



# TERMS OF REFERENCE

## *for the* DIASPORA ADVISORY BOARD

**[REVISED]**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Background**

- (i) The Diaspora Advisory Board (“the Board”) was established by way of a resolution adopted at the 2004 Biennial Diaspora Conference held in Kingston. The Board is an advisory body to the Minister with responsibility for Diaspora Affairs within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT) (hereafter referred to as “the Minister”). While the Board represents an important bridge between the Government and Jamaican Diaspora Communities, it is not the sole tool or method of engagement. It is important to note that the Board is not an arm of the Government of Jamaica (GOJ). Also the views of the Board Members do not necessarily represent the views of the Minister or those of the Government of Jamaica (GOJ).
- (ii) The Board will meet no less than once per quarter but additional meetings may be convened as deemed necessary. Meetings will be convened under the Chairmanship of the Minister, supported by the Diaspora Affairs Department to consider government policy priorities and issues pertinent to the overseas community and the broader Diaspora engagement process.

## 1.2. Board Membership

The Board comprises such number of individuals drawn from Canada, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA) as designated in Appendix A. The number of members from each Diaspora location or region may be increased from time to time on notification by the Minister, in accordance with the expansion of the Diaspora movement and engagement policy objectives.

Youth Leaders from the respective Diaspora locations or regions will be elected and appointed members of the Board and shall be between the ages of 18 and 35.

## 1.3. Governance Structure

- (i) The Chair of the Diaspora Advisory Board is the Minister with responsibility for Diaspora Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT). The Minister may designate a representative of the Ministry to chair in the event of unavoidable absence.
  
- (ii) The Diaspora Affairs Department (DAD) in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT) will be the Secretariat of the Board and be responsible for scheduling meetings and recording minutes of Board meetings.

## **2. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIASPORA ADVISORY BOARD**

**2.1** The primary role and function of members of the Diaspora Advisory Board is to advise the Minister on all issues which impact the Diaspora in the region in which they are elected.

### **2.2 Responsibilities of Board Members**

Board members are expected to:

- (i)** Interface with members of the Diaspora community, including but not limited to Community-Based Groups, Alumni Associations, and individuals in their respective regions, to obtain a clear understanding of the issues, interests and concerns within the Jamaican community overseas.
  
- (ii)** Regularly brief the representatives in the Jamaican Mission under whose jurisdiction he/she falls, and the Minister on developments within the Jamaican overseas community.
  
- (iii)** Make regular contact with the Jamaican Mission under whose jurisdiction he/she falls, to be briefed on the Government's priority areas for development.
  
- (iv)** Provide advice to the Minister in relation to the planning of Biennial Diaspora Conferences held in Jamaica.
  
- (v)** Maintain an open line of communication between all members of the Board.
  
- (vi)** Support the promotion of events being hosted by the Missions, as may be relevant to the communities within the region in which they are elected.

### **3. APPOINTMENT AND TENURE OF BOARD MEMBERS**

- (i) The Diaspora will nominate and elect, in each established Diaspora location, advisors for appointment to the Board by the Minister. Youth Leaders should also be elected. The numbers of members to be elected shall be as set out in Appendix A.
- (ii) Further to the receipt of notification of the final results of elections in each region of a Diaspora location, the Minister shall appoint the individuals who received the largest number of votes in such elections, as members of the Board.
- (iii) Individuals who receive the second highest number of votes in each election may be asked to serve as Alternate Members of the Board for the relevant regions. Alternate members are only entitled to attend meetings when they are invited so to do in the absence of the relevant member. When Alternate Members so attend, they shall count towards a quorum, but should obtain the proxy vote of the appointed member in order to vote on any matter put before the Board as failing same, an alternate member shall not have a vote.
- (iv) For the avoidance of doubt in respect of Canada where two Board Members are elected without regional distinction, the Alternate member shall be such member receiving the third highest number of votes in the relevant election.

- (v) Subject to the terms herein, each member of the Board will serve for a period of two (2) years (“a term”) and may be re-elected to serve further terms. A member may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms but thereafter shall take a hiatus equivalent to at least one term, before being eligible for re-election to the Board.

#### **4. POWERS**

- (i) Subject to 4(ii) below, members of the Board shall not establish any structure, association or entity in the name of the Diaspora Advisory Board or which is established specifically in their capacity as members of the Board.
- (ii) Members may, however, as necessary, coordinate and utilize the skills and services of others in the execution of projects, programmes and events, but shall not make mandatory membership in any body which excludes any Jamaican from participating in such projects programmes and events.

#### **5. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR BOARD MEMBERS**

- (i) Members of the Board are expected to act at all times with honesty, high integrity, in an ethical and professional manner and to promote a positive image of Jamaica.
- (ii) Members of the Board shall not disclose privileged or confidential information to unauthorized parties nor engage in activities that conflict with their obligations to the Diaspora Advisory Board. For the avoidance of doubt, such information shall include the content of Board meetings, unless otherwise advised.

**(iii)** Members are expected to display the following personal and professional characteristics:

- a)** Be honest, have personal integrity and a sense of proper values; demonstrate sensitivity to and tolerance of differing views; a friendly, responsive and patient approach to problem solving; and have an overall concern for Jamaica's development.
- b)** Ability to listen, analyse, and work well with people individually and in a group setting.
- c)** Ability to prepare for, attend, and participate in Board meetings and facilitate discussions face-to-face and through electronic means.
- d)** Take responsibility for one's actions and evaluate oneself, and follow through on agreed assignments or tasks in a timely manner.
- e)** Demonstrate a willingness to acquire skills that would be required for the duties and responsibilities of Board membership, including technological and management skills.

## **6. MEETINGS**

- i. The Diaspora Advisory Board should meet no less than once per quarter, but additional meetings may be convened as deemed necessary. The first meeting of the year may be held in Jamaica in the first quarter and the others via teleconference. Other meetings may coincide with the convening of the Biennial Diaspora Conference in Jamaica
- ii. Board members are expected to attend all scheduled Board meetings. If a Board member is unable, with good reason, to attend a meeting, the Chairman should be notified at the earliest opportunity prior to the meeting. If a member is unable to attend a meeting, the alternate member for the relevant region may be invited to attend.
- iii. Repeated absences from meetings, without explanation, will be considered dereliction of duties.
- iv. The Minister will chair the meetings. In the event of the Minister's absence the Minister may designate a representative of the Ministry to Chair in his / her stead.
- v. Agendas should be circulated at least a day prior to the commencement of a Board meeting.
- vi. The quorum shall be 75% of the membership



## **7. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Board members should avoid conflicts of interest and must disclose any conflicts or potential conflicts of interest with serving on the Diaspora Advisory Board. Conflicts of interests are to be declared in writing to the Minister:

- i) at the time of appointment; or
- ii) immediately where a conflict or potential conflict arises.

## **8. VOLUNTARY SERVICE**

Diaspora Advisory Board members serve on a voluntary basis and are therefore not compensated. Members also acknowledge and agree that due to resource limitations, costs related to travel (mileage, accommodations, and other expenses) will be the responsibility of the Member.

## **9. TERMINATION OF BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

- i. A Board Member may at any time during his / her term, resign from the position as a member of the Diaspora Advisory Board. Such resignation must be submitted in writing and will be effective on the date of receipt by the Minister or such date indicated in the letter, whichever is the earlier.
- ii. The Minister may terminate the appointment of a Board Member if he / she:
  - a) Breaches the standard of conduct set out at 5 (i) or (ii), or 7, or in any way brings the Board or the Ministry into disrepute

- b)** acts beyond the scope of or in breach of the powers set out in 4(i) and (ii) and having been notified in writing by the Minister of the improper action, fails to regularize or correct such action within the time stipulated in the notice, or
  - c)** fails repeatedly to perform his/her responsibilities of membership and having been notified in writing by the Minister of the relevant failures, does not take corrective action
  - d)** behaves repeatedly in a way which disrupts the functioning of the Board or its meetings, and having been notified of same, fails to correct such behaviour.
- iii.** In the event that a Member resigns, or is otherwise unable to continue to serve as a Member of the Board or is terminated by the Minister prior to the end of his/her term, the alternate member in respect of that region shall serve as the principal member of the Board until the next election.

## APPENDIX A

### Composition of Membership of the Diaspora Advisory Board

#### **Diaspora location: United Kingdom**

One member from each of the North and South regions.

One Youth Leader from each of the North and South regions

#### **Diaspora location: United States of America**

One member from each of the West/Mid-West, North East, and Southern Regions.

One Youth Leader from each of West/Mid-West, North East, and Southern Regions

#### **Diaspora location: Canada**

Two members

Two Youth Leaders