at small community based projects identified by MPs after consultation with the communities.
7. A new initiative involves joint financing with Parish Councils of projects selected by the Councils as priorities.

8. Recycling Partners of Jamaica Limited - PET Project

1. The PET recycling project was launched in February 2014 under a GOJ/Private Sector Partnership to properly manage and dispose of waste such as plastics – and in so doing promote environmental sustainability.
2. Seven (7) private sector companies are currently involved:
 - Wisynco Group Limited
 - Pepsi-Cola Jamaica Bottling Limited
 - GK Foods & Services Limited
 - Jamaica Beverages Limited
 - Trade Winds Citrus Limited
 - Seprod Limited
 - LASCO Manufacturing Limited

We are currently seeking other private sector companies to come on board.

3. Under the arrangement the GOJ will allocate \$50 million per year to JEEP for three years, while the private sector will contribute \$23.75 million annually over the period.
4. There are currently three depots – Port Maria, Lyndhurst Road and Martins Hill in Manchester.

Southern Coastal Highway Improvement Project (SCHIP)

The improvement of the southern coastal corridors of the island from Harbour View to Port Antonio and Negril to Mandeville is being planned. The SCHIP is divided into two (2) segments:

- Segment 1 – Harbour View to Port Antonio (106.4km)
 - Segment 2 – Negril to Mandeville (131.4 km)
9. These two (2) segments have been divided into the following 12 construction sections:

Segment 1 (Eastern)

- Section 1A - Harbour View to Yallahs
- Section 1B - Yallahs to Morant Bay

- Section 1C - Morant Bay to Manchioneal
- Section 1D - Manchioneal to Boston
- Section 1E - Boston to Fairy Hill
- Section 1F - Fairy Hill to Drapers
- Section 1H - Drapers to Port Antonio

Segment 2 (Western)

- Section 2A - Negril to Ferris Cross
- Section 2B - Ferris Cross to Crawford
- Section 2C - Crawford to Goshen
- Section 2D - Goshen to Spur Tree
- Section 2E - Spur Tree to Williamsfield

10. The consultant, Stanley Consultants Incorporated, has submitted the Final Feasibility Study Report, other reports and the Preliminary Designs.
11. The Ministry is advanced in identifying concessionary funding for this project. Again, the major challenge is that of “fiscal space”. The particular difficulty faced in this instance is that the traffic flows along these corridors, both present and projected for the medium term, do not make toll roads a feasible option.
12. Priority is to do Section I (Harbour View to Port Antonio, starting with Sections 1A and 1B, Harbour View to Morant Bay)
13. The Minister of Finance and I continue the quest for more concessionary funding which would allow us to pursue implementation of this project.

F: THE HR QUESTION

1. Mr Speaker, whilst I have outlined some important projects which have not yet started, in the main we have reported on real achievements, either completed or in construction – “works in progress”, as it were.
2. The really good news is that a major consequence of the completion of most of these projects is the creation of new employment opportunities.
3. Specific examples: the KCT privatization will lead to increased throughput, requiring additional skilled workers. The completion of the North/South toll road will lead to increased construction activity.
4. This demand for additional numbers of skilled workers will require a re-organization of our educational institutions to produce the skills and competences needed by the labour market.

5. My colleague, the Minister of Education is seized with this imperative and his Ministry is well on the way to guiding our educational and training institutions along that pathway.
6. All of us, as Members of Parliament, have grown accustomed to the requests for employment from our young women and men. We have also become accustomed to the stock response to our question of “What can you do”, which invariably is “Any little thing”.
7. “Any little thing” was never good enough and is even less so in this increasingly knowledge-driven world. It is in full realization of the educational and training requirements of this world in which we must compete which drives the vision and operations of the CMI.
8. They have a long list of achievements which time does not allow me to share today.
9. I must however indicate that during FY 2014/2015, the Caribbean Maritime Institute:
 - (a) Received international accreditation of six (6) academic courses by the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport, UK.
 - (b) Won the BID Century International Quality ERA Award in Geneva 2015. The award is significant, not just for CMI but for Jamaica and the rest of the Caribbean, as this is the first time that a Caribbean country and an educational institution has won the award.
 - (c) Recorded over 100% increase in enrolment. They currently have 2500 students enrolled.
10. A major element of CMI’s mandate is to expand its training programmes to meet the need for trained manpower which will result from the increased investment activity. Particularly in areas requiring technical skills.

G: CONCLUSION

1. Mr Speaker, in the time allotted to me I have sought to summarize some of the achievements of my Ministry. However, I have sought, in addition, to provide the context within which we have operated.
2. We are not simply completing a set of projects in a vacuum but, rather, within the context of providing the country with world class infrastructure which is the basis for fundamental improvement in the economy and the living standards of the population.
3. Mr Speaker, whilst there is much work to be done, the reality is in a wide variety of areas there has been significant progress made over the three years of this Administration.

4. Consider for example, the JUTC. From a run out of less than two hundred and fifty (250) buses each day, we have now increased the number to four hundred and forty (440), with the fleet size now in excess of six hundred (600) buses. The company has adequate spare parts to maintain the fleet at this level. Contrast this with the situation three years ago when parked buses were cannibalized to keep others on the road.
5. We said we would revamp the ramshackle system which we inherited and we have done it.
6. The Kingston Container Terminal (KTC) is being privatized to a global consortium with the expertise to achieve all the objectives required to ensure that the Port of Kingston is able to compete with the most modern ports in the region. All this with no financial obligations being undertaken by the GOJ. Despite the doubts and questions, we said we would carry out a successful privatization and it has been done.
7. Despite obstructions and ill-conceived objections and roadblocks, we completed negotiations with China Harbour for the construction of the North South leg of Highway 2000. The first intersection is open to traffic and by the first quarter of 2016 the full highway will be open. This will totally revolutionize travel between the South and the North Coast and opening up new areas for development.
8. We said we would do it and it has been done.
9. We have developed a totally new programme, JEEP, which in addition to supporting community projects island wide, has also provided houses for thousands of Jamaicans in collaboration with Food for the Poor. This project has been executed with no suggestion of discrimination or hint of corruption.
10. We placed the programme in our Manifesto – we promised to implement it and we have kept our promise.
11. Mr Speaker, we have no intention of resting on our laurels, there is much more to be done. Our mission is far from complete.
12. In terms of the Norman Manley International Airport, we now have expressions of interest from five (5) international firms, each of which wishes to partner with the Airports Authority in the expansion and modernization. This we confidently expect to be completed by mid-2016. We promised to complete the task and we will.

13. A new firm has purchased majority shareholdings in Sangster International Airport, thus demonstrating confidence in Jamaica as an investment destination. We expect to conclude discussions with this firm to extend the runway and bring about further capital development. We make this promise and we will keep the promise.
14. We intend to construct a transportation hub in Portmore to improve traffic flows between that municipality and other sections of the Kingston Metropolitan Region. This investment will result in saving thousands of productive man hours and imported gasoline. We make this promise to Portmore and we will keep the promise.
15. We are far advanced in making plans for the reorganization of the public transportation system downtown, following consultations with all stakeholders. Kingston, as the capital city, cannot move forward as a world class urban centre until this has been achieved - and it will be achieved.
16. And finally, technical work has been completed for the construction of the Southern Coastal Highway, with Section I running from Harbour View to Port Antonio and Section II from Negril to Mandeville. The first stage will be from Harbour View to Morant Bay. This commitment is given and it will be carried out.
17. In summary, Mr Speaker, we confidently made commitments about the next set of projects to be implemented, not simply because they are needed but we have demonstrated the ability to plan and execute needed infrastructure projects despite the tight fiscal challenges which we face.
18. The achievements in the development of physical infrastructure have laid the basis for economic growth and higher levels of employment to which we all aspire. Our track record over the past three years should provide the country with confidence that if we all work together in a disciplined and united way, our objectives will be attained.

I thank you.