

PRESS RELEASE

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“INFORMER” IS NOT A BAD WORD

Address by Mr. Terrence Williams, Commissioner of INDECOM

Delivered at INDECOM’s Annual Church Service held as a part of the Commission’s 6th Anniversary Celebration.

This August marks the 6th year since the INDECOM Act has come into force. Every year we celebrate the commencement of INDECOM. It is right that we do so and it is right that we do so in the church as it gives us an opportunity to reflect, to give thanks, and to reaffirm our vision for the future.

We reflect on the honour of serving our country in this way because in Jamaica, for many years, the question of how the rights of the citizen may be affected by law enforcement has been a significant issue, a significant human rights issue. So we reflect on the honor of being able to serve our country in this important way. We understand that the job and we know this service to our country brings with it, perils and risks.

We give thanks for another year of remaining unscathed despite the dangers of the job. But we remember the members of the JCF, the JDF, the Department of Corrections and the general public who have been physically hurt or injured during the past year. We reaffirm our commitment to serve and in this year for which we have a particular theme.

For our year's activities, we are “promoting principled policing”, it is our special plan for this year and we have many things (planned) along that theme. The main one I want to talk to you about is a principle around truth, because there can be no greater principle.

Time has come for us to be intolerant of violence and lawlessness and we must participate in the intolerance of those things by becoming informers of the truth. For a long time in Jamaica “informer” has been a bad word. Nobody wants to be an informer, and they sing songs that berate informants. But “informer” must become a good word in Jamaica if we want to defeat lawlessness and injustice and replace it with truth.

So therefore I say to you “I am an informer” and I hope you will join with me to say “I am an informer” too.

This year we will reach out to member of the security forces to speak out when their colleagues engage in misconduct, that is the principle of truth.

Speak out when your colleagues misbehave, because in the same way the police depend on the citizens to inform when a crime is committed, it is the same way the citizens depend on the good police officers to inform when their colleagues misbehave.

The police must appreciate their silence in the face of misconduct is misconduct itself and that is silence breaches trust. They must blow the whistle on lawlessness in an effort to foster and enhance public trust.

Many join the force with a desire to serve, they must not let those who have joined to misbehave or who have been corrupted to misbehave to corrupt them. So this year we are asking officers, the good ones, of which we know form the vast majority, to join us in this campaign to inform. To replace silence with truth and to foster public trust. Do not let the bad ones bring you down.

Thank you.

END.