

President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, says there are many opportunities for co-operation between Jamaica and his country, particularly in the areas of trade and investment.

He said it is important that both countries take advantage of these opportunities in an effort to strengthen their ties.

“There is ample scope for even greater and more functional co-operation between the two countries. The opportunities for increased trade and investments are immense,” the President said.

Dr. Jonathan was addressing a special joint meeting of the Houses of Parliament, in commemoration of Jamaica's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence, on August 2.

The President and his wife, Dame Patience, arrived in the island on August 2 for a two-day State visit to mark Jamaica's Jubilee celebrations.

The special meeting was attended by Governor-General, His Excellency the Most Hon. Sir Patrick Allen; Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller; Leader of the Opposition, Andrew Holness; Former Governor-General, His Excellency the Most Hon. Sir Howard Cooke; Former Prime Minister, the Most Hon. P.J. Patterson; Ministers of Government; Members of Parliament and Senators who have served since 1962; and members of the diplomatic corps.

President Jonathan said Jamaica and Nigeria have shared a history of co-operation over the years, and noted that Jamaica was one of the first countries that Nigeria sent its first set of technical aide volunteers to, in 1989. The two countries also signed a cultural agreement in 1991, which provided the exchange of information on culture and arts, the President pointed out.

“There is a unifying vision that Jamaica and Nigeria share. I recall, very vividly, Jamaica's

effective participation in the Second World Black African Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC), held in Lagos in 1977,” he said.

He noted that the Centre for Black and African Civilisation has since been established to consolidate the achievements of FESTAC ‘77.

The President said he will be holding discussions with the Prime Minister to formulate “ways and means for developing an interaction between the Centre and similar structures in Jamaica, to further improve our technical co-operation in cultural matters.”

He also recognised the role both Jamaica and Nigeria, in collaboration with other countries, have played in the quest for a new world order that is more equitable and just.

The President said the two countries have continued these efforts over the decades, especially within the United Nations, the G77, the Commonwealth and the Movement of Non-aligned Countries, and in other multi-lateral bodies.

“We have made a difference. We must continue to press ahead with such collaborations at the multi-lateral level. Jamaica and Nigeria must continue to work together to strengthen our relationship and to help transform our societies and the world,” he said.

put together frameworks for action to support needed collaborations in vital areas of economic growth and development. “We must also work together to secure and guarantee human, civil and other basic rights that support nation building,” he emphasised.