



For Immediate Release

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OTF and JEA Launch The Competitiveness Company

Subsidiary aims to improve Jamaica's export competitiveness

The Jamaica Exporters' Association and OTF Group today launched a new subsidiary, The Competitiveness Company, which has been established for the purpose of supporting Jamaica's efforts to improve its competitiveness.

Speaking at the launch, JEA President Dr. Andre Gordon highlighted the rationale for the formation of the Competitiveness Company and one of the key roles of the new organization as being to develop and ensure the ability of Jamaican firms to be adaptable and able to effectively compete internationally. "The impact of an increasingly open trading environment has meant that the borders between what is the domestic economy and the international economy have grown more porous," he said. "As the global competitive space grows more demanding, we cannot afford to adapt at the speed of evolutionary time." He said that the Competitiveness Company has come out of the association's recognition of its role being more than the voice of the exporting community and lobbying for the interests of members, but also to support the capacity of members to thrive in the new and dynamic global environment.

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P.O. BOX 9, 1 WINCHESTER ROAD, KINGSTON 10, JAMAICA W.I.
TEL: (876) 960, 4908, 960-8884, 968-5812,920-6702
E-mail address: jea@cwjamaica.com
Website: www.exportjamaica.org

The Competitiveness Company2

Competitiveness, which may be defined as the ability to provide differentiated products and services to a sophisticated group of customers who will pay a premium for what is being offered, is a significant issue for companies and governments of all nations, and Jamaica’s ability to compete in international markets is a critical factor for our nation’s development. CSME, FTAA, WTO and Cotonour Trade Agreements give the added relevance and urgency to start up of the Competitiveness Company here.

Funded by the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID), the Competitiveness Company is intended to be a centre of expertise in competitiveness for both the private and public sector to draw on. The company will offer various services to Jamaican firms, government and supporting institutions including cluster advisory services to facilitate groups of firms working together to improve their individual and collective performance, strategy coaching, market research and opportunity identification and policy research.

The launch took the form of a workshop titled “Practicing Competitiveness: From Ideas to Action,” which featured presentations by Sir Alistair McIntyre and Mr. Michael Fairbanks, Chairman of OTF Group, the JEA’s joint venture partner in the new company. The workshop was attended by leaders of the private and public sector.

The Competitiveness Company will be housed within the offices of the Jamaica Exporters’ Association at their new location at 1 Winchester Road, Kingston 10.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Beverly Morgan, Head of the Competitiveness Company, c/o JEA; 876 960 4908
Jeanette Lewis, Katalyst Marketing Communications; 876 381 5700 or 927 6277

P.O. BOX 9, 1 WINCHESTER ROAD, KINGSTON 10, JAMAICA W.I.
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