

JAMAICA

Jamaica has continued to make progress in the implementation of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption since the last meeting of the Committee of Experts for the Follow-Up Mechanism to the Inter-American Convention against Corruption held in February, 2004.

The Commission for the Prevention of Corruption (the "Commission") which was launched in March, 2003 completed its first review of sworn declarations of income, assets and liabilities, required under the Corruption (Prevention) Act (the "statutory declarations"), submitted by over 11, 000 public servants. The Commission has indicated that there has been about 73% compliance for the first set of statutory declarations (which were due on March 31, 2003). To date, approximately fifty-three (53) names have been submitted to the Director of Public Prosecutions for further action regarding the statutory declarations filed or for failure to file. The Commission is now reviewing the second annual statutory declarations (which were due on March 31, 2004) and the Commission has indicated that there has been about 43% compliance in the submission of these declarations.

It is expected that the first statutory report from the Commission to Parliament will be sent to Parliament before July 31, 2004.

As indicated in the update to the Fifth Meeting of the Committee of Experts, the Access to Information Act, which entered into force on January 5, 2004, is being implemented in phases. The third phase of implementation is now beginning, and will include the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Ministry of National Security and Ministry of Works. The agencies to which the Access to Information Act currently applies are the Office of the Prime Minister, Office of the Cabinet, Ministry of Finance and Planning, Ministry of Local Government, Community Development and Sport, Jamaica Information Service, National Works Agency, Planning Institute of Jamaica, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Commerce and Technology, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Water and Housing, Urban Development Corporation, Bank of Jamaica and Accountant-General's Department.

The Access to Information Unit has conducted sensitization training with civil service personnel, schools, universities and in various communities. Since the coming into force of the Access to Information Act, there have been over 84 requests for official documents from civil society, media, and individuals and most of these requests have been fulfilled. Some which have not been fulfilled are in the process of appeal. The Access to Information Act provides three (3) levels of review, an Internal Review, an Appeals Tribunal and the courts.