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# ***Vision 2030*** ***Jamaica -*** **The Role of** **Engineers**

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**ADDRESS TO JAMAICA  
INSTITUTION OF  
ENGINEERS (JIE) 2<sup>nd</sup>  
QUARTERLY  
LUNCHEON**

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**Administrative Professionals  
Week**

**April 29, 2011  
Jamaica Pegasus Hotel, Kingston**

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By  
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Vision 2030 Jamaica  
Planning Institute of Jamaica

## Salutation

- Master of Ceremonies Eng. Stephan Rampair
- Mr. Lenworth Kelly, President, JIE
- Mr. Hugh Burton, President IMAJ
- Omar Sweeney, President-Elect JIE
- Honoured Engineers, Grace Ashley and Peter Jervis
- Members of the Engineering Fraternity
- Administrative Professionals
- Ladies & Gentlemen

## Introductory Remarks:

I am grateful for the opportunity to represent the Director General of the Planning Institute of Jamaica, Dr. Gladstone Hutchinson in addressing you this afternoon on *Vision 2030 Jamaica: the Role of Engineers*, under the theme: *Engineering National Development: "Pieces of a Puzzle – where do we fit in?"* That you have planned this your 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarterly Luncheon to coincide with the annual worldwide celebration of Administrative Professionals Week is instructive as well as timely— this is a time that we set aside each year to applaud the hard work and dedication of some of our key professionals who help to keep the mission and vision of our various institutions, and the nation at large at the forefront of our endeavours, but who largely remain unsung heroes.

In fact, this category of *"unsung heroes"* is where the commonality might lie between our administrative professionals and the engineers in our society who also largely remain anonymous. There are few iconic figures in this field... where, for example, is our Usain Bolt of engineering? How much do we as a society know about the contribution of engineers to organizations, communities, and the nation? How many such persons have we lauded for their engineering feats? How many opt for this field which some consider too technical, or even "dull and boring"? Or indeed, how many engineers are only recognized by society after they have left the profession of their training to achieve fame in other fields of endeavour? Most of us have heard of Michael Lee-Chin, the

billionaire who is regarded as the richest Jamaican on the planet, but many of us may not know that he graduated and practiced as a civil engineer before joining the world of high finance.

And yet, if we are to reflect on some of the most exciting, innovative and incredible feats across the world and throughout history— man on the moon; the Great Wall of China; the Pyramids of Egypt; the Chunnel which links England & France by underground tunnel 250 feet under the English Channel; and closer to home, the Panama Canal— to name but a few, we realize that the engineering profession is one of the oldest and most important in transforming society— in areas of government, civil society, public administration and business. In underscoring the genius of the engineer, and his or her value to society, the Hungarian-American aerospace engineer Theodore von Kármán has stated: “Scientists study the world as it is; engineers create the world that has never been.”

It is this understanding and appreciation of the engineer’s role in creating our world, as silent giants, that I’m sure has prompted those in our society who reserve the loudest applause each year at the graduation ceremony of the University of Technology, as I’ve been told, for the engineering graduates, especially the women. Where do these engineering graduates and the others who preceded them as a critical component of our human capital fit into the puzzle of our development?

I believe that locating this presentation within the context of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* affords us an opportune time for such a reflection, especially when we are seeking as a country to achieve sustainable growth and prosperity and to make “**Jamaica, the place of choice to live, work, raise families, and do business**” by the year 2030, through our collective will, national engagement and collaboration. This is the core aspiration of *Vision 2030 Jamaica*, around which all of us as stakeholders in Jamaica have come together/rallied.

*Vision 2030 Jamaica* – our first long-term national development plan – expresses our ambitions for our country under four national goals, which are stated with the brevity and clarity that I hope engineers would appreciate:

- Jamaicans are empowered to achieve their fullest potential

- The Jamaican society is secure, cohesive and just
- Jamaica's economy is prosperous
- Jamaica has a healthy natural environment

In echoing the words of our Director General, it is “our continuing maturation as a society that has allowed us to appreciate the important inherent meaning and desirability of these aspirations as end goals”.

In crafting this National Development Plan, many steps were taken to ensure that it is a viable, realistic, and strategic guide or roadmap along the road we must travel if our country is to be transformed into “... the place of choice...”

These aspirations and goals of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* were arrived at after an extensive, collaborative and inclusive bi-partisan nation-wide consultative process amongst a wide array of stakeholders from all walks of life in Jamaica and the Diaspora. A number of task forces were set up to develop plans for each sector of the economy and society, and here I would like to pay tribute to the many engineers and members of this institution who participated in this process – including Mr. Don Mullings, who chaired the Construction Task Force, Mr. Ivan Anderson of NROCC, Mr. Michael Archer, Mr. Neville Boxe, Mr. Maurice Anderson, a Past President of the Jamaica Institution of Engineers, Mr. Delroy Alcott of WHICon, Mr. Raymond Cooper, Past President of IMAJ, and several others.

Importantly, *Vision 2030 Jamaica* incorporates lessons learned from the experiences of previous plans and from best practices regionally and globally; and is flexible and responsive to change. It also ensures that while we are working on a Jamaica that is the place of choice, our transformation of the society is achieved through a holistic, coherent, integrated and sustainable model of development which recognizes the interdependencies of the various facets of national life: economic, social, environmental and governance.

Not only does *Vision 2030 Jamaica* identify the strategies for realizing specific goals and outcomes, but it incorporates the necessary accountability measures to ensure a successful implementation, monitoring and evaluation process. One such measure is the identification of the role specific agencies and organizations will play. We are also paying particular attention to the alignment of the planning and budgeting processes within Ministries, Departments and Agencies with the goals and outcomes of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* to ensure that adequate resources are provided for its implementation. The Plan has also been accepted by our International Development Partners as the basis for their country development strategies, programmes and projects for Jamaica.

At the Planning Institute we are busy building (or dare I say “engineering”) metrics and a framework of indicators and targets that will measure the country’s achievements of its declared goals. We are excited about, and looking forward to engaging you as well as every community and citizen nationwide in the important democratic process of ensuring that the collective guiding principles, aspirations and goals for Jamaica’s future are fully realized.

### **Role of Engineers in making Jamaica the place of choice**

Within this context, we can begin to understand the role of engineers and see where they fit in the big picture that is the *Vision 2030 Jamaica* process of transformation and nation-building. *Vision 2030 Jamaica* envisages a paradigm shift for the country from reliance on the Physical Forms of Capital (Natural, Manmade, Financial) to the Higher or Social Forms of Capital (Institutional, Knowledge, Human, and Cultural). In this paradigm shift, the skills and knowledge of engineers are vitally important in adding value in a wide range of goods- and services- producing industries, and in building a knowledge-based economy and society.

As such, there are many specific areas in which engineers and engineering firms are playing and will continue a vital role in the process. As would be expected, engineers and their professional associations are at the centre of ensuring that Jamaica has an *Internationally Competitive Construction Industry* and *Strong Economic Infrastructure*, which are key National Outcomes of the National Goal: *Jamaica’s Economy is Prosperous*.

Other critical areas of involvement for engineers include:

- ensuring that adequate and high quality tertiary education is provided in the disciplines of engineering, science and technology, with an emphasis on the interface with work and school through collaboration with universities and other academic institutions;
- working with HEART Trust/NTA and other training institutions to develop world-class training programmes for construction workers, electricians, and other trades; and
- ensuring a facilitating policy, regulatory and institutional framework for business enterprises particularly in the development approval process.

Engineers also have a key role to play in the development of Jamaica's *energy security and efficiency*, another key National Outcome of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* - through the design of renewable energy solutions, the application of the new energy-efficient building code, and in the diversification of energy sources in the bauxite and alumina industry, the transport sector, the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity, and in the exploration for indigenous supplies of energy.

Engineering firms also may act as exemplars of good business practices and internationally competitive enterprises. In this area, teamwork, sound management practices, and the roles and specialized competencies of our administrative professionals whom we honour throughout this week will play an essential role in ensuring that our engineering firms can compete successfully for projects and the provision of professional services at home and abroad. If anyone was skeptical before this, I hope that I have already said enough to show that engineers and the engineering profession are vitally important pieces in completing the puzzle that represents Jamaica's development.

Now I would like to highlight two specific areas in which engineers and engineering firms can play a truly catalytic role in this present moment of Jamaica's development. It is no secret that our country is facing massive economic challenges – high public debt, negative growth over the past

three years, and persistent unemployment. As a response, the PIOJ has introduced a Growth-Inducement Strategy that is designed to increase the rates of economic growth in the short and medium term. An area featured in the Growth-Inducement Strategy, which is also of particular importance for long-term sustainable development, is strengthening the resilience of the natural and built environment against the impact of natural hazards and climate change. On average, over the last decade, Jamaica has experienced at least one major hurricane or tropical storm annually. Since 1988, the cumulative impact of these events has been in the order of J\$105 billion, an average of 1-2% of GDP annually. It is estimated that by 2025, the cost of these natural hazards for Jamaica could be as high as 13.9% of GDP (based on 2004 GDP). Clearly, this is an area of vital importance for national development. In this regard, engineers have a critical role in building resilience, robustness and adaptability of our natural and built environment to withstand the periodic shocks imposed by natural hazards.

One responsibility is to ensure that building designs are environmentally sound and sustainable with the integrity to withstand hazards of a certain magnitude. Engineers also have a role in maintaining and retrofitting existing structures to enable them to support or resist load and pressure from natural hazards. The area of research and adopting of best practices in emerging technologies, materials and other innovations to increase cost effectiveness while increasing resilience, is also a vital component of your remit. Under the Growth-Inducement Strategy, the single largest area of investment is in infrastructure and strengthening the resilience of the built environment, an area that also has among the highest multipliers for growth throughout the entire economy. Could the importance of our engineers in turning our economy around be any clearer than this?

Also, in our pursuit of actualizing the four national goals arising from *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the emergent commitment to cultivating social capital as a platform for nation building, we especially encourage you, the engineering community, to support the partnerships being developed — government, private sector, civil society, with community residents— for the physical transformation of vulnerable and volatile communities. This initiative is represented in the new Community Renewal Programme, which is also an integral component of the Growth-Inducement

Strategy. Such collaboration has to be at the forefront of the renewal and redevelopment of Inner City communities across Jamaica, as the residents in such communities are beginning in a positive way “to take charge of the process of rebuilding their own lives with the rights and opportunities, and instrumental freedoms that will advance their general capabilities to have agency over their ambitions and become fully productive and engaged citizens”. The construction of physical and social infrastructure that meets the needs and aspirations of residents of these vulnerable and volatile communities is an essential component of making every part of our country into “the place of choice”. We already know from many studies the relationship between crime and economic growth – one study estimates that reductions in our homicide rates could increase our growth rates by up to 5% each year. The proposed holistic process of community renewal will engage engineers in national development at the deepest and most profound levels.

As a part of this process, your involvement will be vital for the physical and economic transformation of West Kingston (perhaps our largest volatile community) through the proposed West Kingston Lifestyles Centre which will be a “commercially valuable and community-valued business project in Downtown Kingston located on a 9.7 acre site adjacent to the Coronation Market and the bustling nearby commercial district on Princess Street”... “At the heart of the 50 commercially underserved residential communities of the approximately 255,000 residents within a 5KM radius, it is imminently poised to become the fulcrum of the modern and cosmopolitan renewal and re-development of the entire Downtown Kingston”. Once again, the catalytic role of engineers – to create the world that has never been – is very clear.

### **Vision 203 Jamaica – Going Forward**

Ladies and gentlemen, we have made important progress in the *Vision 2030 Jamaica* process so far. It is being integrated into the plans and budgets of ministries and agencies, with indicators and targets to hold responsible officials accountable for its success. We are carrying out training to build the capacity of public sector staff to monitor and evaluate the achievement of results. Nine Thematic Working Groups have been set up with representatives from the government, private sector and civil society to support its implementation in every area of national development. A National Dashboard of Indicators has been developed and introduced to track progress toward

achievement of the national goals on a quarterly basis. We have also made great strides in communicating Vision 2030 Jamaica to stakeholders islandwide. We have developed a concise, colourful Popular Version of the larger plan document and distributed over 22,000 copies to schools, public libraries, book mobiles, and community groups islandwide. We have seen the successful execution of the Jamaica Debt Exchange (JDX) as a measure to reduce the cost of servicing the public debt; reforms of the Jamaica Constabulary Force and our Justice system; completion of the Montego Bay Convention Centre and a new cruise ship pier and facilities at Falmouth; development of a comprehensive National Energy Policy 2009-2030 that is aligned to *Vision 2030 Jamaica*, and the commencement of the preparation of a new National Spatial Plan (NSP), that for the first time in forty years will provide a proper basis for land use and development projects islandwide.

Of course, there have been areas in which performance has been less than desired. For example, the Construction Sector Plan called for the finalization of a Construction Industry Policy, licensing of architectural and engineering professionals, and establishment of a Construction Industry Development Board. A major step in 2011 will be the undertaking of a strategic review of the first two years of implementation of the Plan and preparation of a new Medium Term Framework with the priorities for the next three years from 2012 to 2015. In this review, outstanding items such as these will receive priority attention.

Most importantly, if we are each to become change agents in the *Vision 2030 Jamaica* process, than we must be sufficiently aware of all that it entails. I therefore urge each of you as well as the JIE as a collective body to:

- familiarize yourselves with the contents of the Plan;
- use it to guide your plans, projects and programmes;
- be actively involved in working with government and other stakeholders; and
- be good corporate citizens who support your communities and the wider society.

## Conclusion

Ladies and gentlemen, engineering and administrative professionals, I thank you once again for the opportunity to participate in this event. As you continue to “promote and encourage the general advancement of the Engineering profession and the practice and science of Engineering”, I urge you all to see yourselves as vital pieces in Jamaica’s process of transformation into the ‘*place of choice to live, work, raise families, and do business*’, and to translate this understanding into positive action. I therefore leave you with the following words:

*“It is the totality of the pieces coming together that makes a puzzle complete. When we do a puzzle, each piece of the puzzle belongs exactly in a certain spot, no matter how we try to fit the piece somewhere else. Each piece simply goes where it goes. Each piece is neither good nor bad, just like a particular event in our life is neither right nor wrong. The puzzle piece is exactly what it should be and fits exactly where it belongs to make the big picture complete.” (Mathew Goodmote MPT, Dip MDT – February 28, 2011)*

Finally, I invite you all to visit our website at [www.vision2030.gov.jm](http://www.vision2030.gov.jm) for much more information than I could’ve provided here today.

Thank you very much.