



Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller, has reaffirmed Jamaica's commitment to strengthening local and national programmes to eliminate violence against women and children.

Speaking today (Sep. 27) at the United Nations (UN) 67th General Assembly in New York, Mrs. Simpson Miller called on the international community to take bold actions to address this scourge.

"Issues that affect women and children must be central to decision-making processes. We look forward to continued collaboration with UN Women and the international community to help break this cycle of exploitation and insecurity," Mrs. Simpson Miller said.

She added that too many mothers have to face tough choices to meet their basic needs, while too many children are subjected to violence and abuse.

"Children, especially girls, are being used as pawns for economic gain, including through human trafficking and other exploitative actions. Human trafficking is a dastardly threat to the welfare of our women, girls and boys," Mrs. Simpson Miller said.

She further noted that many vulnerable young women are deceived and lured away by attractive offers to get them and their families out of poverty, while adding that they "then find themselves in a strange land, with no support, no identity and no hope of returning home; sold into modern day slavery, and their bodies used as a currency of exchange."

"It is disgraceful that at this juncture of world history, we should see the emergence of a form of modern-day slavery, which renders women, girls and boys to be traded as chattel," the Prime Minister said.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Simpson Miller noted that Jamaica is cognisant of the considerable investment that the U N and the international community have made in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

She said this support has allowed developing countries, including Jamaica, to make a difference in the lives of those affected.

“Nevertheless, inadequate human and financial resources constrain our ability to scale-up testing and treatment, as well as to implement programmes to increase awareness and reduce the risk of new infections. The developing world and lower income populations are hardest hit by the impact of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs),” Mrs Simpson Miller said.

She further stated that the high social and developmental costs of NCDs demand concerted policy actions at the national and international levels, while noting that countries must implement the outcomes of the High-Level Meeting on NCDs held last year.