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MEDIA RELEASE

OCG CAUTIOUSLY WELCOMES THE IMPROVEMENT IN JAMAICA'S TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL'S 2012 CPI STANDING BUT ASSERTS THAT THERE IS MUCH MORE TO BE DESIRED

Kingston; December 5, 2012; The Office of the Contractor General (OCG) has taken note of Transparency International's (TI), the global anti-corruption watchdog, recent publication of its 2012 Corruption Perception Index (CPI), in which it ranked Jamaica at 83 of 176 countries with a score of 38, where, on a scale of 0-100, 0 means that a country is perceived as highly corrupt and 100 means that a country is perceived to be 'clean'. Previously, Jamaica ranked 86 out of 182 countries in 2011, with a CPI score of 3.3 of 10.

The OCG cautiously welcomes Jamaica's marginal improvement, however, warns that though this may be indicative of a step in the right direction, it is of critical importance that the Government of Jamaica (GOJ), Jamaica's Anti-corruption Institutions and other key stakeholders remain cognizant of the fact that Jamaica is still a far distance from what can be deemed as satisfactory and acceptable, as the perception of corruption remains rife, and continues to threaten the stability and effectiveness of the country's good-governance structures.

As we acknowledge Jamaica's improvement, due regard must be given to the upward trend of many of our Caribbean counterparts, specifically, the advancement of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, which has increased its CPI score from 3.2 of 10 in 2011 to 39 of 100 this year, surpassing Jamaica's performance. The anti-corruption effort of the twin-island Republic, Barbados and St. Lucia, amongst others, must be commended and ought to stand as an example for Jamaica in its own anti-corruption efforts.



“The opportunity must not be wasted to again urge the Government of Jamaica to measure its talk of addressing corruption in Jamaica with robust definitive action. Successive Administrations have over the years made numerous promises and commitments of addressing the scourge of corruption to the People of Jamaica, which has disappointingly remained as such – mere promises. I implore the Government and the Parliament of Jamaica to make the fight against corruption a priority in its decision making processes even as it seeks to advance the nation’s developmental goals”, said Acting Contractor General, Craig Beresford.

The OCG is also obliged to again use this opportunity to make reference to its many remedial recommendations which have been proffered to the Parliament of Jamaica and directed to the specific attention of Prime Ministers, on several occasions, as recent as January of this year, which have been crafted to, amongst other things, (a) mitigate against the possibility of the recurrence of the deviations and weaknesses which were identified, (b) enhance transparency, accountability and probity in public contracting and licensing in Jamaica, (c) ensure compliance with the Government’s Procurement Procedures and Guidelines, (d) eliminate waste and inefficiency in the award and implementation of Government contracts, (e) prevent fraud and corruption in Government contracting, (f) strengthen and make more robust, existing systems and processes, so that they are more resilient, and (g) strengthen the independence of the OCG.

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