

The Hon. Natalie Neita Headley, Minister without Portfolio, with responsibility for Sport in the Office of the Prime Minister, has congratulated Ms. Sheckema Cunningham on her outstanding achievement of a gold medal in martial arts. Ms Cunningham participated in the micro-weight division at the Dutch Open in Eindhoven, the Netherlands on Sunday, January 20.

“Ms. Cunningham has made Jamaica proud with her exceptional performance at the Dutch Open. I wish to commend her and the rest of the team who worked long and hard to prepare for this event. This rising star has once again placed Jamaica in the spotlight and we are very happy to share in this glorious moment with her,” Minister Neita Headley said.

“This outstanding young woman has once again made history for our country by stamping her name in the martial arts record books with her incredible golden performance. She is a true inspiration and reminds all of us that with hard work and determination, anything is possible,” she said.

Ms Cunningham was capturing her first European championship gold medal and becomes the only non-European and only black female participant in the 750 strong line-up of competitors to have achieved this feat – this after she defeated her Italian opponent in a close semi-final match and going on to defeat Poland in the final. In 2011, Ms. Cunningham made history when along with Alrick Wanliss they won bronze at the International Tae Kwon do Federation World Championships in New Zealand.

Along with Ms Cunningham, the other Jamaicans competing for the first time at the event are Tashauna Grannum and Adrian Moore. Jason McKay accompanied them as their coach.