

Newly appointed Contractor General, Dirk Harrison, is imploring all stakeholders to assist his office in a renewed fight against corruption.

“It cannot be business as usual. We cannot keep ‘passing the buck’...waiting for the next generation or the next person to solve or begin to seriously tackle the ills of today. We must be prepared to do whatever it takes, for however long it takes, to continue, renew, reshape our strategy in our fight against the abominable crime called corruption,” he said.

Mr. Harrison was speaking after being sworn in as the country’s fifth Contractor General, by Governor-General, His Excellency the Most Hon. Sir Patrick Allen, at King’s House, on February 25.

The new Contractor General urged stakeholders to share information “in the united fight against corruption and maintaining law and order”.

“If we intend to make a difference, collectively, we must work together as we develop strategies and guidelines to fight crime,” he said.

Mr. Harrison said he recognizes that the task is even more difficult, as “the apparently corrupt seem to have become more brazen, technologically savvy and determined to take the fight to law enforcement.”

“I therefore invite my countrymen to tell us what you know and we will take the fight to the corrupt. We will protect the whistleblowers and report wrongdoing in the confines of observing fairness, the laws of natural justice and seek to make Jamaica a better place to live, work and play,” he said.

The Contractor General further called on the legislators to draft the appropriate laws to allow the sharing of information between state agencies.

Prior to his appointment, which becomes effective on March 1, Mr. Harrison served as Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions. He succeeds Mr. Greg Christie, whose tenure ended on December 1, 2012. Mr. Craig Beresford has been acting as Contractor General since that time.

A graduate of the Norman Manley Law School, Mr. Harrison has more than 12 years experience as a prosecutor on a wide range of criminal matters in Jamaica's courts, including the Court of Appeal. In his previous post, he served as Head of the Anti-Corruption Unit, as well as of the Coroners Unit and the Environmental Law Unit.

Mr. Harrison's expertise has been recognised internationally. He participated in the United Nations review of Jamaica's anti-corruption laws and practices and is a member of a UN-selected team for evaluation and review of countries' implementation of the UN Convention Against Corruption. He has also represented Jamaica at several international conferences against corruption.

Established as an independent Commission in 1983, the Office of the Contractor General is responsible for the monitoring and investigation of government contracts, licences and permits, to ensure that they are awarded impartially and on merit.