

April 13, 2007

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Broadcasting Commission Gives Green Light for RJR/NNN Agreement; Consultations on Programming Standards Underway**

The Broadcasting Commission has given the go-ahead to Radio Jamaica's agreement to lease airtime on its upgraded digital AM network to Nationwide News Network Limited (NNN) to broadcast 24 hours a day seven days a week.

The Commission completed its assessment of the commercial arrangement at its meeting in March, after finding that the proposed terms of the agreement complied with the terms of the licence issued to RJR for commercial radio broadcasting.

#### **Broad dialogue on content standards underway**

Robust exchanges about radio, television and cable content started last week when the Broadcasting Commission met with approximately thirty (30) leaders of civil society, developmental and community-based organizations as well as ministers of religion, and heads of institutions caring for and giving support to children.

The discussion was no less impassioned when the Commission met with leading lights from the local entertainment industry.

In setting the tone for the civil society consultation, Chairman of the Broadcasting Commission, Dr. Hopeton Dunn, emphasised that the fora were an opportunity for broad engagement about programming on radio, television and cable, and how to improve the quality of content transmitted by Jamaica's electronic media.

The Commission paid keen attention to the stakeholders' concerns about the treatment of children in news reporting and the depictions of women in news and entertainment programming

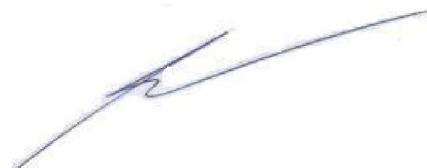
In response the Commission outlined upcoming measures meant to get Jamaican media houses to comply with the laws governing problematic content on electronic media services in Jamaica. Along with the prohibitions that already exist on certain types of sexual and violent content and "bad" language, this stepped-up enforcement campaign will pay special attention to tobacco and alcohol advertising embedded in programming aimed at youth, sexually themed programmes and music videos on TV and radio, as well graphic sexual content on cable "movie" channels.

At the round table meeting with leaders from the entertainment industry which followed on April 4, all parties agreed that the Commission is not, and should not seek to become, a censorship body. Rather the entertainers and music producers involved led the way in proposing more

accountability by media organisations in policing their content and the persons who they hire to be the gate-keepers of the airwaves.

The Commission's discussions later this month with representatives from corporate Jamaica, the advertising and public relations community and producers of entertainment channels on cable will be followed by another civil society consultation in Montego Bay. It will wind up the exercise by meeting with broadcasters and cable operators.

The consultations are a precursor to a mass media campaign through which the Commission will sensitise the general public about rules governing content and the implications of intended enforcement measures for listening and viewing audiences.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cordel Green', is written over a faint, light blue circular watermark or stamp.

Cordel Green  
Executive Director  
Broadcasting Commission

**Addressing concerns about programming**



Donna Parchment, Executive Director of the Dispute Resolution Foundation(r) shares some observations about television, radio and cable programming with Chairman of the Broadcasting Commission, Dr. Hopeton Dunn (l), Huntley Medley, Executive Director of Jamaica Information Service, (2<sup>nd</sup> left), Claude Robinson, Commissioner and Cordel Green, Executive Director of the Broadcasting Commission (2<sup>nd</sup> right).



Earl Witter, Public Defender, in candid discussion about programming on Jamaican radio, TV and cable services with Claude Robinson, member of the Broadcasting Commission (l) and Cordel Green, Executive Director (r),.