

REMARKS



HON. ANTHONY HYLTON
MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, INVESTMENT
&
COMMERCE

Official Launch of the Registered Apprenticeship
Programme

KNUTSFORD COURT HOTEL

THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 2014 at 2 PM

Salutations

- Reverend Ronald Thwaites, MP, Minister of Education
- Mr. Winston Fletcher, Head of Apprenticeship Secretariat and Director ECS- Heart Trust/NTA
- Professor Gossett Oliver OD, JP, Chairman of the Apprenticeship Board and Vice President, School of Graduate Studies, Research and Entrepreneurship- University of Technology, Jamaica
- Mr. David Garrell, Apprenticeship Board Member and Chairman of the Apprenticeship Selection and Welfare Committee
- Representatives of the private sector
- Members of the media
- Invited guests... Good afternoon

We are here this afternoon to witness the resuscitation of the industrial apprenticeship programme as a strategy for getting our workforce ready for the next stage in the development of our economy. This is especially critical to Jamaica's growth agenda and our efforts to ensure that Jamaica's position is strengthened as we meet the challenges and embrace the opportunities presented by the process of globalization.

The modern global economy and its industries demand a modern and competitive workforce; this is what the Registered Apprenticeship Programme (RAP) is all about. I am therefore pleased to see at this gathering, people from various sectors of industry and across Government. Your presence here this afternoon speaks eloquently to your interest and commitment to building a stronger and more competitive workforce.

Ladies and gentlemen, if we are serious about investments, we cannot underestimate the vital importance of having a skilled and highly trained workforce

available for employment. This is one of the pillars on which modern industry and commerce is built, and on which sustained growth and the entire wealth-creation process is driven. It is for this reason that I have never spoken about the logistics-centered economy without highlighting the importance of preparing our local workforce to take advantage of business and employment opportunities that the Logistics hub will provide.

Building a globally competitive economy that is logistics-centered compels us to develop the capabilities of our workforce, in order to drive productivity to the levels being demanded by the investor community. The RAP is not just about jobs, it is also about creativity and innovation as well as enterprise and entrepreneurship. It utilizes the well understood model of “learning- by- doing”, which has been proven as an effective method for transferring know-how and solutions to industry problems. Indeed, it is the single most effective way to provide practical and transferable professional experience to our workforce.

Education without training is insufficient to meet the demands of the modern business environment. This problem will only become more acute as we seek to implement the projects that are central to realizing our vision of becoming a logistics centered and knowledge based economy.

The new RAP provides for training of individuals who will occupy the middle and upper tier of the workforce, especially in technical, creative and logistics related fields. Logistics and technical related jobs in engineering, ship chandlery, port management and fleet management- just to name a few- need to be learnt on the job. The RAP is, therefore, a major initiative towards the creation of a skilled and competent workforce that is able to meet the demands of our logistics- centred economy.

Let me take a few moments to speak about the importance of public private partnership to the success of the Registered Apprenticeship Programme. This initiative requires effective collaboration between industry,

education and training to address the resource gap, in areas that are critically needed to support the logistics-centred economy and our growth agenda.

Ladies and gentlemen, the reality is that we need each other. It is the private sector that has the capacity to facilitate an apprenticeship programme. But it is Government that creates the framework to facilitate economic investments that provides job opportunities for our workforce. Indeed, this move towards greater collaboration is being demonstrated here as well in the joined-up approach by the Ministries of Education and Industry, Investment and Commerce. Only by working together can this programme succeed.

In closing, I commend the steadfast work of Professor Gossett and the other members of the National Apprenticeship Board for bringing this initiative from concept to reality.

I thank you