

A RISK ASSESSMENT BRIEF

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Based on the CIFP Risk Assessment Methodology

BACKGROUND

Jamaica gained independence from Britain in 1962, and the Jamaican Labour Party (JLP) and the People's National Party (PNP) have since shared power through free and fair elections. Prime Minister Percival J. Patterson (PNP) has been leading the country since 1992 but recently announced he would step down. Party leadership elections have been announced for February 2006. There are two serious candidates to replace him as party leader and de facto Prime Minister: Peter Philips and Portia Simpson-Miller. Phillips is the Minister of National Security and has greater support and backing within Parliament and the PNP, while Simpson-Miller, the Minister of Local Government, Community Development and Sports, has greater grassroots support. National elections must be held some time in 2007.

Jamaica is in a strenuous economic situation; debt represents 135% of its annual GDP and inflation is hovering around the 15% mark, while GDP growth has hovered around 1.5% over the last five years. Sugar exports accounted for a significant portion of Jamaica's total exports until last year, when the European Union ended the preferential pricing deal for Jamaican sugar. Tourism and agriculture have also been important sectors but have been decimated repeatedly by hurricanes passing through the region. Reconstruction following Hurricane Ivan in 2004 has yet to be completed and is undermining agricultural production, pushing prices upward.

The island of 2.7 million people possesses one of the highest homicide rates in the world.² Successive governments have tried to crack down on crime, helped by the United States and England, but without major successes. Jamaica is a major transit point for the drug flow from Colombia to North America and Europe. Street gangs vie for control of this drug trade and violence is rampant. Arbitrary arrests, prolonged detention without trial, poor treatment of prisoners, and summary executions are common. These may be attributable to a high crime rate, insufficient resources for the judicial system and a lack of oversight over and training of police and security forces.³

TIMELINE 4

- 1494 Christopher Columbus sights Jamaica.
- **1962** Jamaica becomes independent within the British Commonwealth with Alexander Bustamante of the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) as prime minister.
- **1972** Michael Manley becomes prime minister following an impressive victory by the PNP in the general elections
- **1976** The PNP wins another term following elections marked by violence and proceeds to nationalise businesses and build closer ties with Cuba.
- **1980** Edward Seaga becomes prime minister after his JLP wins general elections. He proceeds to privatise state enterprises and to distance Jamaica from Cuba.US grants Seaga government substantial aid.
- 1988 Jamaica badly hit by Hurricane Gilbert.
- **1989** PNP ousts JLP in elections. New PM Michael Manley chooses to continue Seaga's policy course.
- **1992** Manley retires on health grounds and is succeeded by Percival J Patterson.
- 1993 PNP re-elected with an increased majority.
- **1998** PNP wins a third term; increase in violent crime reported as the economy deteriorates.
- **1999** April Violent protests take place against a 30% increase in fuel prices.
- **1999** July Government orders the army to patrol the streets of Kingston following a massive increase in crime.
- **2001** July Troops and armoured vehicles move in to restore order in the capital, Kingston, after three days of unrest leave at least 27 people dead.
- **2002** October Prime Minister PJ Patterson's People's National Party wins general elections, ushering in fourth successive term in office for party and third term for incumbent premier.
- **2004** March Ousted former Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide takes up temporary asylum, prompting an angry response from the new Haitian government.
- **2004** September Hurricane Ivan described as the biggest in living memory pounds the island, destroying thousands of homes.
- **2005** September Prime Minister PJ Patterson says he will step down by April 2006.

Key Indicators	Influence
*CIFP indicators do not include internal conflict, i.e. gang warfare Governance and Political Instability CIFP Score: 3.81 (Low to Moderate)	**STABILIZING** **While there is a history of internal armed conflict in Jamaica, there has been no international conflict since gaining independence. **Jamaican Defence Forces (JDF) have participated in numerous international peacekeeping missions in the Caribbean region, including Grenada and Haiti. **2** **The U.K. and U.S. are contributing expertise and finances to help curtail the gang-related drug trade. **3** **The military has linked-up with the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF- the police) to form Operation King-fish, targeted at destroying organized drug syndicates in Jamaica. **BESTABILIZING** **Some drug trafficking gangs have their roots in politics as the enforcement wings of their respective parties since the 1960's. While originally dependent on political payouts, they have since turned to the drug trade to supplement their existence. Some still retain strong political links to the PNP and JLP. **Gang-related violence led to a record 1700 homicides in 2005. **Homicides in Jamaica are often connected to gang activity in foreign cities containing a large Jamaican populations, e.g. Toronto, and vice versa. Jamaicans deported from the U.S., Britain, and Canada often reassimilate into gangs in their home country. **Canada, the US, and the UK deport on average 40 criminals back to Jamaica per week. 2,161 Jamaican criminals were sent home in 2005. Those deported retain connections abroad through which they receive weapons and ammunition, while providing willing recipients for drugs smuggled through Jamaica. ***STABILIZING** **Unrestricted freedom of religion, universal suffrage, fair elections and freedom of speech and media. *** **There are signs of an attempt to cut down on party corruption through recent amendments to the Corruption Prevention Act regarding party financing. ** **Unrestricted freedom of religion, universal suffrage, fair elections and freedom of speech and media. ** **The Insurance of the primate of the NPh have signed a document confirming their commitme
Militarization CIFP Score: 1.83 (Low)	 STABILIZING The JDF's weaponry is restricted to light arms and squad support. Arms are not designed for full-scale international war, but rather for small-scale internal operations, drug eradication missions, counter insurgency, and border enforcement. 17 The JDF does not possess mechanized armour but retains a sizeable helicopter fleet for aerial surveillance. Naval branch possesses numerous short to medium range naval interdictor vessels. 18 Jamaica's military spending does not differ significantly from other countries of similar size. 19 DESTABILIZING The military is being used as an internal force (Operation Kingfish and various other deployments). 20 Military training does not prepare soldiers for the difficulty and delicacy internal urban deployments require. They are soldiers trained to fight, not police officers. 21
Population Heterogeneity CIFP Score: 3.00 (Low)	 STABILIZING Jamaica's population is highly homogeneous with 95% of its people being of African descent. Minorities include a small percentage of East Indians, Chinese, Europeans, Syrians and Lebanese. ²² Religious diversity is minimal and non-problematic with 75% of Jamaica's population being Protestant, 8% Roman Catholic. Religious tolerance is widespread. ²³ Discrimination against ethnic and religious groups is prohibited by the Constitution. ²⁴ DESTABILIZING Members of the Rastafarian community have complained of unfair targeting by law enforcement officials. ²⁵ Members of the gay and lesbian community in Jamaica are subject to frequent intimidation, discrimination and increasingly frequent attacks due to their sexual orientation. ²⁶

Key Indicators	Influence
Demographic Stress CIFP Score: 5.3 (Moderate)	 DESTABILIZING Approximately 20, 000 Jamaicans emigrate to the United States each year, while Canada and the UK also receive substantial numbers of Jamaican migrants. ²⁷ 30% of the population is under 14 years old. This youth bulge, while it has been shrinking over the past 15 years, is still likely to put a severe strain on social services and increase the level of gang participation amongst youth in the future in light of the paucity of available jobs. ²⁸
Economic Performance CIFP Score: 5.82 (Moderate)	 STABILIZING: The government is committed to reducing debt and has adopted fiscal austerity measures. ²⁹ Public debt ratio has gone down and policy is directed at maintaining a stable currency. The government reached an agreement with the Jamaica Confederation of Trade Unions freezing wages over two fiscal years. ³⁰ The Caribbean Single Market & Economy came into being on January 1st, 2006. The agreement between CARI-COM states will arguably increase business, employment and travel opportunities throughout the region. ³¹ Jamaica, along with thirteen other Caribbean nations, has signed the PetroCaribe agreement with Venezuela, thereby decreasing Jamaica's sensitivity to fluctuating world oil and gas prices. ³² DESTABILIZING Total public debt is a burden at 135% of GDP, having increased almost 40% since 2001. ³³ Double digit inflation (12.9% in 2005) ³⁴ European Union sugar reforms will result in a 36% cut in prices paid for Jamaican sugar over the next four years, a policy shift that will hurt exporters' throughout the Caribbean community and likely put many out of business. ³⁵ Unemployment and government budget constraints for social programs are creating social instability. The tourism industry has suffered gravely from Hurricane Ivan in 2004 and Emily and Dennis in 2005. PetroCaribe guarantees stable, discounted oil prices but is only available to state-owned companies. This will cost international oil firms likely billions of dollars in the long run and deter foreign investment in Jamaica. ³⁶
Human Development CIFP Score: 4.74 (Moderate)	 STABILIZING Life expectancy at birth is 70.8 years and the Human Development Index Value is 0.738, ranking Jamaica 98th of 177 countries. ³⁷ Jamaica has a combined primary secondary and tertiary education gross enrollment ratio of 74%. ³⁸ 93% of Jamaicans had reasonable access to an adequate amount of water from an improved source, such as a household connection, public standpipe, borehole, protected well or spring, and rainwater collection, in 2002. ³⁹ DESTABILIZING The high school dropout rate is increasing and teenagers, looking to 'make it' fast, are being pressured to join gangs.
Environmental Stress CIFP Score: 6.67 (Moderate to High)	 STABILIZING The Ministry of Agriculture created the National Forest Management and Conservation Plan (Forest Plan) in response to growing concerns over ecological problems. 40 The government of Jamaica has created a \$600 million energy conservation fund out of the proceeds of the PetroCaribe oil agreement to facilitate loans for small and medium-sized business owners to retrofit their establishments with energy-saving devices. 41 DESTABILIZING Severe deforestation (CIFP score of 7.0: high). Hurricanes and other reoccurring natural disasters such as floods create temporary human displacement, create food shortages, damage agricultural lands, pollute ground water, and negatively impact the tourism sector. 42
International Linkages CIFP Score: 4.7 (Moderate)	 STABILIZING Jamaica has a strong relationship with the United States, the United Kingdom, and with Canada. All support (financially and concretely) Jamaica's battle against the drug trade and related gangs. 43 Jamaica is an active member of numerous international organizations, including CARICOM, the FAO, G-77, IADB, ICCt (signatory), IOC, IOM (observer), IMF, Interpol, NAM, OAS, UNCTAD, UNESCO and the WTO.44 Kingston is home to the International Seabed Authority, the body responsible for implementing UNCLOS 1982.45 DESTABILIZING Jamaica is not a member of any significant security alliances. 46 Jamaica's increasingly close relationship with Venezuela may be a threat to its economic stability if Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, were to further isolate his country from the United States. Chavez could use his country's vast oil reserves to drive a wedge between the US and PetroCaribe member countries, similar to Chinese actions in South East Asia. The general impression that the US is ignoring the Caribbean and Latin America is giving Chavez an opportunity to push for change in disaffected governments in the region. 47 Political or military confrontation in Venezuela could hurt PetroCaribe members by interrupting their petroleum imports and increasing price levels. Previous riots over gas price hikes occurred in 1999.48 Haitian refugees are launching court challenges against Jamaican law, which precludes refugee status. 49 Plan Colómbia: contingent upon the degree of success in reducing or eliminating the source of most drugs transiting Jamaica, pressure on the drug supply from Colombia will likely exacerbate inter-gang violence. 50

Scenarios

Best Case

- 1. PNP leadership candidate Portia Simpson-Miller is elected leader, assuming the position of interim Prime Minister until the next scheduled elections in early 2007. Simpson-Miller's considerable grassroots support¹ pulls supporters away from the opposition JLP, leading to a clear PNP majority in the national elections.
- 2. Bi-partisan support for cracking down on gang-violence and changing Jamaica's status as a transit point for the regional drug trade leads to a considerable decline in homicide rates.
- 3. Simpson-Miller's tight monetary policy, influenced by the IMF's debt-reduction strategy recommendations, combined with targeted allocations for social services and police training in her 2007 budget all contribute to greater confidence in Jamaica's economy on international markets. This leads to an increase in employment rates and foreign investment, stemming the persistent depreciation of the Jamaican dollar and putting downward pressures on inflation.

Worst Case

- 1. Peter Phillips is elected leader of the People's National Party (PNP) in February 2006. Allegations by the opposition JLP of security forces being used for partisan purposes by the PNP provoke increased violence between politically linked armed gangs and joint JDF² and JCF³ security forces. Those forces already deployed in anticipation election lead-up violence are provoked into a forceful response to quash the escalating inter-gang violence. Well-coordinated gangs capitalize on the seeming proof of partisan security forces, and respond with calls for uprising and further escalate violence against both their adversaries and security forces. This solidifies their hold over their 'garrison communities' and incites broad anti-police rioting. With peaceful and fair general elections an impossibility because of the unrest plaguing the country, interim Prime Minister Phillips declares a state of emergency across Jamaica, imposes an indefinite curfew, and authorizes draconian crack-downs to control unrest. Elections are postponed until late 2007.
- 2. Jamaican expatriates in large Western cities respond to the growing instability in their home country with street protests against the actions of police and security forces in Jamaica, bringing further attention to the crisis throughout the international community. Transnational rival Jamaican gang members mirror the violence in Jamaica, leading to a spike in murder and violent crime in communities abroad.
- 3. Growing concerns about Jamaica's stability in international markets provokes considerable capital flight and a precipitous drop in the value of the Jamaican dollar, pushing inflation and private debt to unsustainable levels and exacerbating social turmoil. Interim Prime Minister Phillips mulls an official request for international help to regain order within the country.

Most Likely Case

- 1. Peter Phillips is elected leader of the People's National Party (PNP) in February 2006, a victory attributed to widespread support amongst core PNP members and in spite allegations of electoral inconsistencies from Simpson Miller's coalition. ⁴
- 2. Extra-judicial killings persist, as do gang-related homicides. Increasing pressure from the opposition JLP for an early election results in a date being set for early 2007. Moderate violence and social unrest intensify in the runup to the election. The JLP accuses the Jamaican Defence Force and the Jamaica Constabulary Force of politically motivated attacks and crackdowns in JLP areas. Nevertheless, the election proceeds as usual, reflecting the run-up to the 2002 general election.
- 3. Benefitting from a widespread perception that his connections to the military make him better suited to crack-down on violent crime, Peter Phillips and the PNP are re-elected with a majority government in early 2007, however allegations by inner-city voters of intimidation by armed gangs plague many ridings. ⁵
- 4. With record murder rates in 2005 and little change in 2006, battling violent crime remains Phillips' top priority as the new Prime Minister in 2007. His crack-down on crime and organized violence leads to limited declines in the homicide rate, however reform of police and defence forces remains inadequate. The implementation of anti-corruption legislation and Police Commissioner Lucius Thomas' efforts to clean up the police force continue. ⁶
- 5. Few significant improvements to human security in Jamaica and a focus on crime instead of the economy leads to no real change in the growth of inflation rates. In an attempt to stabilize the Jamaican dollar and minimize the growth of the country's external debt burden, the Bank of Jamaica shows signs of an increasingly interventionist monetary policy shortly after the general election.

Appendix 1: Canada, The United States and Jamaican Deportees

- Canada, the US, and the UK deport on average 40 criminals back to Jamaica per week. 2,161 Jamaican criminals were sent home in 2005. While there may be a downward trend in the number of deportees from the US (1,506), UK (1,273), and Canada (down a total 22% FY2005), concerns over criminal involvement remain high.1
- Those deported to Jamaica are not tracked; there is nothing demanding a deportee to declare himself as such.² There is a law permitting monitoring of high risk/violent deportees in place (1997), but police must request a warrant for it and seldom have the resources to carry it out.3 Some deportees are able to retain connections abroad through which they may receive weapons and ammunition, while providing willing recipients for drugs smuggled through Jamaica.
- Soon after they arrive, many criminal deportees reconstitute their formal street gangs and recruit from an inexhaustible supply of local teenagers eager to learn from their 'cultured' cousins.4
- Some Jamaican deportees have been deported multiple times. Canada seems vulnerable to illegal reentry because it utilizes a private firm, "International Fingerprinting Services" to manage immigrant fingerprints. Tech-savvy deportees learned that by supplying fake finger prints, (e.g. fake JCF files, which are then passed by the private company to the RCMP), they can avoid being caught at the border and easily enter Canada as though it were there first time. Once in Canada, they could conceivably cross easily into the US—which is of particular concern given the current border security discussions.⁵
- One author points out that current U.S. immigration policy deports not only criminals, but also instantly deports those that have violated their visas in any way, whether innocently as university students working illegally to pay for university or maliciously, apprehended for committing murder.6

ENDNOTES

Background and Timeline

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Scenarios

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Appendix 1

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