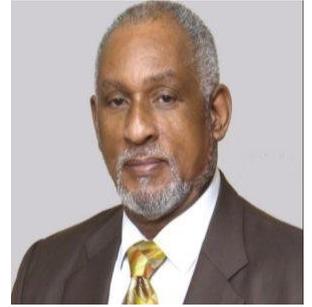


Message – CIVIL SERVICE WEEK 2017



It is a privilege and an honour to extend greetings on the occasion of this year's Civil Service Week being observed from 19th to 24th November, 2017. The week of activities is an opportunity for us to highlight the achievements of the Civil Service, as well as reflect on our past and chart a course for the future. That future offers us numerous opportunities to 'refocus' our institutions, towards the task of nation-building.

Civil servants are persons of a certain 'ilk'; persons with a special calling - humble, hardworking and dedicated individuals, who recognise that service above self is an essential undertaking. We understand that success is about making a positive impact on people's lives. To the officer in the overseas employment program at the Ministry of Labour who observes the farmer who has participated in the program over many years, being able to provide a better home for his family and a better education for his children; to the workers in the health sector and the education sector whose dedication to duty sees them showing up for work each day in some very volatile communities and offering quality service to citizens; to the Foreign Service Officer, attending conferences at the United Nations and other international fora, and representing and advancing the cause of small island developing states, this nation owes you a debt of gratitude. The journey has been long, but there is as yet, a little further to go. Stay focussed, stay positive and strive always to make your best a little better.

There is more work to be done in improving the quality of public services, as the public sector operates in a dynamic environment and requires a bureaucracy that is responsive and constantly re-engineering. The most recent Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies indicates that the government will focus on public sector transformation and modernisation over the next 2 – 3 years. This is directly in alignment with the government's thrust for 5% economic growth in four years, and public servants, as nation-builders, are required to support '5 in 4'. The public sector is being called upon to implement policies that create sustainable economic growth and support a safer society, as well as improvements in the social infrastructure.

As a young Management Studies graduate of the University of the West Indies in the 1970s I wanted to be part of something that was bigger than myself, I wanted to serve my country, I wanted to be part of the mainstream developing policies that contribute to growth and development whilst protecting the vulnerable. I have learnt over these many years that success is about making a positive impact on people's lives and there is only one place where this can be done holistically, and that is the Public Sector. My vision for the public sector is that it again becomes the employer of choice in support of the vision of Jamaica as the place of choice to 'live, work, raise families and do business'.

The leadership and staff of the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service need to be commended as they have led the charge in ensuring that the potential benefits of the IMF Stand-by Precautionary Agreement are achievable and sustainable. The foundation has already been laid, and progress must now be markedly accelerated.

The challenges we face are many, but I exhort public servants to remain committed and to deliver quality service to the public, to continue to serve our country and people, putting service above self. It is this commitment to public service that is being honoured during this week of activities.

I sincerely thank all those involved in the planning and execution of Civil Service Week. I encourage all Public Servants to participate fully in the week of activities, and commend all those being recognized at the Long Service Awards Ceremony.

Douglas Saunders

Cabinet Secretary

and

Head of the Public Service