



MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
& FOREIGN TRADE

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF JAMAICA'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION (IMO)

MESSAGE BY:

SENATOR THE HONOURABLE KAMINA JOHNSON SMITH, JP
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

This year marks a proud milestone for Jamaica as we commemorate the golden anniversary of our membership in the International Maritime Organization (IMO) under the theme “Jamaica and the IMO: 50 years Advancing Safe, Secure and Sustainable Shipping”. This theme both focuses our reflection on the journey that Jamaica has undertaken in partnership with the IMO, and re-affirms our enduring commitment to maritime cooperation, safety, sustainability and international law.

Since joining in 1976, Jamaica has remained steadfast in advancing these principles, while strengthening our maritime governance structures. We remain ever aware that for small-island developing states, and particularly for Jamaica, whose marine territory is almost twenty-four times its landmass, maritime affairs are not peripheral, they are existential and hold great strategic importance.

In this context we are committed to building on our maritime history of resilience, innovation and collaboration, to deliver on our aspirations as the world’s fourth logistics node.

Over the past five decades, our active participation in the IMO has ensured that our practices align with international standards, while supporting the wellbeing of our seafarers, empowering women in the sector, and enhancing port infrastructure and security. Today, we are particularly proud that over the past two decades our intensified focus on inclusion has yielded significantly greater participation of women at every level, from student cadet cohorts to leadership of maritime boards, associations, academic faculty and our defence force.

Jamaica has proudly served on and led IMO committees, earning recognition as a respected voice in global maritime affairs. We have contributed to shaping international shipping policy while navigating challenges such as climate change, maritime security threats, supply chain disruptions, and the global transition toward decarbonization. These issues are especially critical for Small Island Developing States, and we welcome the IMO's leadership in ensuring that our unique vulnerabilities are reflected in global decision-making.

This anniversary also honours the dedication of individuals and institutions who have built Jamaica's maritime sector, including the Maritime Authority of Jamaica which celebrates its 25th anniversary this year. We salute our partners, both local and international, whose support has been invaluable.

Looking ahead, Jamaica stands ready to continue working with the IMO and our partners to build a global maritime industry that is safer, greener, more inclusive, and more resilient.

Happy 50th anniversary to Jamaica at the IMO!