

## PRESS RELEASE

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Kingston, Jamaica, December 20, 2017: The Jamaica Chamber of Commerce (JCC) and the Canadian Executive Service Organization (CESO) have signed a Partnership Agreement covering the delivery of technical and advisory support services to Jamaican firms. The agreement was signed in early December.

Under the terms of the partnership agreement, the JCC will be the access point for securing senior-level Canadian Volunteer Advisors from a range of sectors and industries to provide expert services to JCC member firms and affiliated entities with a view to strengthening their operational efficiencies. These Volunteer Advisors will undertake specific tasks over specified period generally ranging from two to six weeks.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Walter Bernyck, Counsellor and Head of Development Cooperation at the Canadian High Commission in Jamaica, underscored the partnership's significance at a time when Canada is celebrating its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, even as he acknowledged that the relationship between the two countries pre-dates their independence.

He noted that "this CESO-JCC partnership will benefit the JCC and its constituent members with a focus on expanding the reach, impact and commercial viability of the JCC's service offerings". He asserted that the partnership represents "a good example of an innovative approach to developing, promoting and executing investments in the private sector".

In response, JCC President Larry Watson welcomed the Partnership, stating that the association would be urging its membership to take fullest advantage of the services that will be made accessible. He noted that CESO's engagement and experiences in over 120 countries would prove beneficial to Jamaican firms, particularly those in the SME sector, who are required to achieve productivity gains and to increase their competitiveness both domestically and as they look to export markets.

Under the partnership agreement, initial areas of assistance will include advisory input the development of an Arbitration Registry, institutional strengthening to both the JCC Secretariat and the JCC-Sameer Younis Foundation. A number of member firms will also benefit from expert advisory input based on needs identified in their operations.

CESO, a non-profit development organization, has over 50 years experience in developing countries, and has been operating in Jamaica since 2013. The JCC is one of the hemisphere's oldest business associations, dating back to its formation in 1779.