

NIA, GOVERNANCE AND CORRUPTION:

What to look for and what to do



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NIA's MISSION

- “To combat corruption and build integrity in Jamaica through the persistent promotion of transparency, accountability in the conduct of government, business and the wider society”.
- Transparency = seeing through, seeing into, less darkness more light. The people must know
- Accountability = answerability; taking responsibility for one's actions; reporting back; being liable

NIA's MISSION Cont'd

NIA's mission acknowledged in words across all levels of Jamaica's governance. The task is to turn words into deeds.

- **Man in the street:** corruption the main reason for continuing economic hardship (**December 2014**).
- **Governor General** – “corruption is the cause of the day”. “Despite... NIA's excellent work we are still lagging in the fight against corruption” (**March 2015**).
- **Prime Minister Simpson-Miller** – “the Jamaican people want more accountable and transparent government” (**January 2012**).
- **Prime Minister Golding** – priority “transparency and accountability and the elimination of corruption” (**September 2007**)
- **International Community** – 174 countries including Jamaica signed 2005 UN Convention Against Corruption

HOW DO GOVERNANCE RULES REFLECT THIS CONSENSUS MISSION?

- **Transparency** - right to Information; Jamaica's Constitution Charter of Rights; Freedom of Information Act, Public Bodies Management Accountability Act
- **Accountability** – right to vote out and vote in government; Jamaica's Constitution, Representation of the People's Act (ROPA).
- **Fairness/Integrity** – non-discrimination on grounds of politics; Jamaica's Constitutions Charter
- **Anti-Corruption** – Corruption Prevention Act 2002

So there are rules in our governance for transparency and
accountability

Key Question

How is the system performing? (Compared with others like rating Reggae Boyz, Sunshine Girls, Usain Bolt)

A+ for Freedom of the Press/ Media

A for Petty Corruption

B+ for Election Administration

F for Corruption Perception (CPI 2014) 38 out of 100

F for Transparency. Global Competitiveness report Jamaica rank 109 out of 144 countries. Parties can get money from any source without disclosing.

F for Accountability. Global Competitiveness report wastefulness of government spending 125 of 144 countries. No audited reports from NSWMA for 10 years; one successful prosecution of a Minister in 53 years.

What an NIA Member is to look for

Positives and negatives re transparency and accountability.

- **Positives/ Passing Grade:**

- law passed requiring political parties to be registered.
- NSWMA Board changed
- INDECOM holding police officers more to account

- **Negatives/Failing Grade:**

- Still no special Prosecutor for the Corrupt; no ban on criminal money to political parties; no exposure of large tax evaders (yet publication of the photos of student loan bureau delinquents)

What about more transparency in what money is spent on in the Constituency Development Funds or at the University?

What Should NIA Members Do?

- Commend positives; criticize negatives; advocate for corrective measures
- 1. **Get the Facts** re both positive and negative; website searches – Auditor General, Contractor General.
- 2. **Speak Out** on Talk Shows, in your institution or your community
- 3. **Write Letters** to the newspapers – national/community
- 4. **Use social media** – online comments to newspapers, to radio and TV have impact
- 5. **Invite persons** who support our mission to get involved; get guidance to form an NIA club/chapter

What Should NIA Members Do?

5. **Make Reports** – anonymous if necessary to:
 - **Contractor General** – e.g. where contracts awarded on grounds of politics or family connections and not on merit
 - **Auditor General** – where public money is spent wastefully
 - **Public Defender** – where rights are being violated
 - **General Legal Council** – e.g. where lawyer doesn't deliver service paid for
 - **Electoral Commission/ Political Ombudsman** – e.g. where politician attempts to buy your vote
 - **INDECOM** – e.g. police abuse
 - **MOCA** – where police or public official ask for a bribe (or to 1-800-CORRUPT)
 - **NIA** when you are not sure, where to go or what to do

Sustained Reporting and Advocacy Can and Does Bring Results

- St. Andrew Park Citizens Association
- Abandonment of EWI Project
- Roll back of Bank Withdrawal Tax
- Extradition of Christopher “Dudus” Coke

“Combatting corruption is never easy where the erosion of values and positive attitudes has created a fertile ground for criminal activity. It is not a stroll in the park, it is a long tedious tiring tussle through the mud because it goes right back to the family where too many parents have abdicated their nurturing and character building role”.

(Governor General; March 9, 2015).