



---

Sistema Económico  
Latinoamericano y del Caribe

---

Latin American and Caribbean  
Economic System

---

Sistema Econômico  
Latino-Americano e do Caribe

---

Système Economique  
Latinoaméricain et Caribéen

---

## **Presentation by Jamaica**

***Faith Mullings-Williams, Embassy of Jamaica in Venezuela***

*Regional Dialogue on Financing for Development and Foreign Debt ahead of the UN High-Level Meeting  
to review the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus; Doha, 2008*

*Caracas, Venezuela*

*20 June 2008*

*SP/DRFDDE-RANONUCM/Di No. 19 -08*

Copyright © SELA, June 2008. All rights reserved.  
Printed in the Permanent Secretariat of SELA, Caracas, Venezuela.

The Press and Publications Department of the Permanent Secretariat of SELA must authorise reproduction of this document, whether totally or partially, through [sela@sela.org](mailto:sela@sela.org). The Member States and their government institutions may reproduce this document without prior authorisation, provided that the source is mentioned and the Secretariat is aware of said reproduction.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Jamaican delegation wishes to join with those who have gone before in commending Ambassador José Rivera Banuet and the Permanent Secretariat of SLEA for hosting this very important meeting in preparation for the participation of the Latin American and Caribbean region in Doha 2008.

Mr. Chairman, the issue being addressed by this meeting is, as you know, a very critical one for Jamaica and has been raised in previous meetings of this body and also underscored earlier in the presentation made by the Distinguished Representative from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB).

Jamaica is ranked as the fourth most indebted country in the world (measured either relative to GDP or population), behind Lebanon, Japan and the Seychelles.

The debt/GDP at the end of the 2007/2008 Budget year stood at 126%. Mr. Chairman, what this means in per capita terms, is that each Jamaican's share of total public debt is approximately US\$ 7,920, which further accounts for roughly 50.97 cents of every revenue dollar. Needless to say that this enormous debt burdens the economy with debt service that severely constrains the country's development options.

Considerable effort is underway at the domestic level to effectively respond to these challenges.

While admittedly, the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) debt relief programme has provided benefits to a number of countries, the delegation of Jamaica that there is still much left to be achieved at Doha 2008 and wished to solicit the support of the region for these issues.

### **Middle-Income Countries (MICs)**

- Jamaica is of the view that there should be special support for middle-income countries (i.e. relief and not debt cancellation) as these countries are not poor enough to qualify for concessionary loans, but have to reduce spending on important social services because of the high debt burden and debt service costs. There is no arrangement similar to that for the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative for least developed countries for middle-income countries such as Jamaica and other Caribbean countries.
- The situation for heavily indebted middle-income developing countries has become even more acute due to rapidly rising energy prices, shortage and high prices in food and the current weakness in the US economy.
- In this regard, Mr. Chairman, the international should maintain its support to middle-income countries, bearing in mind the following reasons:
  - to contribute to the efforts toward the eradication of poverty. (41% of the world's people living on less than two dollars a day live in MICs);
  - to prevent losing ground in the social and economic progress already achieved;

**2**

- to support MIC's contributions in the provision of international public goods such as peace building, prevention of contagious diseases, financial stability and environmental sustainability;
  - to offset the vulnerabilities experienced by many MICs. Such vulnerabilities affect stable paths of sustainable growth. Vulnerabilities include the integration into international financial markets and difficulties in generating a sustained and dynamic process of technological and productive development. Small Island Developing Countries such as Jamaica also suffer from the vulnerability to natural disasters which impact on the alleviation of poverty, growth and development.
- The following are also critical to the discussion on the development agenda:
    - Each country has the primary responsibility for its own development;
    - There should be no limited approach which defines development in the context of the promotion of human rights and effective governance at the national level, without equal attention being paid to the broader global systemic issues which continue to negatively impact the development prospects of developing countries. This has an impact on aid effectiveness as the quality of aid is also important as its quantity. Effectiveness should not be narrowly focused on accountability and governance of developing countries and should not attract conditionalities which compromise effectiveness.
    - A more active voice and effective participation by developing countries in the Bretton Woods Institutions so as to promote *inter alia*, the legitimacy and relevance of the international financial system and allow developing countries to eradicate poverty and accelerate economic growth in a sustained manner.
    - Policy advice, technical assistance and financial support for developing countries should take due regard of policy space to allow for a greater role in global economic decision-making, better integration in the world economy in accordance with their national priorities and objectives, and that
    - The development approach should advance sustained economic growth and development in order to achieve the MDGs and other agreed internationally development goals.

With respect to **international trade**,

Jamaica regards trade as important for wealth creation, poverty alleviation and the achievement of the MDGs and other development goals. We believe that the six-year stalemate in the negotiations in the Doha Development Round jeopardises the delivery of development promises for developing countries and is a source of concern. It is therefore critical that at the September meeting in Doha that the region pushes for the early and timely conclusion of the Doha Round and that there is the fullest realisation of the development dimensions of the Doha Work Programme.

For Jamaica and for CARICOM the development dimension of the Round should include the following:

- Increase in effective market access in areas of export interest to the region;
- genuine recognition of real asymmetries between developing and developed countries which are determined by several factors including the size of CARICOM economies, supply capacity as well as institutional and regulatory capacities;
- Real sensitivity towards the adjustment concerns resulting from trade reforms and liberalisation; and,
- Full support and adoption of the proposals tabled by the group of small, vulnerable economies.

Jamaica like the rest of CARICOM accords great importance to the creation of a viable, equitable, open, rule-based trade regime which recognises the diversity in the levels of development and size of economies, underscoring the principle of special and differential treatment.

There is also need for improvements in the multilateral trading rules of enhance fairness and bring equity to the system through *inter alia* reduction and removal of trade-distorting agricultural subsidies, and institutional and regulatory reform particularly in the field of services.

Governments should be allowed adequate policy space to align the multilateral framework of rights and obligations under the WTO with the objectives of national development strategies in and effort to safeguard livelihood, preserve tariff revenues and promote diversification and competitiveness.

In closing Mr. Chairman, my delegation wishes to not only reiterate the need for regional support for the issues which have been raised going into the September negotiations but would also request that the specific concerns and position which have been tabled on behalf of Jamaica and the wider CARICOM region be included as part of the final documents of this meeting.

I thank you.