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**National report submitted pursuant to Human Rights
Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21***

Jamaica

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

Introduction

1. Jamaica is pleased to submit its report to the fourth cycle of the Universal Periodic Review of the United Nations' Human Rights Council (HRC).
2. Jamaica welcomes this opportunity to respond to the recommendations of its international peers and to inform of its ongoing progress in fulfilling its treaty obligations in the field of human rights.

Methodology

3. The former Ministry of Legal and Constitutional Affairs (MLCA) prepared this report in conjunction with other Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and civil society groups. These included the following:

- Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport (MCGES).
- Ministry of Education, Skills, Youth and Information (MESYI).
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT).
- Ministry of Justice (MoJ) – as it was named at the time.
- Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MLSS).
- Ministry of National Security (MNS) – as it was named at the time.
- Attorney General's Chambers (AGC).
- Bureau of Gender Affairs (BGA).
- Child Protection and Family Services Agency (CPFSA).
- Department of Correctional Services.
- Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF).
- Jamaica Defence Force (JDF).
- Office of the Children's Advocate (OCA).
- Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP).
- Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ).

4. The following civil society groups participated in the process:

- Jamaica Aids Support for Life (JASL).
- Equality for All Foundation (formerly J-FLAG).
- Jamaica Network of Sero-positives (JN+).
- Fi We Children Foundation (FWCF).
- Jamaica Association for the Deaf.
- Chose to Glow Ministries.
- Stand Up Jamaica.
- Council of Voluntary Social Services.

5. Formal written reports on diverse aspects of the human rights situation were provided to the former MLCA and stakeholder consultation sessions were organized and executed by the MLCA to meaningfully engage a wide cross section of MDAs and civil society groups in preparing this report.

Developments since Jamaica's third cycle report of May 2020

6. In January 2022, Jamaica established the MLCA, the mandate of which included the protection of human rights. The Human Rights Division prepares treaty body reports, conducts sensitization sessions and activities to increase human rights awareness at all tiers in society. Its Legal Education Division also conducts public sessions to increase awareness of legal rights and responsibilities.

7. Jamaica's Inter-Ministerial Committee on Human Rights (IMCHR) has engaged in a workshop (November 2024) hosted by the Commonwealth Human Rights Unit to consider all policies and measures with a human rights perspective and to increase the nation's adherence to international human rights standards.

8. Legal reform continues in Jamaica to safeguard inherent freedoms, including the rights to liberty and protection of the person. The enactment of the Bail Act, 2023 and the Domestic Violence (Amendment) Act, 2023 manifest such protection.

Ratification of international instruments (Recommendations 107.1, 107.2, 107.3, 107.6)

9. Jamaica ratified the Marrakesh Treaty in September 2024 which means enhanced access to published works for persons with disabilities. Jamaica reaffirms its commitment to fostering an inclusive society, where access to information and knowledge is recognised as a fundamental right for all. The Government of Jamaica (GoJ) has introduced amendments to the country's Copyright Act to include provisions that benefit individuals with hearing disabilities, going beyond the scope of the Marrakesh Treaty. Jamaica is still undergoing internal assessments in relation to the ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

10. Jamaica ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons on October 23, 2020, reaffirming its commitment to global disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. In keeping with its international obligations, Jamaica has taken legislative steps to ensure nuclear safety and security. Notably, the Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection Act, 2015 is a comprehensive statute designed to protect the public and the environment from harmful exposure to radiation, regulate and secure radioactive sources, and support Jamaica's adherence to key international instruments, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

Cooperation and follow-up with treaty bodies (Recommendations 107.6, 107.120)

11. Jamaica has consistently undertaken efforts to update its reporting obligations and is presently working to finalize outstanding reports to strengthen its compliance. It has demonstrated a sustained commitment to engaging with the mechanisms of the United Nations (UN) human rights system. It is important to recognize, however, that—as with many small developing states—limited human and financial resources can impact the timely submission of reports. Notwithstanding, the Government has taken deliberate steps, including through the IMCHR, to address these challenges and mitigate their impact on reporting obligations. In this regard, the IMCHR's 2024 workshop was specifically designed to strengthen national capacity to meet treaty reporting requirements.

12. Jamaica has demonstrated its commitment to meet its reporting obligation for the UN. Among these reports are:

(a) The 8th periodic report for the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) which was submitted in 2020 and Jamaica's responses to UN questions arising from that report were further submitted in 2023.

(b) Combined twenty-first and twenty-fourth periodic report for the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) on the 31st of July 2023.

(c) Initial and Second Reports on the International Convention on The Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (CMW) in 2025.

(d) Jamaica has completed and submitted the fifth periodic report of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

(e) Jamaica is actively working to complete its reporting obligations under the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 and the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 for submission in 2025.

13. Jamaica also engaged the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in a constructive dialogue in March 2022.

14. Going forward, Jamaica intends to enhance its compliance by utilizing the simplified, focused reporting format developed by the UN, once such an option becomes available.

Constitutional and Legislative Framework (Recommendation 107.13, 107.70)

15. The Constitution of Jamaica guarantees fundamental human rights and freedoms to all individuals. Section 13(3)(i) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms secures the right to freedom from discrimination based on, among other things, race, place of origin, social class, and colour.

16. Complementing these constitutional guarantees, Jamaica has also implemented practical measures to promote inclusion and equal protection. Notably, the JCF has adopted a Diversity Policy that provides guidance to its members on the fair and respectful treatment of all individuals, including members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

17. Jamaica is currently engaged in a constitutional reform process which seeks to develop a modern Constitution that reflects the nation's cultural heritage and developmental aspirations while embodying the will of the Jamaican people. Phase Two of the reform process will focus on reviewing entrenched constitutional provisions, including possible amendments to the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms.

18. Jamaica's National Integrated Strategic Plan for Sexual and Reproductive Health and HIV 2014-2019 identified the creation of an enabling environment and the protection of human rights as key strategic priorities. Recognizing that stigma and discrimination – particularly against people living with Human Immunodeficiency Viruses (PLHIV) and men who have sex with men – negatively impact testing, treatment uptake, adherence, and access to support services, the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MoHW) in collaboration with civil society organisations has implemented targeted interventions at the individual, community, and institutional levels. Jamaica actively contributes to the *Global AIDS Monitoring Report* and the *National Commitments and Policy Instrument* under the UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), reporting on efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, especially among vulnerable populations.

19. To strengthen redress mechanisms, Jamaica transitioned its *National HIV-related Discrimination Reporting and Redress System* into the *Jamaica Anti-Discrimination System for HIV (JADS)*. Through this mechanism, complaints – primarily channelled via JN+ – are investigated or referred to relevant oversight bodies. Where violations are found, redress is provided, including through mediation or legal action. JADS works in partnership with entities such as Jamaicans for Justice (JFJ), the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MLSS), the MoHW's Complaints Management System, and the JCF, with cases reviewed quarterly.

20. In 2024, the MoHW integrated leadership of its HIV, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), and Tuberculosis (TB) response under the *HIV/STI/TB Unit*, which oversees prevention, treatment, care, support, and human rights. The reactivation of the *National AIDS Committee (NAC)* has also ensured more inclusive, multi-sectoral governance of the national HIV response.

21. Several policies and strategies further support these efforts, including:

- The GoJ Service Excellence Policy (2022): Promotes high-quality, non-discriminatory public service;
- The National Community-Led Monitoring Strategy (2023–2026): Supports community participation in monitoring the HIV response;
- The Draft National Strategic Plan for HIV (2023–2030): Provides a roadmap for prevention, treatment, and care;
- The National Workplace Policy on HIV/AIDS (2008): Led by MLSS, promotes inclusive and equitable treatment of PLHIV in the workplace.

22. Pilot HIV services were introduced at five health centres in 2024, supported by an implementation guide from the HIV/STI/TB Unit for continued rollout by regional health authorities. Additionally, Jamaica AIDS Support for Life (JASL) conducts human rights training for select JCF officers and Justices of the Peace to improve their capacity to respectfully receive and support PLHIV and other vulnerable groups. Jamaica remains committed to a multi-sectoral, rights-based approach in its national HIV response, focused on reducing stigma, increasing access, and improving health outcomes for all.

Legal and institutional reform (Recommendation 107.58)

23. Jamaica implemented significant legislative reform to strengthen the regulation of firearms. The Firearms (Prohibition, Restriction and Regulation) Act, 2022 repealed and replaced the Firearms Act of 1967. The objectives of the new legislation include:

- (a) Eliminating the illegal possession, manufacture, trafficking, proliferation, and use of prohibited weapons by, among other measures, increasing penalties.
- (b) Regulating the lawful manufacture, possession, trafficking, and use of firearms and ammunition to enhance personal and public safety; and
- (c) Aligning Jamaica's legal framework with its international treaty obligations concerning firearms and ammunition.

24. Additionally, in 2022, the Government launched a two-week national gun amnesty, allowing individuals to surrender illegal firearms without fear of prosecution—an initiative aimed at reducing the number of illegal weapons in circulation.

25. Further to the JCF's thrust to improve its efficiency and effectiveness the Counter Terrorism and Organised Crime Investigation Branch (C-TOC) has been re-organised to include the Narcotics Division and has been renamed, the Firearms and Narcotics Investigation Division (FNID). This adjustment will more seamlessly address the nexus between narcotics and firearms trafficking, and other forms and manifestations of organised crime, including violent gang activity.

National Human Rights Institution (Recommendations 107.7, 107.8, 107.9, 107.10, 107.11, 107.12)

26. The establishment of a National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) has been recommended by several stakeholders. Currently, several existing bodies play critical roles in upholding human rights in Jamaica. These include the Office of the Public Defender (OPD), the OCA, and the Independent Commission of Investigations (INDECOM). Each institution operates under an independent constitutional or statutory mandate, distinct from the executive arm of Government.

Equality and non-discrimination

(Recommendations 107.15, 107.17, 107.18, 107.19, 107.72, 107.73, 107.75, 107.77)

27. The protection of human rights and the promotion of the rule of law remain central priorities for the Government, consistent with the guarantees enshrined in the Constitution of Jamaica. The Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms provides a robust legal framework for safeguarding these values. These constitutional protections apply to all persons within Jamaica.

28. Further, Section 13(1) underscores the State's obligation to promote universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and freedoms. It recognizes that all individuals in Jamaica are inherently entitled to fundamental rights and liberties, not only for themselves but also for future generations, as citizens of a free and democratic society.

29. In alignment with these constitutional provisions, the JCF has adopted several key policies to operationalize rights-based policing. These include the Diversity Policy, which promotes respect for differences such as political affiliation, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and other identity markers. This is supported by the Police Public Interaction Policy and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), as well as the Human Rights and Use of Force Policy—all of which establish a framework for professional conduct, accountability, and the protection of human rights in law enforcement operations.

30. On the other hand, support for persons living with HIV/AIDS continues to be strengthened through the collaborative efforts of the MoHW, the AIDS Healthcare Foundation, and various non-governmental organizations (NGOs). These entities provide critical services, including access to antiretroviral medication, counselling, and personal care items.

Racial discrimination

(Recommendations 107.14, 107.16)

31. The Constitution of Jamaica expressly prohibits discrimination, *inter alia*, on the grounds of race, colour, place of origin, and social class. Where an individual believes that any of their constitutional rights have been, are being, or are likely to be infringed by another person, they may seek redress in the Supreme Court pursuant to Section 19 of the Constitution. This provision also grants the right to appeal a decision of the Supreme Court to the Court of Appeal.

32. Jamaica commemorates the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, observed annually on March 21. In 2023, the GoJ also participated in a press conference hosted by the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), underscoring its ongoing commitment to combatting racial discrimination.

Right to development

(Recommendation 107.24)

33. Jamaica remains committed to its long-term National Development Plan, *Vision 2030 Jamaica*, which is being implemented through a series of Medium-Term Socio-Economic Policy Frameworks (MTFs). To date, the country has successfully completed the 2015-2018 and 2018-2021 MTFs. In pursuit of the goals outlined in *Vision 2030*, Jamaica continues to implement a range of programmes, policies, and measures, including the Climate Change Policy Framework (updated 2023) and the National Policy for Gender Equality (2011).

Human rights and climate change (Recommendations 107.23, 107.26, 107.29, 107.34, 107.35)

34. In 2023, the Government updated its national climate policy, the Climate Change Policy Framework for Jamaica (CCPFJ). This framework guides national action to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts across all sectors.

35. Jamaica has adopted the Just Transition Programme, which seeks to align climate action with the principles of decent work, as part of the country's broader commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Additionally, a Jamaican delegation, led by Senator the Honourable Kamina Johnson Smith, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, made submissions before the International Court of Justice on matters relating to climate change and specifically climate change and human rights.

36. The Emissions Policy has also been tabled as a Green Paper, signalling the Government's intention to formalise regulatory approaches to emissions control.

37. Several initiatives have been launched to support climate adaptation. These include the Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT), which aims to strengthen Jamaica's technical and institutional capacity to meet its reporting obligations under the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

38. To coordinate national climate efforts, Jamaica has maintained several governance mechanisms, including the CCPFJ, the Climate Change Advisory Board, the Climate Change Focal Point Network, and the National Transparency Working Group (NTWG). The MLSS has implemented projects specifically focused on the economic and employment impacts of climate change.

39. Recognizing the psychosocial effects of disasters, including those exacerbated by climate-related events, Jamaica continues to explore system-level responses – such as the provision of online mental health support. All national climate-related policies undergo review every 3–5 years. Recent policy updates, including the National Population and Sustainable Development Policy and the National Poverty Reduction Policy, have integrated climate change considerations. Under the Vision 2030 framework climate resilience has been incorporated into all Ministries' policy agendas.

40. The CCPFJ not only reflects the obligations under the Paris Agreement but also outlines several critical action items to strengthen national climate resilience. To ensure that women, children, persons living with disabilities and local communities are meaningfully engaged in the development and implementation of climate change and disaster risk reduction policies the CCPFJ has action items such as:

(a) Mainstreaming gender in climate action at all levels, including through the implementation of the Climate Change Gender Strategy and Action Plan, to ensure equitable participation and the protection of vulnerable populations.

(b) Conducting and periodically updating vulnerability assessments for key sectors, as well as undertaking a national assessment of climate-vulnerable groups, geographic areas, and ecosystems. These assessments provide the necessary evidence base for targeted adaptation and mitigation planning.

41. These measures are integrated into Jamaica's broader development agenda as articulated in Vision 2030 Jamaica, ensuring that climate action remains a cross-cutting priority in national policymaking and planning.

Prohibition of torture and ill-treatment (including cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment) (Recommendation 107.114)

42. The National Plan of Action for an Integrated Response to Children and Violence (NPACV), continues to be implemented through legislative reform, public education, and child protection services.

43. The Child Abuse Mitigation Project (CAMP) launched at the Bustamante Hospital for Children and expanded to the Cornwall Regional Hospital in 2017, has successfully reduced practicing corporal punishment among parents as evinced by the reduction or cessation of hospital visits for children (regarding injuries from corporal punishment) whose families participated in the CAMP initiatives.

44. The School-Wide Positive Behaviour Intervention and Support (SWPBIS) framework 2022 has been implemented to reduce aggression in schools. Its three-tiered model helps identify and respond to behavioural issues and has been successfully piloted in several schools.

45. Children's Courts provide rehabilitative, child-sensitive judicial processes. Courts are equipped to issue custodial and non-custodial orders, in line with CRC standards. The JCF submits daily reports of children in custody to the OCA and the CPFSA which conducts regular inspections and intervenes as required. The Child Interaction Policy governs police engagement with children separated from adults while in police custody.

46. The GoJ has expanded the Family Courts and established child-friendly spaces which is in line with the Policy for Strengthening Multi-Agency Interaction within Jamaica's Child Justice System (2020). A multi-agency team was convened to review current issues and develop rights-based proposals for child justice protocols. The Security and Standards Inspections and Correctional Investigation Branch ensures oversight of juvenile facilities. These facilities are monitored by an independent board under the 2013 Boards of Visitors Regulations, which promote child welfare in correctional institutions.

47. Law enforcement has taken practical measures and law enforcement training to prevent excessive use of force by its members. The Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) has implemented comprehensive measures to address claims of excessive use of force or ill-treatment by state officials, emphasizing adherence to legal and ethical standards. Each JDF operation is governed by established Rules of Engagement (ROE), communicated before operations, to promote lawful conduct and safeguard human life. Key aspects include the restriction of firearms use to commands by an On-Scene Commander and as a last resort in self-defence or to protect life. There are also disciplinary measures within the JDF which enforce these ROEs rigorously, with any breaches subject to internal trials, boards of inquiry, and potential sanctions, including dismissal. The JDF's use of force framework is deeply integrated into comprehensive education and training with strict prohibitions against ill-treatment and torture.

48. Further, the Diversity Policy is a SOP developed by the JCF to guide all police officers in the execution of their duties. It states that all Jamaicans are to be treated fairly, and their human rights and dignity be upheld by the servants of the State.

49. All JCF members receive training on respecting human rights, use of force, community policing, and public interaction, guided by policies that emphasize respect for human rights and prohibit torture and ill-treatment. Training begins at the National Police College of Jamaica (NPCJ) and continues through ongoing professional development programs. The JCF's human rights training covers several key areas: understanding human rights policing, child rights and protection, support for victims of sexual violence, inclusivity toward gender and sexual minorities, ethical use of force, and engagement with people with disabilities.

50. JCF's officers' benefit from various specialized training programs offered by both local and international partners, including the Government of the United States of America, Jamaicans for Justice, United Nations Development Programme, and others. These partnerships have significantly bolstered JCF's capacity to address critical human rights issues and cater to vulnerable populations. A notable initiative by Jamaicans for Justice involves multi-day training sessions conducted by national experts at the NPCJ, covering topics such as legal literacy in human rights policing, gender sensitivity, non-discrimination, among others.

51. The JCF also has a critical division known as the Inspectorate and Professional Standards Oversight Bureau (IPROB) which is tasked with ensuring compliance with the JCF's policies and maintaining high standards of professionalism. IPROB plays a pivotal role

in preventing, investigating, and addressing acts of torture, as well as cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment, through its oversight enforcement mechanisms. IPROB also works with the Independent Commission of Investigations (INDECOM), achieve its mandate. This Bureau also conducts regular inspections across divisions to assess compliance with JCF policies and promotes professionalism and accountability at all levels. Where investigations reveal breaches of conduct, officers may face consequences through internal disciplinary mechanisms or may be brought before a court of law for prosecution. In addition to its investigative duties, IPROB contributes to preventative measures by training public officials on anti-corruption practices and principles of good governance. A tipline and email are provided to the public to make complaints against misconduct including acts of torture.

Conditions of detention

(Recommendations 107.39, 107.40, 107.42 107.43, 107.49)

52. Since 2020, Jamaica has implemented a National Correctional Services Policy grounded in human rights principles and aligned with international standards for the treatment of prisoners. The policy promotes a shift toward rehabilitation and reintegration, emphasizing reform across the correctional system.

53. Between 2017 and 2023, the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) engaged private contractors to undertake priority infrastructure repairs and upgrades across several correctional facilities, including the Richmond Farm Adult Correctional Centre and the Rio Cobre Juvenile Correctional Centre, with continued improvements underway at other institutions. To enhance institutional capacity, the DCS Recruitment and Training Centre was established in June 2025 to deliver professional training for correctional staff.

54. In response to overcrowding, the DCS continues to implement population management strategies, including the reclassification and transfer of eligible offenders from maximum-security to medium and low-security institutions. Plans are also in place for the construction of a new male maximum-security facility. The Bail Act, 2023, which permits pre-charge bail, is expected to reduce unnecessary pre-trial detention.

55. The GoJ has also made significant strides in juvenile justice reform, notably through the Child Diversion Act (2018) and the supporting Child Diversion Policy. These initiatives provide a rights-based framework for rehabilitating child offenders by diverting them from the formal criminal justice system into community-based interventions. The Child Diversion Programme, supported by UNICEF, mobilizes court and court-adjacent services to deliver counselling, restorative justice, drug treatment, and community-based rehabilitation. As a result of these reforms, juvenile incarceration rates have steadily declined – from over 400 in 2012 to under 260 in recent years.

56. Additionally, the DCS has maintained a strong focus on medical and nutritional support. All offenders are medically assessed within 48 hours of admission, and again prior to release, parole, or transfer by medical staff at the correctional facilities. The DCS also utilizes private suppliers and its internal Farm-to-Feed initiative to ensure the consistent provision of nutritious meals across its facilities.

57. In 2020, a Mental Health Task Force was convened to examine the legal, policy, and institutional framework concerning inmates with mental health conditions. This culminated in the Report of the Mental Health (Offenders) Enquiry Committee, a judicially led review, which has since been published. That same year, INDECOM also issued a report on the treatment of mentally ill inmates. Following these developments, several inmates who had been deemed mentally ill and held for an extended period were released.

Access to justice and remedy

(Recommendations 107.52, 107.56, 107.57, 107.60)

58. Jamaica has adopted reforms to enhance procedural guarantees within the justice system, including:

(a) Court modernisation via digital case management, video conferencing and the renovation of Court facilities and establishment of new court houses led by the MoJ and Court Administration Division.

(b) The Bail Act of 2023 brings additional safeguards to procedural fairness in the Criminal Justice System by helping to reduce the incidence of unlawful pretrial detention.

(c) Cases have been expedited using the Committal Proceedings process which has replaced the use of preliminary inquiries. Bench Trials are also encouraged, pursuant to the Criminal Justice (Administration) Act, which permits criminal matters (except for murder or treason) to be heard without empanelling a Jury.

(d) Jamaica has made significant progress in reducing case backlog within its court system, particularly in the parish courts, which are now considered backlog-free. This progress is attributed to various factors, including increased staffing, efficient case management, and a focus on timely resolution. This reform has aided in protecting citizens' right to a fair hearing within a reasonable time.

59. In 2020 the Mobile Justice Unit expanded its fleet by two units increasing the reach of Legal Aid Services across Jamaica, ensuring accessibility of justice services to underserved inner-city communities as well as remote rural areas. These Units are available in each parish at least once per month.

60. The MoJ, through the Legal Aid Council in 2024 and 2025, staged legal aid fairs monthly across Jamaica with multiple fairs being specifically targeted towards persons with disabilities – increasing access to justice and legal aid services for vulnerable groups. The fairs offer various services, including legal advice, assistance with court matters, and information on legal rights.

61. The Twelve-Month Mediation Programme (TMMP), a partnership between MoJ and the Dispute Resolution Foundation (DRF) started in 2021 and continues to be extended yearly. This programme facilitates matters referred to mediation by the Courts where the parties qualify for pro bono mediation services. This programme increases access to justice and legal services for persons who are unable to afford the associated legal fees.

62. In January 2022, a new full-service Family Court was operationalized in Manchester. In 2024, a fully renovated Family Court was handed over in St. Ann, increasing the access to justice services in those parishes.

Human trafficking and contemporary forms of slavery (Recommendations 107.55, 107.62, 107.63, 107.64, 107.65, 107.66, 107.67 107.86)

63. Jamaica has strengthened its legislative framework to address human trafficking through the 2021 amendment to the Trafficking in Persons (Prevention, Suppression, and Punishment) Act (TIP Act), which increased the maximum fine under Section 15 from J\$250,000 to J\$1,000,000. The amendment also empowers the Minister of National Security to amend penalties via affirmative resolution and removes the option of fines for certain offences, ensuring stricter penalties for perpetrators.

64. To strengthen capacity within the justice sector, the Justice Training Institute, under the Ministry of Justice, launched a free online course in 2022 aimed at training justice sector personnel and others who interact with child victims of crime. The MNS also provides Trafficking in Persons (TIP) training for law enforcement officers and judicial personnel.

65. In 2025, the Office of the National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons (ONRTIP) launched a public-facing, self-paced online course to raise awareness about human trafficking. ONRTIP has also developed key resources, including an E-learning module and the Human Trafficking Survivors' Handbook, which outlines available support services for victims.

66. The MNS is leading the implementation of Jamaica's National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for child trafficking, which outlines a five-phase response system:

- (a) Initial Report and Intake;
- (b) Identification and Investigation;
- (c) Needs Assessment and Referral – coordinated by CPFSA, in consultation with the Counter Terrorism and Organized Crime Investigation Branch of the JCF and the OCA;
- (d) Support and Protective Services;
- (e) Reintegration.

67. The ODPP has established a dedicated Trafficking in Persons Unit, enhancing prosecutorial focus on these offences. The TIP Act provides for victim restitution covering medical care, psychological treatment, transportation, temporary housing, legal costs, emotional distress, and other applicable losses. It further allows in-camera hearings to protect the well-being of child victims and provides for the use of child-friendly interview spaces, developed with international support, now operational across 10 locations island wide. Three 24-hour hotlines are in place for public reporting via the CPFSA, the OCA, and the JCF.

68. Public education efforts continue, including a Youth Symposium held in 2024 under the theme *“Leave No Child Behind – Fight Against Human Trafficking”*, further underscoring Jamaica’s commitment to a victim-centred, multi-agency approach grounded in Human Rights-based principles.

69. The GoJ has established safe houses for victims of TIP including women and children. The provision of a trauma informed approach for child victims is discussed under the theme *Children Protection Against Exploitation*.

Human rights and poverty

(Recommendations 107.20, 107.21, 107.22, 107.25, 107.28, 107.30, 107.31, 107.32, 107.33, 107.36, 107.76)

70. Since 2020 the GoJ has increased the minimum wage by 128 percent. This was achieved through initiatives such as the National Poverty Reduction Programme (NPRP). Jamaica’s national poverty rate declined from 16.7% in 2021 to 8.2% in 2023.

71. The following programmes are targeted towards the elimination of poverty:

- (a) Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH) – cash transfers to vulnerable households.
- (b) Steps to Work Programme.
- (c) Poor Relief, School Feeding, and School Fee Assistance.
- (d) National Health Fund (NHF), Rehabilitation Grants, and Jamaica Drugs for the Elderly Programme (JADEP).
- (e) Short-Term Poverty Alleviation (STPA) and Municipal Social Assistance Programme (MSAP) – with JMD 726 million disbursed to 32,339 beneficiaries (2017–2024).
- (f) The SIP implemented by the MLSS to provide support to vulnerable individuals, and communities (particularly youths) through employment, education and entrepreneurship grants.
- (g) The Special Employment Programme (SEP); which facilitates the employment of young Jamaicans by partnering with Private Sector Companies.
- (h) The Social Pension Programme – was implemented in 2021, The programme targets the elderly population in Jamaica.
- (i) The Solidarity programme provides a one-time cash grant valued at J\$20,000.00 to vulnerable individuals who have never received support under any existing national social assistance programme.

72. In 2024, the PIOJ launched the “Leaving No One Behind (LNOB)” Toolkit to enhance coordination, service delivery, and stakeholder partnerships.

73. In response to COVID-19, the GoJ distributed over 30,000 meals and care packages daily, activated the RONA Helpline Senior Care Response Initiative for support to the elderly, and implemented the COVID Allocation of Resources for Employees (CARE) Programme, providing cash grants to the unemployed and vulnerable.

74. Housing support expanded under the New Social Housing Programme (NSHP), part of the Housing, Opportunity, Production and Employment (HOPE) initiative. The Desmond McKenzie Transitional Centre for the Homeless (opened in 2022), along with shelters like Marie Atkins Night Shelter, offers accommodation and reintegration services. Rental assistance is also available through municipal Poor Relief departments.

75. The pandemic highlighted the need for digital transformation and stronger partnerships to improve service access and resilience in poverty reduction efforts.

Right to health (Recommendation 107.27)

76. The issue of poverty has been addressed in the sections of the report devoted to *Human Rights and Poverty* and *Human Rights and Climate Change*.

77. The MoHW is leading the Primary Healthcare Reform (2021–2030), aimed at modernizing healthcare delivery with a focus on non-communicable diseases and broader social and environmental health determinants.

78. Further advancing public health, the GoJ has recently approved the National School Nutrition Policy, which was tabled in the Senate on May 9, 2025. The policy will be implemented in all early-childhood, primary, secondary, and special education institutions, both public and private. It aims to ensure access to safe, nutritious food to support the health, cognitive development, and academic performance of all students, particularly the most vulnerable.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (Recommendation 107.74)

79. Jamaica's Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy is currently under review spearheaded by the MoHW which is intended to increase access to healthcare services, particularly for adolescents and vulnerable populations.

Right to education (Recommendations 107.71, 107.78, 107.79)

80. The GoJ remains committed to fulfilling its obligations under the Education Regulations and the Child Care and Protection Act, which mandate access to educational opportunities for all children up to age sixteen (16).

81. The National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) guides improvements in access, equity, and quality across all levels of education. Special emphasis is placed on early childhood including vulnerable groups. The NESP includes:

(a) School Feeding Programme: The programme continues to provide meals to students across the island.

(b) Early Childhood Care and Education: To improve learning at the early childhood level, scholarships and grants have been allocated to upskill early childhood practitioners.

(c) Special Education Policy and Standards: These frameworks support inclusive education for children with special needs.

(d) Student Transportation Support: Transportation assistance is provided for students at the primary and secondary levels in rural communities.

(e) Exam Fee Assistance: Assists in covering the cost of core Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examination subjects such as Mathematics, English, and Science. The level of assistance varies annually and is performance-based.

(f) The school-book rental scheme exists for secondary level students; and digitized textbooks are also provided.

(g) The Technology Resource and Education Network and Development (TREND) Programme supports digital learning and educational technology access in schools.

(h) The Education and Entrepreneurship Grants Programme (E&EGP) aids young Jamaicans experiencing financial difficulty at the secondary or tertiary level.

Human rights education, trainings and awareness raising (Recommendations 107.47, 107.61)

82. The MLCA implemented a comprehensive public education and sensitization campaign on human rights targeting MDAs, schools, and private sector entities. These include:

(a) The Human Rights Forum – a platform for dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and advocacy;

(b) The National Human Rights Debate Competition – Engaging students in critical discussions on rights-based issues;

(c) CVM Skool Fest Tour under the theme “Unity over Violence”;

(d) Multimedia Campaigns – the production and dissemination of educational videos and public service advertisements.

83. The OCA promotes human rights awareness and education across various sectors in Jamaica, focusing on children’s rights and capacity building. Stakeholders engaged include law enforcement, judicial personnel, educational practitioners and other public officers. This enhances stakeholder interactions with children through community outreach, policy advisories and collaboration with national and international partners.

Discrimination against women (Recommendations 107.82, 107.90, 107.96, 107.97, 107.105, 107.109, 107.110)

84. The National Strategic Action Plan to Eliminate Gender-Based Violence in Jamaica (NSAP-GBV 2017-2027) targeted towards victims, perpetrators, and witnesses who experience gender-based violence (GBV) in Jamaica. Under the NSAP-GBV a robust programme of sensitization and training is done at the community level to increase knowledge on the types and forms of GBV, how to report instances of GBV, as well as the laws and legislative framework that provide support to victims of GBV. In 2024, sensitizations were held across twenty-six (26) communities.

85. During the period 2020–2025, the BGA hosted the following:

(a) First responders and human service providers training aimed at increasing knowledge and strengthening the community’s response to GBV;

(b) Parish Coordination Platform workshops with key stakeholders to coordinate efforts in addressing and preventing GBV; and

(c) Training for staff members from the GBV Helpline in Case Management to better manage the cases and develop more impactful treatment plans.

86. The issue of gender equality is discussed under the themes, Participation of Women in Political and Public Life and Violence against Women.

Participation of women in political and public life (Recommendations 107.80, 107.85, 107.94, 107.98)

87. Since 2015, there have been increased women's representation and participation in decision-making positions in public life. Women have held and continue to hold key positions within the GoJ. Women occupy 26 of the 63 seats in the House of Representatives – an increase from holding 12.7% of seats in 2015; and 8 of the 21 seats in the Senate. The March 2025 data from the Houses of Parliament indicates that during the period of 2020–present, female representation on Joint Select Committees (JSC) of Parliament is 40.49% (representing 66 out of 163 total JSC members).

88. Jamaica held its first-ever all-female sitting of Parliament in 2023, featuring young women aged 18–25. Alongside this, Parliament formally established a Bicameral Caucus of Women Parliamentarians mobilized in March 2023, aimed at building cross-party cohesion, capacity, and legislative influence among female Members of Parliament (MPs) and Senators. In 2024, Jamaica appointed its first female President of the Court of Appeal.

89. The phased implementation of gender mainstreaming mandate is continued through ongoing training of members of the Gender Focal Point Network (GFPN) to promote the development of approved gender mainstream action plans within their respective MDAs and other entities. There are approximately one hundred and fifty (150) gender focal points spread across twenty-seven (27) MDAs.

Violence against women (Recommendations 107.51, 107.83, 107.87, 107.88, 107.102, 107.104, 107.106, 107.107, 107.108)

90. The GoJ, through the JCF, has reaffirmed its commitment to addressing all forms of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence. This commitment is reflected in a range of proactive initiatives, including community engagement, strengthened support systems, and the implementation of innovative strategies aimed at reducing incidents of violence, supporting victims, and intervening before conflicts escalate.

91. The JCF has prioritised addressing domestic violence through the establishment and expansion of the Domestic Violence Intervention (DVI) Centres, now operating in ten (10) locations across the island. These centres offer victims a safe space for reporting incidents, professional counselling, agency referrals, follow-ups, and case updates, supported by trained volunteer counsellors and chaplains. In 2023, the centres processed 6,000 of the 8,500 reported cases, reflecting increased public trust in the system.

92. The Sexual Harassment (Protection and Prevention) Act was passed in 2021. The Act came into effect on Monday, July 3, 2023. Further strengthening the legislative framework, amendments to the Domestic Violence Act took effect in January 2024. Among other provisions, the revised Act empowers the Court to issue Protection Orders and imposes significantly stricter penalties for breaches – raising the maximum fine from one hundred thousand dollars (J\$100,000) to one million dollars (J\$1,000,000), along with a possible prison sentence of up to one year. It also expanded the category of persons who are allowed to apply for protection orders on behalf of victims inclusive of giving the Minister residual power to include entities such as BGA and the Women's Resource Outreach Centre as entities who could seek protection orders on behalf of applicants.

93. The GBV Helpline Unit was officially established in September 2023, to support victims, survivors, and witness of gender-based violence. As part of public awareness efforts, various entities in Jamaica were encouraged to participate in activities during the '16 Days of Action Against Domestic Violence' Campaign, celebrated from November 25, 2024, to December 10, 2024, to promote positive masculinity and increase awareness as to the dangers of domestic violence. There were also public sensitization sessions conducted during 2024, focused on combatting sexual harassment in the workplace. The BGA continues to support the development and review of workplace policies on sexual harassment across various organisations in Jamaica.

94. Victims of sexual violence and their families have access to legal aid and advice through various channels, including Family Courts, the Legal Aid Council (an entity under the MoJ), the Legal Aid Clinic at the Norman Manley Law School and the Women's Resource and Outreach Centre (WROC).

95. The issue of Gender Based Violence is discussed under the themes, *Discrimination against Women and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence*.

Persons with disabilities: definition, general principles (Recommendations 107.117, 107.118, 107.119)

96. The Disabilities Act, 2014 came into effect in February 2022 and provides a comprehensive legal framework for the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities. The Act adopts a broad definition of disability, including individuals with intellectual or sensory impairments, and mandates the implementation of accessible facilities and reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities.

97. Several initiatives have been introduced to support the Act's implementation. These include the launch of an Accessibility Checklist, the development of the "I AM ABLE" mobile app, and the establishment of the Disabilities Rights Tribunal in 2023, which is now operational. The Abilities Foundation also continues to provide vocational training and skills development for persons with disabilities.

98. The Act also established the Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities (JCPD) as a body corporate. The JCPD is tasked with safeguarding the rights of persons with disabilities and carries out several key functions, including:

(a) Providing registration service for persons with disabilities so that they may receive benefits/assistance, once there is medical proof of the disability.

(b) Access to rehabilitative services – includes programmes which provide grants to facilitate income generating activities by disabled persons as well as access to aids for vision, mobility, hearing, technology and therapy services (such as behavioural therapy).

(c) Provision of disability sensitization and training services to organizations (including MDAs and NGOs) on issues such as legislation and rights relating to the disabled, how to respectfully interact with the disabled and how to create inclusive/accessible environments, particularly in the workplace.

(d) JCPD has provided an online Accessibility Manual (including the Disability and Accessibility Checklist) by which organizations are guided in creating accessible environments. It also offers its services to assess environments (such as workplaces) whether they have met the standards for accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

99. The GoJ has progressed toward greater inclusion of persons with disabilities, recent measures include: the Jamaica Urban Transit Company in 2025 announced plans to outfit additional buses with features to better accommodate the disabled community; the new polymer banknotes, introduced in 2022, include raised bumps that allow the visually impaired to identify denominations independently; some ATMs operated by commercial banks have been adapted to facilitate easier access for persons with disabilities; some Courts have been retrofitted with ramps for wheelchair access, and court clerks have received sign language training to better serve the hearing impaired. The Justice Mobile Units are similarly retrofitted with ramps to ensure full access to services for persons with disabilities.

Children: definition; general principles; protection (Recommendations 107.111, 107.115)

100. Jamaica has adopted the National Plan of Action for an Integrated Response to Children and Violence, reaffirming its commitment as a member of the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children. Public education plays a vital role in prevention. The Gender Ambassadors Programme (GAP), implemented in schools in 2019 continues to

promote gender equality, healthy relationships, and non-violence. GAP actively addresses bullying and antisocial behaviour, encouraging positive dispute resolution among youth.

101. The Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) Curriculum in secondary schools also reinforces messages of respect, responsibility, and non-violence. A Positive Behaviour Management Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Manual has been provided to guide the responses to disruptive behaviour and work towards rehabilitation of juveniles in correctional facilities.

102. The Safe Schools Programme, which includes the deployment of School Resource Officers (from the JCF) in schools contributes to maintaining a secure and supportive learning environment and prevent the escalation of violent activities.

103. The CPFSA provides services for children in conflict with the law, particularly those who are wards of the state, including legal representation through CPFSA-employed attorneys, operating under the principle that deprivation of a child's liberty is a measure of last resort.

104. Court modernisation via digital case management, video conferencing and the renovation of Court facilities and establishment of new court houses led by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and Court Administration Division.

105. The Bail Act of 2023 brings additional safeguards to procedural fairness in the Criminal Justice System by helping to reduce the incidence of unlawful pretrial detention.

106. Cases have been expedited using the Committal Proceedings process which has replaced the use of preliminary inquiries. Bench Trials are also encouraged, pursuant to the Criminal Justice (Administration) Act, which permits criminal matters (except for murder or treason) to be heard without empanelling a Jury.

107. Jamaica has made significant progress in reducing case backlog within its court system, particularly in the parish courts, which are now considered backlog-free. This progress is attributed to various factors, including increased staffing, efficient case management, and a focus on timely resolution. This reform has aided in protecting citizens' right to a fair hearing within a reasonable time.

108. The MoJ has also strengthened its support for child protection by doubling the number of Child Diversion Officers since the programme's inception, in response to increased referrals from the courts and the JCF. The OCA continues to emphasize the psychological harm of having children endure the facilities and circumstances of the penal justice system. Child Diversion is also discussed under the theme, *Conditions of Detention*.

109. The OCA has also conducted judicial training seminars and sessions with all levels of the judiciary in the use and application of the *OCA's Child Justice Guidelines*. These guidelines outline the minimum standards aimed at providing child appropriate justice to any child facing the justice system.

Children: protection against exploitation (Recommendations 107.112, 107.113)

110. The National Task Force for Trafficking in Persons (NATFATIP) and the Office of the National Rapporteur on Trafficking (ONRTIP) collaborated under the Child Protection Compact Partnership (2018–2022). This partnership strengthened Jamaica's capacity and procedures in combating child trafficking. Key outcomes included the development of a referral mechanism for child trafficking cases and a SOP for Child Victims and Survivors of Trafficking and the introduction of the Jamaica Child Trafficking Screening Tool to assist frontline personnel in identifying child trafficking victims.

111. In 2021, NATFATIP expanded its outreach to schools, conducting in-person sensitization sessions to educate students about the methods and risks associated with trafficking. Children are also being educated through the Anti-Trafficking Activity Workbook, designed for ages 6–12.

112. The Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce Child Labor II (CLEAR II) was conducted during the period 2014–2019. This programme has yielded the following resources which are currently engaged in the fight against trafficking:

- (a) Trained officers, law enforcement officers, and representatives of the OCA and the CPFSA to treat with instances of child labour;
- (b) a manual was developed regarding child labour investigations and prosecutions; and
- (c) The National Action Plan on child Labour.

113. The CPFSA utilizes ‘child-friendly spaces’ at its National Children’s Registry (implemented in 2023) to receive reports of child trafficking. This allows for sensitive interviewing of children in potential cases of child trafficking or abuse. Social workers and other personnel have also been trained to treat with child-trafficking victims. The CPFSA is guided by the Standard Operating Protocols for a victim-friendly, trauma-informed and child-sensitive approach in treating with the trafficked children.

114. The JCF’s Anti-Trafficking in Persons Unit at the C-TOC investigates all complaints of child trafficking, which are usually referred to it by the children’s registry. A Child-Friendly Space has also been opened at the C-TOC.

115. Training on identifying and interacting with trafficking victims, including children, is addressed under the theme *Human Trafficking and Contemporary Forms of Slavery*.

116. The Child Labour Unit in the MLSS facilitates the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Child Labour. The Plan of Action’s responsibilities include collecting data on child labour for the formulation and implementation of policies and measures to combat child labour; as well as to remove and/or rehabilitate children who are found in unlawful/hazardous child labour.

117. The PATH programme (with 70 percent of the beneficiaries being children), includes subsidizing transportation cost for school buses. This support reduces the incidence of child labour by lessening the financial pressure which could lead children to engage in economic activities.

Cooperation with human rights mechanisms and request for technical assistance

(Recommendations 107.4, 107.5)

118. In November 2024, the IMCHR collaborated with the Commonwealth Secretariat Human Rights Unit in hosting a workshop to enhance its treaty-body reporting obligations under seven of the nine core international human rights treaties ratified by Jamaica. The workshop aimed to bolster Jamaica’s commitment to international human rights standards.

119. The issue of Jamaica’s treaty body reports is discussed under the theme, *Cooperation & Follow-up with Treaty Bodies* and its current national mechanisms for treating with human rights recommendations are discussed under the heading, *Developments Since Jamaica’s Third Cycle Report of May 2020* at paragraph 5 and the theme, *Ratification of Instruments*.

Budget and resources (for human rights implementation)

(Recommendation 107.91)

120. The issue of the NSAP-GBV is discussed under the themes, *Discrimination against Women and Violence against Women*.

Rule of law and impunity (Recommendations 107.50, 107.53, 107.54)

121. The GoJ continues to implement a robust legal and policy framework to address the escalating rates of violent crime, particularly homicides, gang-related activities, and emerging trends in vigilante violence. These efforts are grounded in a rights-based approach that prioritizes the protection of life, public safety, and the rule of law.

122. To safeguard proportionality and the rule of law, Jamaica enforces a multi-layered oversight system during States of Public Emergency (SOEs). Detainees have immediate access to the Supreme Court for habeas corpus, judicial review, or declarations of rights, as affirmed in *Roshaine Clarke v Attorney-General*, Claim No. SU2019CV00093 [2022] JMFC Full 3 (with reference to paragraphs 113, 114 and 128 of this case authority).

123. Each SOE Regulation includes an Emergency Powers Review Tribunal, chaired by senior legal professionals, including judges, which must review every detention order within seven days and may recommend release if unjustified. Security commanders are also required to submit regular reports to ensure compliance with human rights standards.

124. SOEs are strictly limited in duration, geographic scope, and purpose. A proclamation expires after seven days unless extended by Parliament, with extensions beyond 14 days requiring a two-thirds majority. Measures are confined to high-violence areas and focus on tools such as curfews, cordons, and preventative detention of those reasonably suspected of violence. This framework governing SOEs – through judicial access, independent review, and parliamentary control, ensures that emergency powers are exceptional, time-bound, and aligned with constitutional and human rights standards.

125. The Government continues to invest in a multi-pronged approach to crime prevention and justice reform, including:

(a) Zones of Special Operations (ZOSOs), which combine community-based security initiatives with social development programmes in high-risk areas.

(b) States of Emergency (SOEs), used as a targeted tool to disrupt organized criminal activity in violence-prone regions.

(c) Ongoing justice reform efforts led by the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of National Security, aimed at improving efficiency, fairness, and access to justice.

126. These efforts are supported by the strategic use of technology, criminal intelligence, and the deployment of specialized units, such as the Major Organised Crime and Anti-Corruption Agency (MOCA), which focuses on investigating and prosecuting gang leaders and high-level criminal networks.

127. The provisions of Section 19 of Jamaica's Constitution also grant power to the Police Service Commission to hold disciplinary proceedings and impose sanctions against members of the JCF who are of and above the rank of Inspector.

128. In addition, as an independent civilian oversight body, INDECOM, is responsible for investigating the actions of members of the JCF, the JDF when acting in support of the JCF, and Correctional Officers, particularly in cases where their conduct results in death, injury, or the violation of individuals' rights. Between January 1, 2024, and July 31, 2025, INDECOM's investigations led to charges being filed against a total of forty-one (41) law enforcement officers. The matters brought before the courts include eleven (11) cases of fatal shootings, as well as incidents involving assault, road collisions, and non-fatal shooting injuries.

Right to physical and moral integrity (Recommendations 107.44, 107.46, 107.48)

129. The National Commission for Violence Prevention (NCVP) was established in 2019 and is mandated to conduct a continuing comprehensive review of all existing public and private violence-prevention programmes. Its purpose is to identify gaps in the prevention and

intervention services and to make recommendations. In 2024 a total ban on corporal punishment was among the recommendations of the NCVP. As of May 2025, the NCVP has submitted a report to the Prime Minister as part of their mandate to develop a 10-year evidence-based National Action Plan.

130. Corporal punishment is also discussed under the theme, *Prohibition of torture and ill-treatment (including cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment)* and the issue of excessive use of force and of allegations of violations of human rights are discussed under the theme, *Access to justice and remedy*.

Liberty and security of the person (Recommendation 107.41)

131. The issue of children's detention is discussed under the theme, *Conditions of Detention*.

Right to life (Recommendation 107.37)

132. The GoJ has demonstrated its commitment to public safety through legislative reforms and successful prosecutions under key laws such as the Criminal Justice (Suppression of Criminal Organisations) Act (the Anti-Gang Act) and legislation addressing human trafficking. The Anti-Gang Act, enacted in 2014 and amended in 2021, has proven instrumental in prosecuting gang leaders and members, with convictions resulting in a range of sentences for leadership, membership, and facilitation of serious crimes.

133. Other critical legislative tools include the Firearms (Prohibition, Restriction and Regulation) Act, 2022, which strengthens penalties for trafficking and illegal possession of firearms, and the Bail Act, 2023, which enhances pretrial risk assessments – especially for violent and repeat offenders.

Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions (Recommendations 107.38, 107.45)

134. Allegations of extrajudicial killings and arbitrary deprivation of life are subject to independent investigation by the INDECOM, which is mandated by law to investigate all actions by members of the security forces that result in death or injury. INDECOM's investigations into alleged incidents of excessive force remain active, and several members of the security forces have been charged and brought before the courts in connection with fatal shootings and other use-of-force incidents.

Sexual and gender-based violence (Recommendations 107.81, 107.84, 107.89, 107.92, 107.93, 107.95, 107.99, 107.100, 107.103)

135. As part of the continuum of care for women survivors of GBV, Jamaica has established a National Strategy for Shelters and Other Safe Spaces, which guides the operation of facilities for survivors of GBV. Two GoJ-operated shelters are currently operational, with a focus on supporting both survivors and their dependents, including school-aged children and infants. Through a Memorandum of Understanding with the MOESYI, arrangements are in place to ensure educational continuity for children residing in shelters. The first shelter was opened in 2020. A third shelter is currently under construction.

136. The funding under the Spotlight Initiative (January 2020 – December 2023) has been used to Eliminate Family Violence, with focus on Violence Against Women and Girls, in Jamaica. The GBV Helpline Unit provides support to victims, survivors, and witness of GBV.

137. Additionally, inmates at the Tower Street Adult Correctional Centre have undergone sensitization training to recognise and report cases of GBV through a workshop held in June 2025.

Economic, social and cultural rights (Recommendations 107.116, 107.68, 107.69)

138. Jamaica promotes human rights through the social inclusion of young people in sports. This is achieved through a combination of national policies, community-based programmes, and partnerships with local and international stakeholders. The GoJ through the National Sports Policy and the National Youth Policy has prioritized sports as a tool for fostering social inclusion, discipline, and life skills among youth, particularly those from marginalized or vulnerable backgrounds. These policies support the creation of safe and inclusive spaces where young people can engage in meaningful activities that promote equality, non-discrimination, and mutual respect. These policies are implemented through partnership with organizations such as the MOESYI, the Institute of Sports (INSPORTS), and NGOs.

Economic, social and cultural rights – general measures of implementation (Recommendations 107.68, 107.69)

139. Jamaica promotes the family as the foundational unit of society and the preservation of family values through a range of economic and social policies. One such policy is the National Parenting Support Policy (NPSP) developed by the MOESYI which underscores the importance of shared parental responsibility, the well-being of children, and the protection of vulnerable family members. It also outlines a national framework for the development of parenting materials and the delivery of services, with special attention being paid to families affected by poverty, illness, and other vulnerabilities.

140. In Jamaica, the CPFSA and the National Parenting Support Commission (NPSC) strengthen positive parenting, protect children's rights, and empower families. The CPFSA focuses on proactively safeguarding children and family life. The NPSC coordinates and streamlines parenting through public education campaigns covering topics like positive discipline and child development. They also operate an initiative by which volunteer parent mentors provide community support and share best practices.

141. The initiatives under Jamaica's Vision 2030 National Development Plan aims to prioritize improved standard of living through legislative reforms, targeted initiatives, social security system enhancements, and asset creation programs like secure housing. These initiatives are designed to strengthen family life, enhance social protection, and create a supportive environment that nurtures the holistic development of all family members.

142. Jamaica has several programmes which assist vulnerable groups, for example: maternity benefits, and support to the elderly and persons with disabilities within family units. This includes PATH and the National Insurance Scheme (NIS). PATH, for example, enables beneficiaries to pursue higher education, enhancing their employability and potential living standards while pensions and maternity allowance would be available under NIS to Jamaican citizens in keeping with their respective contributions to this scheme. The National Insurance Act governs the operation of the NIS.

143. The issue of economic and social development is discussed under the themes *Human Rights and Poverty* and *Children: protection against exploitation*.

Advancement of women (Recommendation 107.101)

144. The Boosting Innovation, Growth, and Entrepreneurship Ecosystems (BIGEE) Programme was launched in 2020 through a loan agreement between the GoJ and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Under this programme, the Development Bank of

Jamaica officially launched the 'BOOST HerBiz' initiative in 2024 which is a special financial award designed to support the acceleration of female-led enterprises.

145. The following entities also contribute to the continuing advancement of women:

(a) The Micro Investment Development Agency (MIDA) supports women, particularly in rural areas, to start and expand small businesses.

(b) The HEART/NSTA Trust provides vocational and entrepreneurial training for women and girls, with special focus on non-traditional fields such as construction, technology, and engineering.

(c) The Women's Centre of Jamaica Foundation (WCJF) works pursuant to the National Policy on the Reintegration of school-age Mothers in assisting adolescent mothers to continue their education. The WCJF held its inaugural Empowered Futures Parenting Symposium in May 2025. The Empowered Futures Parenting Curriculum supports adolescent mothers in developing the knowledge and skills necessary to raise their children nurturing, non-violent and responsive ways.

(d) Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers partners with the BGA and other entities to empower rural women through agricultural training, development, and access to land and technology.

Children: juvenile justice (Recommendation 107.59)

146. The matter of Children – juvenile justice is discussed under the themes, *Conditions of Detention* and *Children: definition; general principles; protection*.

Ratification of and accession to international instruments (Recommendations 108.1, 108.2, 108.3, 108.4, 108.5, 108.6, 108.7, 108.8, 108.9, 108.10, 108.11, 108.12, 108.13, 108.32 109.1, 109.2, 109.3, 109.4, 109.5)

147. Jamaica has not yet ratified the UN Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.