



PERMANENT MISSION OF JAMAICA  
GENEVA

502/1/4

The Permanent Mission of Jamaica to the Office of the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies at Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and has the honour to refer to the latter's Note Verbale dated 4 June 2008, regarding Human Rights Council Resolution 7/9 entitled "*Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities*".

The Permanent Mission has the further honour to transmit herewith, the response of the Government of Jamaica on the implementation of the above-mentioned resolution.

The Permanent Mission of Jamaica to the Office of the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies at Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 14 October 2008

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights  
Geneva



**OHCHR REGISTRY**

14 OCT. 2008

Recipients :...A...Z.....  
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## **MEASURES BEING TAKEN TO IMPLEMENT HUMAN RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN JAMAICA.**

The Government of Jamaica welcomes the entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2008, and looks forward to working with all States Parties to promote and protect the rights of disabled persons worldwide. Jamaica was an active partner in the negotiations to conclude the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and is particularly pleased to have been the first State Party to the Convention, having deposited its instrument of ratification on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2007.

The Government of Jamaica is committed to realizing the full participation and inclusion in society of all disabled persons and to this end has undertaken the following measures to protect and promote the rights of persons with disabilities:

- Legislating a National Disability Act which is aimed at protecting the rights of persons with disabilities in every sphere of life. The current bill is at its 4<sup>th</sup> draft and stakeholder consultations are being held.
- Transforming the education sector to allow children with special needs from early childhood education to tertiary, a place in school. This transformation will also take into account accessibility (physical and educational) materials. Among the priority areas are:
  - The introduction of special day care facilities to accommodate children with disabilities in the 0-6 age group.
  - Increasing the number teachers being trained in the area of special education.
- Establishing a Task Force to develop a plan so that persons with disabilities can be fully integrated into the society and to support Jamaica's goal of a developed country status by 2030.
- The commitment of Government to reserve 5% of jobs in the public sector to persons with disabilities.
- The introduction of 'special funds' to encourage entrepreneurship for persons with disabilities in the form of concessionary loans and grants.

- Promoting Public Education awareness campaigns among employers, unions and the general public.
- Increasing the number of persons trained in Sign Language with free classes being given to employers and key Government Departments.
- Hosting 'Employment Fairs' for persons with disabilities. The aim is to remove barriers/stigma/misunderstandings to employment and to encourage the Private Sector to employ persons with disabilities.
- The Government is currently examining areas to improve the access of persons with disabilities within the health system.
- Other improvements include the social security provisions through social assistance programme.

The Government is fully committed to supporting the "Equalization of opportunities" for persons with disabilities in Jamaica and to ensuring their full and effective participation and inclusion.