



Any reply or subsequent reference to this communication should be addressed to the **Contractor-General** and the following reference quoted:-

No. :

TELEPHONE No.:876-929-8560/6466

FAX No. : 876-929-2476

E-mail: communications@ocg.gov.jm

OFFICE OF THE CONTRACTOR-GENERAL

PIOJ Building

16 Oxford Road

P.O. BOX 540

KINGSTON 5

JAMAICA, W.I

MEDIA RELEASE

Contractor General Initiates Discussions with Prime Minister About Perception of Corruption in Jamaica and OCG's Remedial Recommendations

Kingston; October 31, 2011 – Contractor General, Greg Christie, has, today, written to the newly appointed Prime Minister, the Hon. Andrew Holness, to confirm his preparedness to meet with him to discuss, among other things, the Office of the Contractor General's (OCG's) concerns about the pervasive perception of corruption in public contracting in Jamaica and the several recommendations that the OCG has formally advanced to remedy the problem which have, to date, been ignored.

The Contractor General had initially written to the Prime Minister on Monday, October 24, 2011, the Prime Minister's first day in office, to congratulate him upon his appointment into office and to advise him that he, the Contractor General, stood "ready to discuss with you, at your earliest convenience, the hopes of my Commission".

The Prime Minister subsequently responded to the Contractor General by way of letter that was dated October 27, 2011, to advise that he was presently reviewing the Government's "policies and procedures in respect of procurement and divestment", and that once he had completed his review, he would be willing to meet "to discuss this subject area of interest".

In his response to the Prime Minister, which was communicated by way of letter that was dated today, October 31, the Contractor General welcomed the Prime Minister's undertaking, particularly in light of the public commitments that he has already given to tackle corruption in Jamaica, to ensure public transparency in the decisions of Government, and to be open with the Jamaican People.

In preparation for the proposed meeting, the Contractor General took the liberty of sending to the Prime Minister, copies of two (2) of his most recent public Presentations.

They are entitled: '**The Need for Political Will and Effective Law Enforcement in the Fight Against Corruption in Regional Jurisdictions – Jamaica Case Study: Proposal for a Single Independent National Anti-Corruption Agency**', and '**The Fight to Secure Integrity, Transparency and Accountability in the Award of Government Contracts in Jamaica**'.



The first Presentation examines, among other things, the problem of corruption generally, why and how it must be relentlessly fought, the failings of Jamaica's present anti-corruption institutional system, and the reasons why the OCG is of the considered view that the Government's proposal, for the establishment of an **Office of the Special Prosecutor**, as presently conceptualized, is not one which will effectively or efficiently resolve Jamaica's challenging corruption problems.

The first Presentation also seeks to substantiate and renew the proposal which was made by the OCG to former Prime Minister Bruce Golding, the Leader of the Opposition, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate, from as early as March 22, 2010, for the establishment of a Single National Independent Anti-Corruption Agency for Jamaica, merging the Parliamentary Integrity Commission, the Corruption Prevention Commission and the OCG, and vesting in same, full criminal investigation, arrest and prosecutorial jurisdictional powers over all corruption related matters.

The second Presentation, among other things, itemizes, in summary form, twenty-six (26) of the remedial Recommendations that have been formally submitted by the OCG, to the Executive and Legislative arms of the State (a) to significantly enhance transparency, competition, accountability and probity in public contracting in Jamaica, (b) to ensure compliance with the Government's Procurement Procedures and Guidelines, (c) to eliminate waste and inefficiency in the award and implementation of contracts, (d) to prevent fraud and corruption in Government contracting, (e) to strengthen the independence of the OCG, and (f) to generally win the battle against corruption in Jamaica.

However, to date, none of the Recommendations has been implemented by the State.

The Contractor General's letter, a full transcript of which is attached hereto, was copied to the Leader of the Opposition, the Cabinet Secretary and the Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister.

-END-

Contact: The Communications Department, Office of the Contractor General of Jamaica
C/o Craig Beresford, Senior Director of Monitoring Operations, Corporate Communications and Special Projects
E-mail: communications@ocg.gov.jm. Tel: 876-929-8560; Direct: 876-926-0034; Mobile: 876-564-1806



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OFFICE OF THE CONTRACTOR-GENERAL
PIOJ BUILDING, 16 OXFORD ROAD
P.O. BOX 540
KINGSTON 5
JAMAICA, W.I.

No. :

TELEPHONE No. : 876-929-8560/6466
FAX No. : 876-929-2476
E-mail: gchristie@ocg.gov.jm

October 31, 2011

The Hon. Andrew Holness, MP
Prime Minister of Jamaica
Office of the Prime Minister
1 Devon Road
Kingston 10

Dear Prime Minister:

Re: Proposed Meeting to Discuss Concerns and Matters of Interest Regarding Public Contracting in Jamaica

I am privileged to write to you to acknowledge my receipt of your letter of the 27th instant that was written in response to mine of the 24th instant. You have advised that so soon as you have reviewed “some of the policies and procedures in respect of public procurement and divestment”, you “would wish to meet with (me) to discuss this subject area of interest”.

In my letter of the 24th instant, I had indicated that “I stand ready to discuss with you, at your earliest convenience, the hopes of my Commission, as it seeks to diligently, faithfully and dispassionately discharge its statutory mandates to ensure impartiality, merit and the lack of irregularity and impropriety in the award and implementation of Government of Jamaica contracts and licences, inclusive of the divestment of State-owned assets, by the Executive arm of the State which you now lead.”

Among the concerns of the Office of the Contractor General (OCG), which I would like to place on the record for your attention, is the pervasive perception of corruption in public contracting in Jamaica, and the several recommendations that have been formally advanced, by the OCG, in an effort (a) to significantly enhance transparency, competition, accountability and probity in public contracting in Jamaica, (b) to ensure compliance with the Government’s Procurement Procedures and Guidelines, (c) to eliminate waste and inefficiency in the award and implementation of contracts, (d) to prevent fraud and corruption in Government contracting, (e) to strengthen the independence of the OCG, and (f) to generally win the battle against corruption in Jamaica.

Although most of the referenced Recommendations have been repeatedly made, no action has, to date, been forthcoming from either the Government, or the Legislature, to implement any of them.

In the premises, your expressed willingness to meet with me is welcomed, particularly against the background of the public commitments that you have recently made to tackle corruption in Jamaica, to ensure public transparency of the decisions of your Government, and to be open with the Jamaican People.

To assist you in your deliberations prior to our meeting, and to ensure that you are fully and formally apprised of the concerns and Recommendations of the OCG, I have taken the liberty of enclosing, herewith, for your ease of reference and guidance, a copy of the following germane documents:



- (1) Presentation entitled ‘**The Need for Political Will and Effective Law Enforcement in the Fight Against Corruption in Regional Jurisdictions – Jamaica Case Study: Proposal for a Single Independent National Anti-Corruption Agency**’, delivered by me at the First Regional Law Enforcement Anti-Corruption Conference, on March 23, 2011, at the Pegasus Hotel, Kingston.
- (2) Lecture entitled ‘**The Fight to Secure Integrity, Transparency and Accountability in the Award of Government Contracts in Jamaica**’, delivered by me as the Seventh Annual Lecture in The Caribbean International Network (CIN) Lecture Series, on October 26, 2011, at The Schomburg Center, New York City, New York.

The first Presentation examines, among other things, the problem of corruption generally, why and how it must be relentlessly fought, the failings of Jamaica’s present anti-corruption institutional system, and the reasons why the OCG is of the considered view that the Government’s proposal, for the establishment of an **Office of the Special Prosecutor**, as presently conceptualized, is not one which will effectively or efficiently resolve Jamaica’s challenging corruption problems.

Most importantly, however, the Presentation goes further to substantiate and to renew the proposal which was made by the OCG to former Prime Minister Bruce Golding, the Leader of the Opposition, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate, from as early as March 22, 2010, for the establishment of a Single National Independent Anti-Corruption Agency for Jamaica, merging the Parliamentary Integrity Commission, the Corruption Prevention Commission and the OCG, and vesting in same, full criminal investigation, arrest and prosecutorial jurisdictional powers over all corruption related matters. The OCG’s considered positions, in the foregoing regard, are fully supported by the National Integrity Action Forum (NIAF).

The second Presentation, among other things, has itemized, in summary form, twenty-six (26) of the above-referenced Recommendations that have been formally submitted by the OCG, under my watch, to the Executive and Legislative arms of the State, over the past few years. These are the said Recommendations, amongst others, in respect of which no remedial action has so far been forthcoming from the State.

In light of the issues which I have outlined herein, I have copied my letter to you, inclusive of its enclosures, to the Leader of the Opposition, the Cabinet Secretary and the Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to you the assurance of my highest considerations.

Very respectfully,

Greg Christie (Signed)

Greg Christie
Contractor General

Copy: The Most Hon. Portia Simpson-Miller, MP, ON, Leader of the Opposition
Ambassador the Hon. Douglas Saunders, CD, OJ, Cabinet Secretary
Ms. Onika Miller, Permanent Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister

Enclosures