

JAMAICA

Jamaica has continued to make great strides since the last meeting of the Committee of Experts of the Follow-Up Mechanism for the Implementation of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption held in July, 2003.

The Commission for the Prevention of Corruption which was launched in March, 2003 has received and reviewed the declarations of assets, liabilities and income submitted by over 11,000 public servants. The Commission has sought further information from public servants concerning some of these declarations. Where persons failed to provide that information, the Commission, in accordance with the Corruption (Prevention) Act, issued summonses to ensure compliance. To date, the information requested, has in most cases been provided.

The Commission has identified those persons who failed to file declarations and is in the process of ensuring that they file within the next month. The Commission is also making preparations for the next round statutory declarations due in April, 2004.

The Commission is in the process of computerizing its office and hiring more investigators in order to fulfill its function. It is also looking for ways to improve its functioning and effectiveness. The Commission is scheduled to issue its first statutory report to Parliament in June, 2004.

The Access to Information Act came into force on January 5, 2004. It will be implemented in four phases. The first phase encompasses seven Government department/agencies. These entities are the:

- Office of the Prime Minister,
- Cabinet Office,
- Ministry of Finance and Planning,
- Ministry of Local Government, Community Development and Sport,
- Jamaica Information Service,
- National Works Agency, and
- Planning Institute of Jamaica.

All remaining Government department/agencies will be brought within the purview of the Act in the other three phases.