

The Integrity Commission's Leadership Code of Conduct Document

Greg Christie

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Dear Mr. Campbell:

I greet you well.

I write with reference to our telephone discussions of yesterday, and your inquiries about the Integrity Commission's Media Release of November 16, 2022, regarding the Leadership Commitment Code of Conduct Document that was conveyed by it, on November 15, 2022, to the Most Hon. Prime Minister, Mr. Andrew Holness, MP, and the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Mark Golding, MP.

As was indicated in its Media Release, the Commission's requisition is grounded primarily in Section 6 (1)(g) of the Integrity Commission Act, 2017, which provides as follows:

"Subject to the provisions of this Act, the functions of the Commission shall be to -

(g) prepare codes of conduct and other advisory material relating to corruption and guide public bodies in respect of matters within the purview of this Act.

Given its statutory functions and mandates, and as was indicated in its Media Release, the Commission, during 2020-2022, embarked upon the formal delivery of a comprehensive Good Governance and Anti-Corruption Workshop Series for which members of both the Cabinet and the Shadow Cabinet have been beneficiaries.

The programme has since been rolled out to several Public Bodies and Officers across Jamaica's Public Sector, and is presently ongoing, virtually on a daily basis.

The **Seven Principles of Public Life**, as laid out in the Commission's Leadership Commitment Code of Conduct Document, are long-standing Principles that have been adopted in several countries as underpinning conduct in public life. In Jamaica, they warrant reaffirmation.

The Principles, which have been fully agreed to and endorsed by the Commissioners of the Integrity Commission, were first advanced in the United Kingdom in 1995. They are documented in the First Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life in the House of Commons (the "Nolan Committee").

Subsequent to the issue of the Report of the Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life, Jamaica, on April 29th 2002, through the then Prime Minister, the Right Hon. P.J. Patterson, advanced 'Ministry Paper No.19/2002 - Conduct of Ministers' which was *"...informed by the Code applicable to Members of the Government of the United Kingdom, and, in particular, the Recommendations of a Committee headed by Lord Nolan..."*.

The Right Hon. Mr. P.J. Patterson, in the Ministry Paper, which was brought before the Jamaica Parliament, expressly stated that "it is anticipated that this Code of Conduct will contribute to enhancing the quality of governance in Jamaica."

The Commission, acting in furtherance of its statutory mandates, and recognizing the importance of establishing appropriate Principles and Codes of Conduct of integrity and good governance to guide those who discharge public functions in Jamaica, has, therefore, formally invited Jamaica's Prime Minister and Opposition Leader to officially sign, subscribe and commit to the referenced Principles in the fulfilment of their roles in public life.

However, while there is no legal requirement placed upon either or any official to commit to the Code of Conduct, their formal subscription to the stated Principles will obviously be a clear demonstration to the People of Jamaica of the standards of integrity, governance and accountability that they are prepared to submit themselves to as holders of the highest public offices in Jamaica.

Likewise, and conversely, a failure to formally commit to the Code would also signal to Jamaicans, the type of leadership that they should not expect from the country's highest public office holders.

I am to respectfully advise, therefore, that the only consequence that the Commissioners of the Integrity Commission would expect from their overture, and quite rightly so, is conformity by our country's leaders with the **Seven Principles of Public Life**.

Respectfully,

Greg Christie
Executive Director
Integrity Commission