

Minister with responsibility for Information, Senator the Hon. Sandra Falconer, says Jamaica has made significant progress towards the full empowerment of women since independence.

“We have elected a female Prime Minister, which means that we have broken the glass ceiling at the highest level of political leadership,” she said, noting that several key positions in the public service, such as Chief Justice, Auditor General, and Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), are held by women.

Ms. Falconer, who was addressing an International Women’s Day (IWD) function held on Friday (March 8), at the Wyndham Kingston hotel, said 56 per cent of Permanent Secretaries, and 28.6 per cent of mayors across the country are of the female gender.

She noted further that the last General Elections held in December 2011, saw women contesting seats in more than 35 per cent of all constituencies, for the first time in Jamaica’s history.

Ms. Falconer, however, pointed to the need for greater representation of women in the Houses of Parliament, noting that only 25 per cent of the Senate and 12.7 per cent of seats in the Lower House, are occupied by females.

The Information Minister commended the women of Jamaica for rising against the odds and contributing to the country’s economic development.

She noted that women continue, in creative and sustainable ways, to raise children, the nation’s most important resource, while at the same time, adding value to the economy as workers and leaders.

Ms. Falconer stated that as the journey towards full empowerment continues, the Government remains steadfast in creating the environment that enables women and girls to achieve their fullest potential as participants in Jamaica’s social, cultural and economic development.

By Chris Patterson, JIS Reporter.