

Opening Remarks by Dr. Ruth Potopsingh Group Managing Director of the
Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica, April 16, 2008 at the Seminar entitled
“Building Human Resource Capacities for Renewable Energy Development”

Salutations:

Mr. Gary Jackson – Seminar Chairman

Her Excellency Señora Leonora Rueda
Mexican Ambassador to Jamaica

Dr. Jorge M. Haucuz Villamar
Head, Non-Conventional Energy Unit
Electrical Research Institute (IIE), Mexican Energy Secretariat

Señor Ricardo Saldaña Flores
Project Manager, Electrical Research Institute (IIE), Mexican Energy
Secretariat

Mrs. Francene Thelwell, Manager, Information and Corporate Affairs

Members of staff of the PCJ

The CERE organizing Committee

Participants

Members of the media

Good morning

It gives me great pleasure to make these opening remarks and to welcome
you to this very special renewable energy seminar entitled: “Building
Human Resource Capacities for Renewable Energy Development” which is

being hosted under the auspices of the Government of Jamaica/Government of Mexico Cooperation, within the framework of Scientific and Technical Cooperation. This is a landmark as we know Mexico is a petroleum rich country and has had a long history of cooperation with Jamaica in the field of energy. The San Jose Accord has brought significant benefits to our countries. The area of renewable energy cooperation with Mexico is therefore a new paradigm in our relationship. For this we are most grateful to Her Excellency Señora Leonora Rueda for her proactivity in making this collaboration a reality.

Ladies and gentlemen yesterday marked yet another milestone in high energy prices as crude oil prices went up to US\$114 per barrel. For a non oil producing, energy intensive economy such as ours this is not good news. We are over 94% dependent on petroleum imports to satisfy our energy needs. In 2006 our energy bill was 87.4% of export earnings. This is unsustainable when the Government is seeking to meet and surpass the Millennium Development Goals. Mexico's cooperation policies seek to assist in combating extreme poverty, supporting technological and business modernization, efficiently utilizing natural resources, promoting the island's

image and culture, conserving the environment, and attaining sustainable development.

The Seminar's presentations and discussions will address:

- Renewable Energy Project Developments in Mexico,
- Building human resource capacities,
- Solar photovoltaic technology,
- Hybrid Renewable Energy Systems,
- Clean Development Mechanism and
- Project Evaluation and Mapping.

The Government's commitment to reduce our oil dependency by 50% in 10 years must be achieved through the introduction and acceleration of alternative energy namely solar, wind, hydropower, biomass, biofuels and all natural resources which are non-depletable. The national target of 10% electricity generation from renewable sources by 2010 must be stretched in order to transform our energy mix. This intervention through collaboration with the Government of Mexico to address the building of human resource capacity for renewable energy development will see the preparation of a strategic renewable energy plan to achieve this objective. We will learn from

our colleagues Dr. Jorge M. Haucuz Villamar, Head, Non-Conventional Energy Unit, Electrical Research Institute (IIE), Mexican Energy Secretariat and Senor Ricardo Saldaña Flores Project Manager, Electrical Research Institute (IIE), Mexican Energy Secretariat as they share their expertise with this multi-stakeholder group over the next two days.

The issue of energy security has become centre stage and will remain so for decades to come. The twin related energy threats of not having adequate and secure supplies at affordable prices and environmental damage by consuming too much of it must be addressed. Issues of:

- Oil price volatility
- Geopolitical issues
- Economic growth or recession
- Demand and supply
- Refinery capacity

are daily challenges to our energy planners. It is our hope that this seminar will begin the transformation needed for our renewable energy sector. As I have said in other fora the renewable energy offers many opportunities for investment, given our potential for the development of wind, hydropower, biofuels, solar, photovoltaics, biomass and waste-to-energy.

Through the use of technology, research and development and training of energy experts we can begin to make a difference. Sustainable energy use must coincide with overall sustainable development and Vision 2030. Coupled with renewable energy we must begin to address energy conservation in an aggressive way.

People have the power to effect change. Transformation requires each person to do his part. The PCJ as the agency responsible for implementing the Government's energy policy has never shrunk back in caring its mandate. We continue to build capacities to effect change.

I wish this seminar excellent outcomes and strong networking at all levels.

Muchas gracias!

Prepared by:
Ruth Potopsingh, PhD.
GMD
April 16, 2008