

**Senator the Hon. Dorothy Lightbourne, Q.C.,  
Attorney-General & Minister of Justice.  
Subject: Greetings to Public Forum by Community  
Consultative Committees of St. Catherine.  
Venue: Jamaica Police Academy, Twickenham Park.  
Date: 4 p.m., Sunday, June 22, 2008.**

**“From a Culture of Violence Towards a Culture of Peace:  
Citizens and Police in Partnership Against Crime”**

Warmest Greetings to the Community Consultative Committees of St. Catherine. You, in association with the Ministry of National Security and the Ministry of Justice, are to be congratulated for the continuing efforts to bring about the change that is so desperately needed in attaining the essential goal of peace.

If ever there was a transformation which this nation must make to survive, it is this one: **“From a Culture of Violence towards a Culture of Peace.”** And the most effective way of achieving it is by: **“Citizens and Police in Partnership against Crime.”**

Crime reduction and the safety of communities cannot be achieved solely by the police and the Government. Although it is the States duty to guarantee the safety and security of each citizen, all Citizens have a responsibility for the community they live in and that responsibility demands that we act together to counter crime and anti-social behavior.

There is too much violence in the streets, in the communities, in the schools and media. You, the Community Consultative Committees of St. Catherine, are striving to bring about the transformation in culture that is vital to this nation's viability by hosting this annual public forum.

Commendations to, **Reverend, the Hon. Sophia Azan, J.P.**, *Custos of St. Catherine and Chairman of the Community Consultative Committees of St. Catherine*, **Bishop Bradley S. E. Dyer, J.P.**, - *Coordinator of the Parish CCCs*, Committee Members and other volunteers, for your admirable work in transforming the culture of violence.

Peace is not something that will be achieved overnight, or next week but we -- individuals, families, communities, social agencies and the police must all work together to achieve it.

A journey of a thousand miles starts with the first step. You have taken the first step in this essential journey in trying to bring about a culture of peace in the parish. You recognize that bonding between the police and citizens -- is crucial.

Violence destroys lives, self-confidence, and hope, whether the victims are civilians or members of the security forces. The fear of violence is prohibiting and paralyzing. Jamaica was not always this violent.

***We cannot afford for it to continue this way. We must return to a path of peace and safety.***

You, the leaders and membership of the Community Consultative Committees of St. Catherine, are confronting the culture of violence by teaching more self-restraint, more self-control, and more tolerance. You see the need to be less angry, less impatient, less confrontational in our language and less aggressive in our driving. Yes we need a wider application of restorative justice, a significant concept being adopted by this administration through the Justice Reform Programme. Young people must be taught that there is a different way. We -- individuals, families and communities in every parish must build on your example.

You have achieved much, but much more is required from the citizens in whose interests you have been actively instilling the idea that we must all reject violence as being totally unacceptable in our lives. We cannot continue to ignore the human and moral costs of so much violence in the society.

The criminals are more organized than ever, more brazen, more equipped and more ruthless. The challenges and dangers facing the police have never been greater. But the solution requires a joint approach.

We, the citizens, must join the police in playing a more active role to increase and strengthen community involvement in the enforcement of law and the reduction of crime through **Neighborhood Policing** or **Community Policing**.

The goal may seem distant now but policing with the co-operation and

assistance of citizens must be integrated into every aspect of community life, for the transformation from violence to peace.

The public's expectations of safety and security, protection and reassurance from the State, have never been higher.

Pope John Paul the Sixth counsels: **"If you want peace, work for justice"**.

You the leadership of the Community Consultative Committees of St. Catherine, have begun the journey and you are undoubtedly on the right path.

END