

# FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMISSION

## Launch of Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica Code on Corporate Governance

Terra Nova Hotel  
New Kingston

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### Comments at the Launch of the PSOJ Code on Corporate Governance

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Executive Director

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

Let me for a moment address my remarks to the businessmen and entrepreneurs amongst us. What is the difference between your company and a “fly by night” or a “bandit” company? An unkind person might ask “Is there a difference?” Well, I am sure that you know the difference, but what do your customers think? What do your suppliers think? What do your bankers think? What do those nice people at the tax office think? Are there clear lines to be drawn between the good and the bad; the kosher and the non-kosher; the acceptable and the beyond-the-pale?

The answer is: “Of course there are!” But we do know that while the distinctions certainly exist it is often quite difficult to know the difference in real life circumstances. The fact of this real life ambiguity is, perhaps, one of the reasons why it is so easy to lapse into moral and ethical relativism and why it is so

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difficult to defend the maintenance of high standards; except in lip service, of course.

Yet the world, and Jamaica with it, has become increasingly aware of the importance of good quality and high standards in the corporate world. In light of the numerous corporate scandals that have brought many companies to their knees and even into their grave in the last six years, the need for greater accountability, transparency and integrity in our business sector has become increasingly clear. Therefore, for the continued viability of any corporate entity, it is imperative that it explicitly takes responsibility for its own corporate governance. Companies should understand how good governance contributes to their own competitiveness.

It is of absolutely critical value to the law-abiding, the legitimate, the real person trying to produce value for his or her customers, his or her stakeholders and, of course, himself or herself and family that the distinction between the well-governed, on the one hand, and the badly-governed or the ungoverned, on the other, is readily made by the customers and other stakeholders of the enterprise. We can see the appreciation of this in the enormous sums that are spent every day by businesses on advertising and image building. All business people know the value of a good reputation.

“Corporate Governance”, the codes, standards, practices and body of knowledge that the term signifies, represents an effort to put substance behind the image, to create a lasting and substantial basis for making the distinction clearer to customers and stakeholders.

Against this background, I want to commend the Private Sector Organization of Jamaica (“PSOJ”) on this significant achievement, the launching of the Code on Corporate Governance. I am happy to have this opportunity to publicly express the Financial Services Commission’s (“FSC”) endorsement of this seminal piece of work. When this code is adopted by publicly listed companies and non-listed companies that operate in the financial sector, it will be an indication of their commitment to a higher level of transparency and accountability to their shareholders, investors and clients.

In closing, I would like to congratulate all the persons who have played a part in the development of the PSOJ Code of Corporate Governance that we expect will have a positive impact on Jamaica’s corporate landscape.

Thank you.

Brian Wynter

Executive Director  
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