



Publication of the National Security Policy Coordination Unit (Jamaica)

# Security Connect

*On a point of policy*



## **SECURITY CLEARED!**

**Hundreds of students from across the Caribbean who attended the April 9 talk by the President of the United States at the University of the West Indies, Mona were vetted by the United States Secret Service.**

## **ID VETTING HAS INCREASING ROLE IN NATIONAL SECURITY**

The President of the United States (POTUS) Barak Obama's visit to Jamaica from April 8 to 9 had an official itinerary of four events across as many locations in Kingston. During the same days, CARICOM heads of states and their delegations met in Kingston and also met with the POTUS. The successful execution of the activities required the direct participation of hundreds of vetted Jamaican officials, and selected guests to events, all of whom had to be scrutinised by the United States Secret Service (USSS), which is the federal agency has the protection of the President and Vice President as a part of its mandate.

The United States Secret Service is an agency under the direction of the Department of Homeland Security which operates out of the Cabinet of the United States of America.

On April 9, President Obama spoke for more than an hour in front of an audience of upwards of 400 persons in the Assembly Hall of the University of the West Indies, Mona.

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The guests and media practitioners each had to submit a professional résumé, and other information for scrutiny by the USSS before clearance was given or invitations issued. The USSS is prepared for secure and credible identity verification as the agency director noted in its 2014 - 2018 strategic plan that the department has “advanced information technology systems that allow them to share sensitive information quickly and leverage data to gain additional operational insight.”

The **National Security Policy of Jamaica (NSP)** highlights the importance of having a national identification system for Jamaica that provides verifiable and authentic identity assurance for every Jamaican citizen and resident. The National Identity System Project in the Office of the Prime Minister is advancing a framework that will be developed around a National Identification Number (NIN) which will: enable more effective social protection; security and safety; promote effective governance; enable the business environment; and promote a technology-enabled society and improved national competitiveness. The NIN is expected to link the five main government identification systems that are maintained in Jamaica. These are: the Registrar Generals Department’s birth



registration number; Tax Authority of Jamaica’s Taxpayer Registration Number (TRN); passports issued by the Passport and Citizenship Authority (PICA); Electoral Office of Jamaica’s voter’s identification number; and the Ministry of Social Security’s National Insurance Number (NIS). These independent data collection points will be inter-connected through legislature, and also across technological platforms, to eliminate registering on overlapping government database systems, and remove costs that are incurred maintaining multiple identification systems. The NIDS policy is at an advanced stage of preparation, and is expected to be submitted to Cabinet during the current financial year.

In April the NIDS Project will invite discussion with stakeholders towards developing a framework for appropriate implementation of the NIN. The discussions will cover matters such as the formal organizational structure, common rules, common service provisions and management models.

It is not expected that Jamaica will match the USSS in expertise and technology, but when NIDS is in place, residents of Jamaica and Jamaicans living abroad should benefit from identity related services with increased speed and a high level of integrity and confidentiality. **END**

### CYBERSECURITY POLICY UPDATE

In January, the Ministry of Science, Technology, Energy and Mining recently launched Jamaica’s cybersecurity strategy which has a strong emphasis on the training of legal and law enforcement professionals in tackling cyber crimes effectively. Globally, cybersecurity is considered to be a major area for threat analysis. The President of the United States emphasized this in his 2015 State of the Union address urging congress to “pass the legislation we need to better meet the evolving threat of cyber attacks, combat identity theft, and protect our children’s information.”

The Cybercrimes Amendment bill that is being piloted by the Ministry of Justice is currently in the draft phase and will update the original act that was gazetted in 2010. The update is to allow law enforcement professionals to keep pace with rapid changes in how the Internet is being used. **END**

## Improved planning regulation and building control improves community security and public order

On April 7, the government announced major traffic diversions in sections of Kingston as a part of the preparations for the visit of the President of the United States of America (POTUS). Residents of the city also saw upgrading to roads, clearance of debris and unauthorised structures in public places that were considered to be obstructions to policing.

The activities enabled the creation of what is known as the “security bubble” which is the environment that the United States Secret Service places the persons it is directed to protect.

This was the first time in a generation that Jamaica would experience the activities around a POTUS and, as was expected, there were extensive security preparations in areas where there is normal public access, such as roads and parks.

In a lead-up press briefing, the Jamaica Defence Force and the Minister with Responsibility for Information updated the country that the National Heroes Circle would be a security zone and that the Harbour View Roundabout would receive special attention by the Kingston and St Andrew Corporation (KSAC). As a result, several structures erected by street vendors were removed.

The **National Security Policy (NSP)** notes that improved planning, regulation and building control allows the state to have a strong continuous presence that will enable lasting security. The activities to support this would include ongoing removal of abandoned buildings, zinc fences or other

structures that create defensible spaces in which gangs can operate.

The oversight towards achieving a strong continuous presence is the Public Order Committee of Cabinet, which is chaired by the Minister of National Security. The committee is established to:

- i) provide direction, coordination, and monitoring of policies in the areas of security, law enforcement and public order, in keeping with the **National Security Policy**;
- ii) influence the reinforcement of positive values and attitudes and civility in personal interactions as a basis for non-violent conflict resolution;
- iii) promote strategies, including a combination of public education and rigorous enforcement to restore order in public spaces;
- iv) approve a sustainable programme for the promotion of road safety.

Speaking on the zinc removal programme currently underway in the August Town area, Minister of National Security, Peter Bunting said that it created challenges for the security forces.

Mayor of Kingston, Dr Angela Brown Burke, in briefing the press on April 15 said that a “Permanent plan is being put in place to regulate illegal food vendors at the National Heroes Circle, Rockfort and Rae Town.”

Agencies that are involved in executing aspects of public order include National Road Safety Council; the Jamaica Constabulary Force; the Ministry of Local Government through parish councils and the National Solid Waste Management Authority and the Ministry of Health. **END**





Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller and the President of the United States of America Barak Obama, concluded bilateral talks in Kingston on April 9, and then joined other regional leaders for the 7th Summit of the Americas, an event of the Organisation of American States (OAS) in Panama from April 10 to eleven. Both nations signed the OAS Inter-American Convention Against Corruption in 1996.

## Cabinet Approves 5th OAS Review on Anti-Corruption

Cabinet gave approval for the Organisation of American States (OAS) to carry out its 5th review of Jamaica's implementation of the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption. The most recent review was done in 2014. **The National Security Policy (NSP)** notes that violence and corruption have deterred inward investment and discouraged business development.

Among the recommendations made at the last review were: Encouraging the implementation of a code of ethics for Senators and Members of the House of Representatives, including mechanisms for violations; 1. Developing provisions that limit participation by former public servants in situations that could involve taking undue advantage of one's status as a former public servant for an appropriate period of time; establish reporting obligations for those public officials and employees who are currently not required to report to appropriate authorities, addressing acts of corruption in the performance of public functions of which they are aware; and 2. Make public on the Access to Information Unit (ATI) website, its annual and quarterly reports.

The OAS report is at this link [http://www.oas.org/juridico/newsletter/nl\\_en\\_188.htm](http://www.oas.org/juridico/newsletter/nl_en_188.htm)

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