

## ENTRY #4

The island paradise of Jamaica can no longer remain complacent in her current, rapidly deteriorating state. A high murder rate, a rise in extra-judicial killings and nation-wide corruption are just a few factors which have resulted in our broken society. How can we fix these and other problems? Martin Luther King Junior's "I Have a Dream" Speech holds the key to changing our circumstances. Three crucial points that can be interpreted from his lauded oration are: "equality in society", "transparency in government" and "unity as a nation".

"I Have a Dream," (Martin Luther King Junior [civil rights activist]), which envisions equality in our society. This dream would see a Jamaica where every citizen is treated with equity under law. Truly, if we aspire for equity in society, issues such as gender discrimination and domestic violence will be eradicated. Additionally, in order to eliminate the corruption which pervades the hierarchy of our society, we must embrace the "Jamaican dream". A dream that is characterized by everyone being able to express themselves without falling to prejudice and everyone is treated fairly under law. Now, imagine a country where everyone is treated equally under law. Also, imagine a nation where its citizens are free to express themselves (within reason). This is the first component of an inclusive Jamaican society.

Jamaica was ranked eighty five out of one hundred and seventy five countries in Transparency International's 2014 Global Corruption Index (CPI), attaining a score of *thirty eight* out of *one hundred*. Corruption is therefore a terrible reality emanating from Jamaica's government framework. Therefore, my dream would also see us aspiring to transparency in our government. At this point in time let us not see the issue as "the government stealing taxpayer's money." Rather, let us look on the real issue which is the 'the lack of transparency in our government'. Truly, the lack of accountability in our government has created a sad reality for our country. In light of this, let us now ask ourselves: Where are the press and the various anti-corruption agencies? Why do we as Jamaicans remain deaf, blind and dumb in the face of injustice and corruption? We often settle for the poor, or no, excuses tendered by the government as they seek to cover up their 'mistakes'. Imagine a country where our top officials are held accountable for their actions. This is the second component of an inclusive Jamaica.

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“We are all united by the reality that all colours and all cultures are distinct and individual.” (C. Joybell C. [Writer of philosophical novels]) Jamaica is a nation where multi-racial and multi-cultural influences all contribute to society. However, old and deep-rooted prejudices have resulted in the reality of a divided nation. Discrimination wreaks havoc on our societal fabric and thus we lack unity as a people. So, imagine a nation where racial prejudices, gender biases and other forms of discrimination are detested. Also, imagine a nation where we are unified, and not segregated, as Jamaicans.

“A dream does not become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work.” (Colin Powell) This is the central theme of Martin Luther King Junior’s “I Have a Dream” speech. His speech has given rise to what I call the “Jamaican Dream”. This dream is characterized by “equality in society”, “transparency in government” and “unity as a nation”. In conclusion, this is my dream of an inclusive Jamaica.