

Jamaica prime minister's visit

Visit will cement 50 years of friendship, cooperation

Clement Allcock
AMBASSADOR OF JAMAICA

The Embassy of Jamaica, Tokyo, and the Jamaican community in Japan, welcome the Most Honorable Portia Simpson Miller, prime minister of Jamaica, on the occasion of her inaugural visit to Japan, at the special invitation of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.



The working visit of Prime Minister Simpson Miller, during the period Nov. 4 to 8, will provide the opportunity for discussions with Prime Minister Abe on matters of mutual interest and to explore opportunities for greater cooperation between our two countries. Prime Minister Simpson Miller will also meet with members of the private sector who have investments in Jamaica, as well as several who have indicated an interest in exploring new avenues of investment.

The historic visit is also in recognition of two significant anniversaries, the golden anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Jamaica and Japan in 1964, and the 20th anniversary of Japan's relations with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The visit will signify the start of activities honoring these important milestones during 2014, which has been designated by the Japanese government and the governments of the Community as the "Friendship Year." This visit further coincides with the recent designation of Tokyo as host city for the 2020 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games, and serves as an opportunity to celebrate this achievement with the people of Japan while underscoring the warm, friendly and productive ties between the two nations.

The Most Honorable Portia Simpson Miller was installed as prime minister of Jamaica, for the second time, in January 2012. During her tenure, the prime minister has overseen continued political and economic growth and stability in Jamaica, and has maintained existing and initiated new infrastructural development projects.

In this respect, tourism, as Jamaica's main economic driver, has had to weather some fallout from the crisis but has been able to maintain its significant role in the country's economy with slight increases in arrivals to date this year and an expectation, based on current bookings, for a strong winter season, which will close out 2013 with over 2 million arrivals. Currently, Jamaica hosts just over 2,000 Japanese tourists per year and looks forward to attracting greater numbers of visitors from Japan as our island remains a choice destination for honeymooners and,



Leadership: Jamaican Prime Minister the Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller speaks at the opening ceremony of National Productivity Awareness Week 2013 on Oct. 7 in Kingston. THE OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER, JAMAICA

increasingly, for ecological and cultural tourists who approach travel with a heightened sense of adventure.

Trade between Jamaica and Japan, in the years since the global economic meltdown, has steadily improved from ¥13 billion in 2009 to ¥23 billion in 2012. Japan remains the major export market for Jamaica's world renowned Blue Mountain coffee, regularly importing 85 percent of Jamaica's total production. The relationship based on coffee has existed between Jamaica and Japan for 80 years, with the first shipment by barrel of Mavis Bank Blue Mountain coffee to Japan occurring in 1953.

In more recent years, the private sector of Japan has demonstrated new and significant interest in Jamaica's energy sector. This is represented in the major investment that Marubeni Corporation has made in Jamaica's dominant provider of electricity, The Jamaica Public Service Co.

The interest and presence of Japanese companies, such as Marubeni, Ueshima Coffee Co., Hitachi, Fujitsu, West Indian Sea Island Cotton and others in Jamaica should be interpreted as a signal that there are considerable opportunities available in Jamaica for investment. The government of Jamaica welcomes and gives high priority to long-term investments that create solid linkages and growth in our domestic economy, and provide jobs for Jamaicans. To this end, Prime Minister Simpson Miller will be utilizing the opportunity presented by this visit to make a presentation on available trade and investment opportunities at the Japan-Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) Business Forum being held from Nov. 7 to 8. She will also hold discussions with the private sector on several areas for integration and cooperation, which the government of Jamaica has identified, including the establishment of Jamaica as a regional logistics hub, agriculture, mining, mineral resources

development and creative industries.

Jamaica has gained in the eyes of many a reputation as the cultural mecca of the Caribbean, particularly given the widespread awareness of Jamaican reggae, cuisine and athletics. In Japan, this perception has been bolstered by the presence of the Jamaican community. They have been instrumental in helping to locally promote Jamaica's culture, music, food, dance, and the beauty of our island and people. Many such Jamaicans have chosen to operate businesses and start families here in Japan, serving as a reminder that commercial and cultural exchanges between Jamaica and Japan are closely intertwined.

The last five decades of diplomatic relations between Jamaica and Japan have enabled many other cultural interactions, particularly through sports, cultural performance and people-to-people exchanges. In this regard, numerous Jamaicans have been exposed to Japan through the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (JET) and have, consequently, knit closer personal ties between the peoples of Jamaica and Japan.

Similarly, festivals such as "Reggae Sunsplash" and the "One Love Jamaica Festival" have bridged the divide of many

nautical miles to celebrate, in Japan, the vibrancy of Jamaican musical arts.

The collaborative spirit that both countries bring to the arts has also been evident in the numerous times we have stood together in mutual support in multilateral forums and in the aftermath of disasters, such as hurricanes that have struck Jamaica, and earthquakes and typhoons that have affected the people of Japan.

Indeed, across the past fifty years, Jamaica and Japan have enjoyed warm and mutually beneficial ties of friendship and cooperation.

Jamaica has received support from the Japan International Cooperation Agency, which has provided, under its technical co-operation program, technology and training in areas such as health care, education, sports, social services and agriculture. As well, Jamaica has been the beneficiary of engagement by the Japan External Trade Organization, the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, the Japan Trust Fund of the Inter-American Development Bank and the Japan-Jamaica Parliamentary Friendship League.

The camaraderie and mutual respect that have typified our half century of friendship forms the basis of the optimism Jamaican



Jamaican Prime Minister the Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller

A lifetime of dedicated service

The Most Honorable Portia Lucretia Simpson Miller O.N., M.P. first became Jamaica's seventh prime minister in March 2006 and was conferred with the Order of the Nation in May 2006.

Prime Minister Simpson Miller's ascension to Jamaica's highest political office, came after 17 years of dedicated service as a Cabinet minister with portfolio responsibility for labor, social security and sport; tourism, entertainment and sport; and local government, community development and sport. Simpson Miller has also had portfolio responsibilities for women's affairs.

In December 2011, the Portia Simpson Miller-led People's National Party was returned to government following a resounding victory in the general election.

On Jan. 5, 2012, Simpson Miller was sworn in as prime minister of Jamaica for the second time. As prime minister, she has ministerial oversight of information, development, sport, women's affairs and defense.

Simpson Miller was the leading architect of Jamaica's Master Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development, and the prime minister has been tireless in her efforts to promote and strengthen urban renewal and community development, leading to fundamental reforms in local government.

As minister of labor, welfare and sport, she presided over the significant expansion of Jamaica's Overseas Work Program and under her watch, the National Insurance Scheme was transformed into a major component of the government's social protection system.

ca invests in the next 50 years of diplomatic relations. This will serve as a firm foundation upon which to mount a stronger, more sustainable framework of cultural, economic, scientific and technical cooperation, trade, and people-to-people ex-

changes over the many years to come.

On behalf of the Embassy of Jamaica in Tokyo, I take this opportunity to wish for our two countries many years to come of increased collaboration and friendship.

Heartiest Welcome

to the Most Honourable
Portia Simpson Miller,
Prime Minister of Jamaica,
on the Special Occasion of
Her Official Working Visit to Japan

Association of Japanese Importers of Jamaican Coffee

Ataka Trading Co., Ltd.
Kanematsu Corporation
MC FOODS LIMITED
UCC Ueshima Coffee Co., Ltd.
Wataru & Co., Ltd.
Yutaka Trading Co., Ltd.

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Tatsushi Ueshima

Honorary Consul of Jamaica in Kobe
and
Chairman
UCC Holdings Co., Ltd.



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