



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FOREIGN TRADE

2 Port Royal Street, Kingston, Jamaica, W.I.

PRESS RELEASE

JOHNSON SMITH LEADS JAMAICA'S DELEGATION AT SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL FOR FOREIGN AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS AHEAD OF 44TH MEETING OF CARICOM HEADS OF GOVERNMENT IN THE BAHAMAS

(MFA&FT: February 15, 2023)

Senator the Honourable Kamina Johnson Smith, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade is leading Jamaica's delegation to the 17th Special Meeting of the CARICOM's Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR) today, February 15 in the Bahamas, ahead of the 44th Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the CARICOM in Nassau.

Johnson Smith said, "It is important for Jamaica to be represented at this special meeting of the region's Foreign Ministers, as the COFCOR considers regional positions, including on candidatures, which will feature highly on the agenda."

The Minister further stated that, "COFCOR Ministers will also participate in a CARICOM-US Strategic Dialogue with Mr. Brian Nichols, Assistant Secretary of State in the US State Department and President and Chair of the U.S. Export-Import Bank, Reta Jo Lewis."

Johnson Smith will remain in the Bahamas as a member of the Prime Minister's delegation to the Conference of Heads of Government, as well as several other important engagements. "As part of Prime Minister Holness' delegation, I am delighted to accompany him to a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, where it is expected that

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discussions will be held on the situation in Haiti, as well as building on the Canada-CARICOM partnership.”

“I will also participate in the bilateral talks between Prime Minister Holness and the Director-General of World Trade Organization (WTO), Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, as well as with the President and Chairman, African Export–Import Bank (Afreximbank), Prof. Benedict Okey Oramah, for discussions on strengthening Africa-Caribbean relations and access to funding opportunities. The Foreign Minister shared, “Prime Minister Holness and I will also engage with U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, John Kerry on relevant matters including renewable energy.”

In addition to those engagements, Minister Johnson Smith will also hold bilateral talks with the Director-General of the Department of Latin American and Caribbean Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, Mr. Cai Wei, and U.S. Special Presidential Advisor for the Americas, Chris Dodd.

Minister Johnson Smith and Prime Minister Holness are scheduled to engage with members of the Jamaican diaspora, hosted by the Honorary Consul of Jamaica in Nassau, Mrs. Doneth Cartwright.

The 44th Regular Meeting of the Heads of Government of CARICOM will be particularly significant for the matters of current interest it is expected to address. COFCOR serves as the deliberative body of Foreign Ministers of the Community to consider issues relevant to the foreign policy of the region.