

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR SHEILA SEALY MONTEITH  
PERMANENT SECRETARY IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FOREIGN TRADE OF JAMAICA  
IN THE WAKE OF THE EARTHQUAKE ON 30<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2023**

**PART III OF THE 28<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY  
31<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2023**

Mr President  
Secretary General  
Delegations all

1. Good morning. I appreciate the opportunity to address you in the wake of the earthquake which affected Jamaica yesterday.
2. In addition to the members of the delegation who customarily attend these meetings, I am joined this morning by Mr Robert Honeyghan, the General Manager of the Urban Development Cooperation, which manages these facilities on behalf of the Government of Jamaica.
3. I thank the Secretary-General for his statement to the Council and the assurances he has provided to you on the steps which have been taken to ensure your continued safety. I join him in echoing the interest of the Government of Jamaica in ensuring the safety of all our visitors and the resident diplomatic corps, even as we attended to the needs of our citizens.
4. I also thank the immediate response team – the Fire Brigade, the UDC, as well as the security personnel who assisted in the safe evacuation.
5. I thank the Secretary for his engagement with us since the events took place, even overnight, as we sought to ensure that all was in condition for resumption. As you heard from the Secretary-General, such was the situation, that the UN Security System did not see the need to activate any additional protocols.
6. This morning, the UDC conducted a debriefing exercise, and I am able to share its report, as follows:

**In respect of the Jamaica Conference Centre, we wish to advise that following the earthquake tremors, the Engineering team from the Urban Development Corporation, conducted an assessment of the building's integrity and have indicated that the building remains structurally sound and is safe for occupancy. Moreover, their analysis of electrical and plumbing fixtures revealed no noticeable issues. The safety and comfort of our clients and visitors to the Jamaica Conference Centre, are paramount. We, however, understand the potential emotional impact of such events and are available to provide any further assurance required. The UDC team wishes the Authority a successful and safe week of meetings.**

7. I also advise that the Prime Minister, who leads the national disaster response and emergency management of the country, the members of the Cabinet and all members of their teams are actively managing the situation. Assessments of structures were conducted over the course of

yesterday and the operations of the Government have resumed. We remain alert to aftershocks and encourage all to be aware.

8. Please be assured that every effort has been made to ensure that your meetings continue in a safe environment. I wish you all a productive engagement for the rest of your meetings.

I thank you!