



Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller, has hailed the roles played by the early pioneers, who stood for human freedom, and who ensured the end of the slave trade, leading to Emancipation and paving the way for independence.

“These and other significant heritage milestones provide us with an opportunity to understand the link between colonisation and liberation struggles. It is a fact that there would have been no political independence in Jamaica, without Emancipation,” the Prime Minister said.

Mrs. Simpson Miller was addressing the 2012 National Emancipation Jubilee, held early on August 1, 2012, at the Seville Heritage Park, in St. Ann.

“(There could be) no embracing of black consciousness without the unrelenting advocacy of Marcus Mosiah Garvey, and no indigenous knowledge system and intellectual knowledge tradition without freedom. Today we are armed with the knowledge that we now have about the role of our ancestors in the shaping of our present. We have to ensure that we carry on that liberation project. We must actualise our Emancipation; we are still a ‘nation on a mission’,” she told the audience.



Mrs. Simpson Miller told the large crowd, which had gathered at Seville Park from late evening on Tuesday (July 31), that freedom must be used to fix short-comings in the society. In highlighting Jamaica’s role in the struggle against the former apartheid regime in South Africa, she stated that Jamaica is opposed to injustice wherever it exists, and has always made its position known in international fora.

“We have to acknowledge our uncomfortable truths, and find solutions to them. Our involvement in that struggle (apartheid) is testament of our role as a nation in the global

agitation for freedom. Not only are we intolerant of oppression at home, we are also intolerant of oppression abroad. So many anti-slavery activists showed us the importance of standing up, standing tall and standing strong again, and again. It was that journey which took us eventually to sweet Emancipation and glorious freedom, and onward to Independence," she said, while paying homage to the many Jamaican advocates for freedom.

She emphasised that Jamaica's journey still has a mission to attain freedom in all its forms - economic, social, political and cultural well-being - that all citizens must enjoy. She encouraged persons to show their appreciation for Emancipation by participating in community efforts and show respect to each other, and "to take hold of the possibilities that came with Emancipation."

"Full free is ours to attain, a 'nation on a mission.' Emancipation led us into Independence, so let us reflect on the road we have travelled and rise to meet the challenges of the future. We must take with us the best of our past, the strengths and convictions of the present, in order to achieve the promise of the future," the Prime Minister said.