



Executive Director's Welcome & Recognition of Guests
FTC's 30th Anniversary Commissioners & Staff Luncheon & Long Service Awards
Jamaica Pegasus Hotel
September 14, 2023

Senator the Honorable Aubyn Hill, Minister of Industry Investment & Commerce, Mr. Donovan White, Chairman of the Fair Trading Commission (FTC), past Chairpersons, present and past Commissioners of the FTC, Staff of the FTC, and colleagues from the Ministry of Industry Investment & Commerce, Good afternoon.

Please allow me to tender apologies on behalf of Commissioners Robert Collie and Dorothy Lightbourne, past Commissioners Robert Drummond, Suzanne Ffolkes-Goldson, Sanya Goffe, and Professor Densil Williams. And, our longest serving Staff member of 30 years, Mr. Alwyn Hutchinson, who had a sudden death in his family and is not able to be with us to celebrate today.

Today we recognize the FTC's Staff for their professionalism, dedication, and commitment to the Commission. Fourteen of our Seventeen Staff members are here today, and you will be hearing a little bit about them.

But before we talk about our Staff, I must welcome our Minister, present and past Chairpersons, and Commissioners who have guided and directed the Staff and the Commission's work over the years.

Welcome Minister. Thank you for coming as you did to our church service last Sunday, and for leading the Ministry with a new and different thrust. This thrust is welcomed.

Ambassador Aloun Assamba, welcome. Firstly, please accept our condolences on the recent passing of your son. You were here for the FTC's work towards the breakup of the TOJ/C&WJ monopoly, the USAID funding support, the now infamous Jamaica Stock Exchange case, and the Courts consent agreement.

Dr. Peter-John Gordon who served as Commissioner before he became Chairman, and again as Commissioner after he gave up the seat as Chairman. Dr. Gordon started the journey to reform the Fair Competition Act because of the Jamaica Stock Exchange case. He was instrumental in our shift from a consumer protection focus to handling competition issues. This move was supported by the IDB capacity-building Project which was initiated and finalized under Dr. Gordon's chairmanship. And for the

Staff, I recall the several meetings with the Ministry of Finance to modernize the organization structure and align our salaries at all levels with agencies with specialist technical persons in the fields of law and economics. Welcome.

Dr. Derrick McKoy, there is a lot to say in welcoming you. You did substantive work that led to the formation of the Commission; you served as Commissioner. You left, and reappeared as Chairman. Left again, and came back as Chairman. It seems you have a special link to the FTC. Perhaps, after you complete your work as Attorney General, you will find your way back to the FTC.

Your leadership was nothing short of phenomenal. I recall your insistence that we should not be afraid to test the law, and to build precedence. Your guidance in formulating internal procedures to take matters to Court. And when the Digicel/Claro merger was on our plate, your encouragement to prepare the matter to take it all the way was indeed instructive. It is now a landmark case that has settled several issues. Dr. McKoy, we have had 13 Court matters since the JSE case, and were successful in all but two – and we got judgement in our favor in our appeals of both decisions.

Welcome, **Mr. Christopher Samuda**. You were high on strengthening the governance of the Commission, and in seeking additional income streams through conducting training sessions for attorneys and the FTC undertaking consultancy arrangements with the OECS. Mr. Samuda was forthright in getting the necessary approvals from our parent Ministry to move the Digicel/Claro matter along.

And having had discussions with the World Bank, I brought a plan to Mr. Samuda to obtain funding for developing a merger review framework for Jamaica, and he immediately sought and received approval from the Minister. We later undertook other capacity-building activities under the World Bank's FCGP.

Welcome to our present Chairman **Mr. Donovan White**, who is leading us into a new dimension, a new world, the Jamaica Consumer & Competition Authority, which is the entity that will handle competition and consumer protection matters in one organization. Work is well advanced and Mr. White and the Commissioners are doing their part to transform the FTC.

A special welcome to Ambassador Stewart Stephenson who was instrumental in signing several consent agreements in the early days, which led to behaviour change by market participants in different sectors in the years to come. Also, to the Commissioners who wholeheartedly supported the work of the Commission in their time.

I invite Chairman White to bring greetings.

David Miller