



Speaking Notes

For

Omar Sweeney

Managing Director, Jamaica Social
Investment Fund

At

Handing Over of the Montego Bay Fire
Station

On May 13, 2022

Salutation

Master of Ceremonies,

The Most Honourable, Prime Minister, Andrew Holness.

Dr. The Honourable, Horace Chang, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security

Minister of Local Government and Community Development, Hon. Desmond McKenzie

Member of Parliament for West Central St. James, Hon. Marlene Malahoo- Forte.

Hon. Homer Davis, Minister of State in the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development

His Worship the Mayor of Montego Bay, Councillor Gerald Lee

Custos Rotulorum of St. James, Honourable Bishop, Conrad Pitkin

Head of the Jamaica Country Office, World Bank Jamaica, Gail Richardson

Chairman of the Board of the Jamaica Social Investment Fund, Dr. Wayne Henry

Commissioner of the Jamaica Fire Brigade, Stewart Beckford and Members of the Fire Brigade

Contractors,

Members of the project team from JSIF.

Members of the Media

Good Morning,

It gives me great pleasure to know that the Jamaica Social Investment Fund has contributed to the enhanced disaster risk mitigation, management, and response capacity of the Jamaica Fire Brigade, exemplified here today in the construction and completion of this fire station that will serve the people of St. James.

Today is indeed a historic occasion, not only for the opening of this impressive facility which is second to none in the Caribbean, but also as we join the Fire Brigade in celebrating the milestone of 80 years stellar service in the in the parish of St. James.

In fulfilling our mandate, the JSIF mobilizes resources in collaboration with GoJ and other partners to implement projects that advance national development and protect the investments already made. I must thusly thank the World Bank who made it possible through a loan facility for the funds to be accessed to complete this well needed resource for the Fire Brigade and for the people of St. James.

This massive construction project was made possible through the Jamaica Disaster Vulnerability Reduction Project, DVRP, which aims to improve Jamaica's resilience and response to Natural and man-made Disasters.

The Montego Bay Fire Station project involved: (insert key scope points). This project emphasizes the importance of the emergency services, not only

response to disaster but also in the prevention and mitigation of hazardous events that we as communities and a country must face. It is this point – the pre-emptive efforts to minimize risk, and the national ability to respond to and manage disasters – that protects our national development investments and the gains made over the years. The role of our partners in both bringing this project to fruition and in the ongoing sustainability and effective utilization of the facility in the service of Western Jamaica, is critical. .

Within the wider context, Climate Change is an ever-present reality and threat for Small Island Developing States like Jamaica. Although sceptics abound, knowledge of the science has informed our implementation of this project, DVRP, which is not only rehabilitating facilities such as fire station but is making an impact with funding being pumped into protecting our country from the shocks of earthquakes, hurricanes and other such hazards.

This is evident in the injection of aid in the form of equipment and training for the earthquake unit and our next big project to be officially opened next week- the Port Royal Street revetment project in Downtown Kingston.

The DVRP's Port Royal Street Revetment Project is the construction of One (1) kilometer of composite seawall and armour stone revetment structure, which is poised to protect the area for another 100 years.

All these projects, like this one that we officially hand over today cannot be seen only as construction projects, but instead must be viewed as project that will serve our generation and generations to come as we are faced with a constantly changing climate.

In all our endeavors at JSIF partnership is critical and this handing over today has again proved to us that projects that will benefit the greater good of the Jamaican population can only see success through collaboration.

This has been a direct alliance with the Jamaica Fire Brigade, who knew exactly what would have been needed to create this revolutionary building. Without this collaboration we would have not known all the essentials required for effective firefighting, rescue, and brigade training.

We at JSIF are proud to have partnered with such a noble organization whose work spans much further than what meets the eye. We are happy that we are standing today in this newly constructed building, that will aid in saving many more lives and renewing the hope of the people of St. James in a Fire Brigade that is swifter to respond and gives world class service because they are now fully equipped to do so.

I Thank You

