



economic zones to provide an industrial platform for global multi-nationals to operate their manufacturing and logistics operations here in Jamaica.

“So, a lot is happening. And we are focused, as well, on our internal logistics, meaning our network of highways and railways to link into these special economic zones and to create that environment for large multi-nationals to position themselves in this hemisphere and participate in global trade. So, we see the mega-ports of Singapore, Dubai, and Rotterdam, and we want to duplicate that here in Jamaica.”

Will there come a day when the ribbon is cut and the world recognizes Jamaica as the fourth hub, or is it an ongoing process?

“It is an ongoing process, but there’s a minimum set of developments we all look to: an improved maritime and transshipment hub port, improved aviation and air

cargo, links by rail, and the development and expansion of special economic zones. These are some of the minimum conditions. We’re also looking at our international financial services hub, because we believe it ties in very neatly and synergistically with logistics services across a range of activities. So, we’re developing a financial services sector based, not on tax havens or anything of that nature, but on the critical services component of the Jamaican labor force and its ability to deliver legal accounting, and banking services to financial entities.”

Can you speak about the role of foreign investment over the last several years?

“We’ve had a growth in investment. When this administration entered office investment had fallen to about \$200 million. Now it’s over \$1.2 billion in the calendar year just ending. And we look forward to more significant investment, based upon our policies and strategies. Foreign investors have brought their creativity, their linkages, and their best practices, especially in the area of logistics. And we look forward to increasing these investment activities over the coming year.”

What are your Ministry’s goals for the next few years and what challenges need to be overcome in order to meet them?

“The goals for our division are the ones set forth in our ‘Vision 2030’ (the country’s National Development Plan). We see Jamaica becoming a developed economy and society by that period of time. What that translates into is the quality of life – Jamaica being the choicest place to live, work, raise a family, and do business. This Ministry has a significant role to play in the economic growth and job creation aspects of it.

“We have to move our unemployment rate from 12 percent down to a manageable five or six percent. We have to increase the rate of growth of our economy to make that possible, which means we have to expand