

**Speaking Notes – Bruce Bowen
Launch - Scotiabank Blood Drive
Wednesday April 15, 2009**

- Greetings and Salutations
- Acknowledgment
- Welcome everyone

- Express personal pleasure for being at an event like this which sees Jamaicans coming out to show love and give personal support for a truly worthy cause – helping our brothers and sisters in dire circumstances to save their lives!

- I am particularly proud as the head of Scotiabank Jamaica, that we are spearheading this initiative. Internationally Scotiabank has a strong and very keen awareness of corporate social responsibility and a strong spirit of volunteerism throughout the 50 countries in which we have our operations.

- Our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a fundamental part of the way we do business at Scotiabank around the globe. We see this as an opportunity for us to build better relationships with all our stakeholders by paying closer attention to how we fulfill our social, economic, environmental and ethical responsibilities.

- In Jamaica we have worked very hard at this on various fronts. Mainly through our Scotiabank Jamaica Foundation and through our Scotia Volunteers and of course through other projects which are supported by the Bank proper – this Blood drive a case in point.

- Most of our CSR takes place through the Scotiabank Jamaica Foundation. Since the Foundation started in 1996, we have spent over \$550 million on numerous projects aimed at improving the circumstances of those less fortunate among us.

- Today we are pleased to say that our support centers on six areas:

1. Accident & Emergency Care
2. Renal Care
3. Cancer Care
4. Student Care
5. Community Care
6. Scoliosis Care

We are committed to helping to improve the quality of health care in Jamaica and this is seen in the clear and extensive support we have given to several local hospitals. These include the University Hospital of the West Indies, the Cornwall Regional Hospital and the Port Antonio Hospital which all have centres which are named after our Foundation and to which we pledge ongoing support year after year.

We have also supported the Bustamante Children Hospital, the Kingston Public Hospital and the Port Antonio Hospitals on repeat occasions.

It is our deep involvement in healthcare which has prompted our interest in this project as these hospitals and the Blood bank work together to save lives by offering the highest standards of quality health care to Jamaicans.

We are aware of the blood banks dire needs and decided to take on the mammoth challenge of assisting them with this major blood drive - through the arm of our Scotiabank Volunteers.

The vision of the Scotia Volunteer programme is for our staff to embrace our philosophy of philanthropy in all we do in and outside of our branches. All **Scotiabankers** live by this principle and we aim to transform communities across Jamaica by improving the quality of life of the most vulnerable in Jamaica.

At Scotiabank we are always seeking to assist in areas where there is a great need and in creating awareness and leading a way for others to follow.

This morning, I want to take some time to highlight the importance of volunteerism and encourage us to take this on in a huge way in 2009.

Volunteerism should be the mantra for all of us we all need each other's help at some point and could never survive – no matter how much money we have and how 'connected' we believe we are.

Volunteerism in this period bears special significance as times get hard and financial resources begin to dry up. NGOS and other community based organizations applying for help may find that donations will be even scarcer as there are other competing priorities - with fewer monies to commit.

Other countries around the world are also encouraging citizens to come out, volunteer and give of themselves to make their countries better. One of our closest neighbours the United States, has taken on the challenge of calling on Americans to come together in this time of adversity. President Barack Obama, has been capitalizing on the traction of his campaign for Presidency to encourage every American to volunteer in an agency or entity that serves the public to truly make a difference.

Many who have lost jobs or hours have seen this as a silver lining to go out and help others- even as they go through their own personal difficulties. This is very admirable!

We too can take the opportunities we have to give of our personal time in meaningful ways and work together to make our communities better.

The projects need not be huge or capital intensive...we can make a difference individually – one on one in a classroom, at our local library, at the hospital, teaching a child, helping a golden ager...there are lots of ways in which we can all give back.

Scotiabank is inviting Jamaicans to look into ourselves and recognize the need we see in each others faces and around our communities each day. Take personal responsibility to reach out and touch the lives of a brother and sister.

We all know what needs to be done and we often complain about the lack of care and compassion that is demonstrated in the public- even for children in need. Look at the appeal the Blood Bank has sent out to facilitate surgery for the 20 youngsters age 1 – 11 who are being operated on at the Bustamante Children hospital today... how many units were raised ...just 25.

But there is hope...we can all remember when the kindness of a stranger made an impact on our lives...pass on the love collectively and Jamaica will become a better place.

We have Andrea Stanley a very eloquent young lady who received 39 units of blood to save her life when she was experiencing difficulty in delivering her baby some years ago. It was the kindness of 39 people who volunteered to donate blood that saved her life!

I am calling on all Jamaicans to ignite a spirit of volunteerism. We need not wait on any special day, teachers day, labour day, reading day or any other special occasion. Let's make it a part of our lifestyle.

I am not just appealing to individuals, but to organizations in the private and public sector to spearhead volunteer programmes, initiatives like this being launched here today. We can rally our employees and spread the spirit of care.

From the executive level right through to frontline staff, lets all encourage our colleagues to go out into the community to make a contribution.

Our 2009 estate of expenditure was made public last week by the government and it showed a *real* decline in the amount of monies that will go towards social services. Global economies and governments the world over are feeling the crunch and don't have the monies to make social interventions which are so desperately needed.

There is only but one way forward – for each and every one of us to get out of our 'comfort' zones and shake off a false sense of security and help to change a life or save a life by volunteering.

At Scotiabank we are constantly trying to think of opportunities and ways that we can continue to give back to the community. Even more importantly, so we are looking for projects in which our volunteers can give of themselves.

Think of the change we could have in our country, if we all give our ourselves, especially in situations were what is needed does not necessarily have to cost us.

Jamaica is a nation that is abounding with talent, and we can volunteer in our schools, churches and communities. Carpenters, painters, teachers, nurses, accountants, professionals in every area go out and volunteers and show Jamaica truly as the land we love!