

Jamaica



Burchell Whiteman

Minister of Education, Youth & Culture

Mr. Whiteman holds a B.A from London - University College of the West Indies, and a M.Ed. from the Birmingham University. After 30 years as teacher and Principal he was elected Member of the Jamaican Parliament (1989 –1997), appointed Member of the Jamaican Senate (1998 – present), and Minister of Education and Culture (1992-present). Mr. Whiteman is Chairman of the Human Resource Council of Jamaican Cabinet, and holder of the Order of the Southern Cross of Brazil for services to Education in the Region. He has been a consistent voice in the Caribbean for the promotion of Caribbean culture and of the values and relationships which have created relatively harmonious societies in the region. He believes that development and promotion of cultural products, the reinforcement of cultural identity and

the celebration of multi-ethnic coexistence are significant contributors to the process of learning to live together.

Linking internationally in education

Jamaica welcomes the current focus being given to international dialogue on education for living together. It indicates a recognition that each country and region has some contribution to make to the rest of the global community on issues such as this, and that this pillar of education is critical to the establishment of a sustainable social order.

We in Jamaica have recognised the need for new approaches to development planning. Education is clearly the structure through which most of the social and economic objectives of the society will be met. However, to ensure that the education sector is facilitated to achieve the desired output, we have adopted an integrated, transdisciplinary, inter-sectoral planning and policy development process. We have also sought to engage civil society as fully as possible in creating both the national vision and 2,0 the development path. Both are also vital determinants of resource allocation.

In an era of increasing international alliances, there is an ever growing demand on our citizens to increase their knowledge and appreciation of other societies and cultures while being reassured about the value and viability of their own. Respect therefore for self and others at the personal, community and national levels becomes more than a desirable ideal. It is a necessary principle for survival and for ensuring the release of the creative imagination and the productive energies of our people.

We believe very strongly in the cultural underpinnings of all aspects of education and training. We also recognise the central importance of early education and the role of the public and private communications media in shaping behaviours. We look forward therefore to sharing perspectives on how these and other elements can be woven into the fabric of development as we educate for living together in a complex world. ✍