



Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller says Jamaica has made significant progress globally and locally in its 50 years of Independence and the country is now “the toast of the world”.

Addressing a joint sitting of the Houses of Parliament today (August 2) to commemorate Jamaica’s 50th anniversary of independence, the Prime Minister said the country boasts “a mature parliamentary system” with institutions important for preservation of our democracy and which have been the product of bi-partisan parliamentary approach. “In fifty years, Jamaica has held steadfast to the rule of law, the principles of constitutional democracy, fundamental rights and freedoms and a growing consensus that we, in this House, are servants of the people,” the Prime Minister said.

Among other areas mentioned by the Prime Minister in which Jamaica has made progress included health care delivery; comparable world standards for infant mortality and life expectancy; far-reaching social legislation and reforms impacting the poor, as well as Jamaica entering the mainstream of technology and significant improvements to the country’s infrastructure and expanded access to better education at all levels.

The Prime Minister said that as a nation, Jamaica has developed an enviable reputation as a leader of international peace, security, human rights and world affairs.

Acknowledging there is still some way to go to fulfill all the hopes and expectations of Independence, the Prime Minister called on Jamaicans to use the occasion of this 50th anniversary to lay the foundation for the kind of Jamaica we want to see in the next fifty years, which according to the Prime Minister must be the accomplishing of independence in all its forms – economic, social, political and cultural.

The special joint sitting also welcomed visiting Head of State His Excellency, Dr. Goodluck Jonathon, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Mrs Patience Jonathon and delegation who arrived in the island earlier today on a two day State Visit.

Communications Unit-OPM