



Presentation to Parliament

by

The Honourable Dr. Nigel Clarke, MP

Customs Tariff (Revision) (Amendment) Resolution, 2018

Mr Speaker, the matter for consideration by this Honourable House is the confirmation of the Customs Tariff (Revision) (Amendment) Resolution, 2018 required to give effect to the implementation of the revised Common External Tariff (CET) based on the new 2017 Harmonized System (HS) of Classification. Section 5 of the Customs Act provides for the House of Representatives, by resolution, to impose import duties, revoke, reduce, increase or alter any duties so imposed and may provide for the importation of any goods without the payment of customs duties.

The HS is the World Customs Organization's (WCO) international multipurpose product nomenclature used as the basis for Customs Tariff and the collection of international trade statistics. The WCO is responsible for the HS and revises the system at regular intervals to ensure that it reflects changes in technology or in patterns of international trade.

Jamaica, being a member of CARICOM, is required to adopt amendments to the CET based on the new 2017 HS. The CARICOM Secretariat requested of Member States to implement the revised CET based on the new 2017 HS effective January 1, 2018. However, Jamaica only received the final draft of the document from CARICOM on March 16, 2018. Consequently, a commitment was given to implement the 2017 HS on

May 14, 2018. The delay in implementing the HS is as a result of further consultation that had to be undertaken between Jamaica and the CARICOM Secretariat as well as other internal stakeholders.

Mr Speaker the Resolution that has been brought before this House provides for the replacement of the current CET based on the 2012 HS with the revised CET based on 2017 HS. The latest version of the HS contains approximately two hundred and thirty-three (233) amendments, in response to changes in the following Sectors: Agricultural; Chemical; Wood; Textile; Base metal; Machinery; Transport; and, other sectors. These amendments were largely driven by changes in trade patterns and practices, technological progress, the necessity to clarify texts to ensure uniform interpretation, and the need to make provision for specific social and environmental developments.

Mr Speaker, this Honorable House is invited to note that the amendments are not to impose higher Tariff, but rather to facilitate the deletion of a number of headings, the merger of some as well as the creation and restructuring of new headings or subheadings.

Mr. Speaker Jamaica remains committed to honouring our obligations under CARICOM to which we are signatories. Accordingly, the Customs Tariff (Revision) (Amendment) Resolution, 2018 is hereby submitted to this Honourable House for Confirmation.