



**Mayor, Councillor Desmond A.  
McKenzie, JP**

<p><b>Presentation of the Speaker</b></p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MCKENZIE HAS BEEN MAYOR OF KINGSTON &amp; ST. ANDREW SINCE JULY, 2003.</p> <p>BORN DECEMBER 1, 1952, HE IS THE YOUNGEST PERSON TO HAVE EVER BECOME MAYOR OF THE CITY.</p> <p>A MEMBER OF THE OPPOSITION JAMAICA LABOUR PARTY (JLP), MAYOR MCKENZIE WAS COUNCILLOR FOR THE DENHAM TOWN DIVISION FROM 1977 TO 1984 AND COUNCILLOR FOR THE TIVOLI GARDENS DIVISION FROM 1990 TO THE PRESENT.</p> <p>MAYOR MCKENZIE WAS A MEMBER OF THE JAMAICAN SENATE BETWEEN 2002 AND 2003 AND WAS THE OPPOSITION'S JUNIOR SPOKESMAN ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT, YOUTH, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SPORT DURING THAT PERIOD.</p> <p>HE IS CURRENTLY A VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE OF MAYORS, A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF MAYORS.</p> <p>MAYOR MCKENZIE IS REGARDED IN JAMAICA AS THE MOST ACTIVE MAYOR THE ISLAND HAS EVER PRODUCED, AND IS KNOWN FOR HIS HANDS ON ATTITUDE IN PERSONALLY DIRECTING PROGRAMMES TO REGULARIZE ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES IN THE CITY.</p>
<p><b>Data of the represented Institution/Organization</b></p>	<p>Kingston &amp; St Andrew Corporation, Jamaica West Indies</p>



<b>Thematic Workshop</b>	Political Leadership & the role of the elected officials
<b>Title of the presentation</b>	Much talk, too little action: The Jamaican Experience.
<b>Executive summary of the presentation</b>	THE PRESENTATION WILL BE A POWER POINT BEGINNING WITH AN INTRO OF THE CITY OF KINGSTON, THEN WILL MOVE ON TO KINGSTON'S EXPERIENCE INCLUDING ADVANTAGES AND DIS ADVANTAGES ECCOUNTERED.

### **PARTS OF THE ACTUAL SPEECH**

JAMAICA IS THE FIRST ENGLISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN COUNTRY TO BE INCLUDED THE ECONOMIST INTELLIGENCE UNIT'S E-READINESS RANKINGS, IN TERMS OF WHICH WE WERE RANKED 41ST IN APRIL.

OUR FAILURE HAS BEEN PRIMARILY IN THE AREA OF CONNECTIVITY AND TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE.

ONE OF THE DISAPPOINTMENTS OF THE OUTCOME OF OUR LIBERALIZATION PROGRAMME SO FAR, IS THE FACT THAT INTERNET PENETRATION REMAINS VERY LOW, ONLY ABOUT 10% OF THE MARKET.

THE FACT IS THAT WE DO NEED TO RAISE THE LEVEL OF INTERNET LITERACY AMONG OUR PEOPLE. THE PROBLEM IS HOW WILL WE FINANCE IT WHEN CENTRAL GOVERNMENT IS ALREADY STRAPPED DOWN BY ENORMOUS AND RISING DEBT, A FAILING ECONOMY AND SOCIAL CHAOS?

IF WE AGREE THAT LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS NOT JUST ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE OF OUR COUNCILS BUT, ESSENTIALLY, ABOUT THE EMPOWERMENT OF OUR PEOPLE TO DIRECT AND MANAGE THEIR AFFAIRS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL, THEN WE MUST ACCEPT THE POWER OF THE TOOLS OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE PROCESS.



SINCE 1993, WITH THE INITIATION OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM PROGRAMME, THE POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM HAS BEEN LAID OUT AND A LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT CREATED TO START THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTATION.

WE HAVE ACHIEVED SOME LEVEL OF FINANCIAL AUTONOMY. HOWEVER, WE ARE NOT SEEING THE LEVELS OF REVENUE INFLOWS NECESSARY TO IMPROVE OUR SERVICES. THIS IS, BASICALLY, DUE TO THE FACT THAT THESE TAX INFLOWS DO NOT COME TO US DIRECTLY, BUT THROUGH CENTRAL GOVERNMENT.

THE RESULT IS THAT WE ARE UNABLE TO MEET OUR GOALS, INCLUDING THE CREATION OF A PROPER INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM, AND OUR EFFORTS TO IMPROVE OUR SERVICES AND INCREASE THE BENEFITS TO OUR CONSTITUENTS HAVE BEEN SERIOUSLY HAMPERED.

THIS HAS STALLED OUR EFFORTS AND INCREASED LOSS OF FAITH IN THE AUTHORITIES AMONG THE PEOPLE WE REPRESENT.

I BELIEVE THAT COUNTRIES, LIKE JAMAICA, WHERE LOCAL GOVERNMENT HAS BECOME A VIRTUAL BALL BOUNCING FROM POLICY TO POLICY, WITH NO POWER TO DEMAND PRIORITY TREATMENT IN NATIONAL PROGRAMMES AND ARE STARVED OF NECESSARY RESOURCES, NEED TO FORM AN ALLIANCE THROUGH WHICH WE CAN REACH OUT TO OUR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS FOR HELP AS LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

TODAY, I APPEAL TO YOU TO MAKE THIS A PRIORITY IN YOUR EFFORTS.

I AM ALSO APPEALING TO THE INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES, WITH THE NECESSARY RESOURCES, TO TAKE A GREATER INTEREST IN THE PROBLEMS STIFLING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THIS INFORMATION BRIDGE BETWEEN LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THE PEOPLE THEY REPRESENT IN DEVELOPING NATIONS LIKE OURS.

WE CANNOT WIN THE SUPPORT OF OUR CITIZENS IN THIS EFFORT, UNLESS WE CAN SHOW RESULTS AND WE CANNOT SHOW RESULTS WITHOUT THE NECESSARY FINANCIAL RESOURCES.