



# ELECTION PROCESS FOR MEMBERSHIP TO THE *GLOBAL JAMAICA DIASPORA COUNCIL*

*“Engaging, connecting and realising the power of the collective Jamaica”*

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## **PART A- INTRODUCTION**

### **1. Context**

- I. The Global Jamaica Diaspora Council will comprise elected and appointed members. The Election Process is for elected members. With the endorsement of the Draft National Diaspora Policy at the 8<sup>th</sup> Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference and its inclusion of focused priority areas for Diaspora Engagement; it is critical to ensure the election process provides a transparent, orderly, fair and systemized way to allow qualified members of the Jamaican Diaspora to offer themselves for service.
  
- II. This election process will be implemented in the three locations which contain the largest Jamaican Diaspora populations, namely: the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Canada, referred to as the established Diaspora locations. As other Jamaica Diaspora populations in other regions of the world become more organized, this document will serve as instructive resource material on conducting elections.
  
- III. It is acknowledged and agreed that references to the sitting Council in this document shall, at the inauguration of the Council, be taken to refer to the Diaspora Advisory Board existing immediately prior to the establishment of the Council.

## **PART B- ELECTIONS AND ELECTORAL COMMITTEE**

### **2. Elections**

- I. To become a member of the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council (“the Council”), a person shall be elected by the Diaspora in each established Diaspora region, and subsequently issued a letter of confirmation by the Minister with responsibility for Diaspora Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (“the Minister”).
- II. In each established Diaspora region an independent Electoral Committee shall be established to conduct elections and manage the logistics for the election of Global Jamaica Diaspora Council members.
- III. An independent body shall be commissioned by the sitting Council members in consultation with the relevant Jamaican Overseas Mission(s) to appoint the membership of the Electoral Committee.
- IV. Proposed members of the Electoral Committee should be individuals of good character, in good standing with the Diaspora communities in which the election will take place and have no convictions of any crime which may bring the electoral process into disrepute.
- V. Elections shall be conducted over a 30 day period (the “Voting Period”) and the Electoral Committee shall designate the day on which the Voting Period will commence.
- VI. The start of the referenced Voting Period in 2(V) above shall be in the same week, for all elections in the established Jamaican Diaspora locations. This week shall be decided by the sitting Council, or the Council may delegate this responsibility to the Electoral Committees who shall coordinate to select an appropriate time for elections.
- VII. The Election Process shall begin no less than sixty days prior to the expiration of the term of the sitting Council Members.

- VIII. Each regional election shall elect the corresponding number of Council Members for the respective Diaspora location from among persons having been approved by the Electoral Committee as candidates who have met the eligibility criteria outlined in section five (5).
- IX. Subject to section 2(X) below, Youth Leaders shall be elected by the Diaspora Youth and Young Adults in regional elections to sit on the Global Jamaica Diaspora Youth Council.
- X. The first cohort of Youth Leaders on the Council will be appointed by the Minister. This appointment will only occur with the inaugural cohort of Youth Leaders. .

### **3. Electoral Committee**

- I. The function of the Electoral Committee is to initiate, coordinate and manage the nomination and voting processes for the election of Council Members. (See Minimum Recommended Election Timeline.)
- II. The Electoral Committee shall develop the rules of engagement with respect to the conduct of campaigns.
- III. The Electoral Committee shall operate without bias and in a timely and efficient manner in the management of the election process.
- IV. It is recommended that the Electoral Committee has a membership of at least five (5) but no more than ten (10) persons.
- V. An Electoral Committee shall not consist of any sitting member of the Council (or for the avoidance of doubt at the inauguration of the Council, the immediately previously constituted Diaspora Advisory Board), representative or current employee of the Jamaican Government.

## **PART C – NOMINATIONS, ELIGIBLE CANDIDATES AND FINALISING THE SLATE OF CANDIDATES**

### **4. Nominations**

- I. The Electoral Committee shall publish a call for nominations no less than fifty (50) days prior to the start of the Voting Period.
- II. The Electoral Committee shall produce a form for recording and receipt of nominations (“Nominators Declaration”). The standard nomination form to be used is attached as Appendix 1.
- III. Nominations will only be accepted from members of the Jamaican Diaspora community as more particularly prescribed at (IV) below.
- IV. To successfully be nominated for candidacy to contest Council Membership elections, a person must meet the eligibility requirements outlined in Section five (5) and have accurately completed a nomination form which shall include the names, addresses, and endorsement signatures of at least twenty (20) members of the Jamaican Diaspora community resident in the region for which the election is being contested.
- V. A Nominee may withdraw his/her nomination and shall do so by notifying the Electoral Committee in writing at least two weeks prior to the start of the Voting Period.
- VI. The Electoral Committee shall verify and confirm the withdrawal of a nomination, and subsequently inform nominators and the public as soon as practicable after it has received the notice of withdrawal.
- VII. Nominations deemed ineligible shall not be approved and the nominators and nominees shall be duly notified in writing of their ineligibility by the Electoral Committee. The decision of the Electoral Committee shall be final.

## **5. Eligible Candidates**

To be eligible for nomination for election to the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council, a person shall meet the following requirements:

- I. possess experience, skills, network and influence in any of the 10 thematic areas outlined in the draft National Diaspora Policy;
- II. be a Jamaican or of Jamaican heritage<sup>1</sup>;
- III. be at least twenty-one (21) years of age;
- IV. be between the ages of eighteen (18) to thirty-five (35) years of age to be elected to the Council in the capacity of a Youth leader;
- V. has not been declared bankrupt by a court of law or other competent authority in Jamaica or any other jurisdiction;
- VI. has been registered by the established Electoral Committee to be a candidate for elections;
- VII. possess a reasonable level of demonstrated management and leadership skills or experience;
- VIII. has no disciplinary proceedings or sanctions pending or imposed by a professional or administrative body;
- IX. has a willingness to commit and has sufficient time to discharge his or her duties to the Council.
- X. be properly resident in the region in which the candidacy is sought; and
- XI. acknowledge that any false declaration of eligibility shall render the candidacy or the candidate's election, null and void

## **6. Finalising the slate of Candidates**

- I. The Electoral Committee shall notify individuals of the approval of their nominations and their consequent standing as candidates for the election.
- II. The Electoral Committee shall publish the final slate of candidates on their respective websites and those of the nearest Jamaican Overseas Missions,

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<sup>1</sup>Jamaican or Jamaica heritage refers to persons by birth, descent or by acquisition that is by naturalization, registration on the basis of marriage, being a commonwealth citizen or registration as a minor or restoration (having renounced their citizenship).

and/or through social and traditional media at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the start of the Voting Period.

- III. A candidate and his or her nominators shall be notified separately by the Electoral Committee of the candidate's ineligibility in writing citing evidence of ineligibility.

## **PART D –ELIGIBLE VOTERS, VOTER REGISTRATION AND VOTING**

### **7. Eligible Voters**

To be eligible to vote in an election for Council Membership, a person shall meet the following requirements:

- I. be at least eighteen (18) years of age;
- II. be a Jamaican or of Jamaican Heritage; and
- III. reside within the respective region for which the respective elections are being held.

### **8. Voter Registration**

- I. The Electoral Committee shall register voters using the prescribed form ("Voter Registration Form") which may be electronic or paper-based. See Appendix 4.
- II. All persons intending to vote shall register by completing the Voter Registration Form whether
  - a. through the Electoral Committee during the Campaign Period (up to 9 days prior to the start of the Voting Period) or
  - b. during any on-going registration carried out by the relevant Overseas Mission outside of a Campaign Period.
- III. The Electoral Committee shall register only eligible voters and shall cease registration 9 days prior to the start of the Voting Period.

- IV. The Electoral Committee shall produce a list of registered voters (Voters List) no later than 7 days prior to the start of the Voting Period.
- V. Only registered voters shall be allowed to vote in the Election for Global Jamaica Diaspora Council members.
- VI. The Electoral Committee shall verify that there are no duplications in voter registration.
- VII. The link to the electronic ballot on the electronic voting platform shall be sent by “email invitation” to verify registered voters from the voters list.

## **9. Voting**

- I. Votes may be cast electronically during the Voting Period.
- II. Where paper-based voting is permitted by the Electoral Committee,
  - a. paper ballots may only be cast on the first day of the Voting Period
  - b. the Electoral Committee shall designate the polling places to be used for same;
  - c. Votes may be cast from 10a.m. to 7p.m. on the said day, at the designated polling places; and
  - d. the Electoral Committee shall at the end of such voting hours tally the paper ballots, secure and report them as part of the results at the end of the Voting Period
- III. A decision to permit voting by paper ballots shall be communicated on the announcement of the Voting Period by the Electoral Committee.
- IV. Supplemental voting by paper ballot other than on the first day of the Voting Period will only be permitted due to special unforeseen circumstances and by permission of the Electoral Committee.

- V. Voting shall be by secret ballot.
- VI. Where voting by paper ballots are allowed,
- VII. The Electoral Committee shall ensure that no person votes in both electronic and paper ballot form for the same elections.
- VIII. The Electoral Committee may also establish 'walk in' electronic voting stations to increase voter access to the electronic voting platform.
- IX. All voting stations and voting equipment shall be monitored and secured at all times by one member of the Electoral Committee or a volunteer provided that the Electoral Committee agrees and so designates the Volunteer to participate in the Elections at least two weeks prior to the start of the Voting Period.
- X. Best efforts shall be made to ensure that any electronic voting platform used shall be secure and tamper proof.
- XI. The Electoral Committee shall establish a sub-committee of no less than three representatives to access and tally the votes in the presence of a person designated by each candidate. Such sub-committee shall not include any person related to or connected to a candidate or his / her campaign.
- XII. At the end of the tally process (counting), the results shall be printed and signed by all three (3) members of the sub-committee and by the designee of the candidates.
- XIII. The Electoral Committee shall send the final results by e-mail not more than one (1) day after the election to the nearest Jamaican Overseas Mission within whose jurisdiction the election falls.

**RECOMMENDED MINIMUM ELECTION PROCESS TIMELINE****Table 1.1. Outline of Recommended Minimum Timeline for Election Process**

<b>Days to Election</b>	<b>Electoral Activity</b>
<b>73</b>	Appointment (or reinstatement) of Electoral Committee
<b>59</b>	The publication of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Nominations criteria and candidate nomination period (“Call for Nominations”).</li> <li>b) Voting procedure</li> <li>c) Eligible voter requirements and official call for voter registration</li> <li>d) Voting Period</li> </ul>
<b>58</b>	Start of Candidate Nomination Period
<b>45</b>	End of Candidate Nomination Period
<b>44</b>	Start of review period for received nominations
<b>31</b>	End of review period for received nominations
<b>30</b>	Publishing of the final slate of candidate (with biographical data) <p><i>*The period between the publishing of candidates and the day prior to the start of the Voting Period is usually used by Candidates to campaign for votes among the Diaspora and for the Electoral Committee to elicit and review public comments on each candidate.</i></p>

<b>30</b>	Start of Campaign Period
<b>9</b>	Final day for Voter Registration
<b>7</b>	Publication of Voters List
<b>0</b>	Start of Voting Period

## PART E- APPENDICES

### Appendix 1

**Nominators' Declaration:**

We the undersigned electors for the established Diaspora region of .....  
 ..... do hereby nominate .....  
 as a person to serve as a member of the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council. We certify that to the best of our belief that this person is qualified for election as a member of the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council as prescribed by Section five (5) of the *Election Process for Membership to the Jamaica Global Diaspora Council*.

**NOMINATORS:**

	SURNAME	OTHER NAMES	ADDRESS	OCCUPATION	SIGNATURE
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					

## Appendix 2

### **Nominee's Consent of Nomination:**

I ..... nominated in the above Nomination Form, hereby consent to such nomination as Candidate for election as a member of the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council for the established Diaspora region of ....., and submit my name and my address for the serving of papers under the Terms of Reference for the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council and its supplemental Election Process document.

Address .....

Email address .....

Telephone Number .....

Signature of Nominee.....

### Appendix 3

#### Nominee’s Declaration/Statement of Qualification:

I ....., solemnly declare that:

(a) I am Jamaican or of Jamaican heritage by (tick the appropriate box):

i.  by birth Date of Birth \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
dd - mm - yyyy

Place of Birth (city/region) \_\_\_\_\_

ii.  by naturalization Date citizenship granted \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
dd - mm - yyyy

iii.  by other means (Provide details) .....  
.....  
.....

(b) I am qualified to be an elector.

(c) I am by virtue of Section five (5) of the *Election Process for the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council* document qualified to sit as a member of *the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council*.

(d) I acknowledge that if any of my declarations of eligibility above are false, that my candidacy and my election shall be null and void.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Nominee

Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
dd - mm - yyyy

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Witness

Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
dd - mm - yyyy

#### 1. OFFICIAL’S RECIEPT (FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

Received by: .....  
Electoral Committee Representative

..... Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
Signature dd - mm - yyyy

Time:

Receipt No:

*N.B. A copy of receipt is to be given to the Nominee*



I have reviewed the information I offered in the sections above and affirm that it is true. I also understand that if any of the information that I have provided is found to be false that my vote will be disqualified.

This information will be retained by the relevant Overseas Mission / Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica and in addition to GJDC Elections, may only be used by those entities for communication on Diaspora issues.

By affixing your name below you have confirmed your agreement with the above statement.

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Full Name

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Date