

SEVENTY-NINTH (79TH) WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY – MAY 2026

Speaking Notes for the Minister of Health and Wellness

Consolidated report by the Director-General: Review of and update on matters considered by the Executive Board – Poliomyelitis

Provisional Agenda Item 14.3

Mr. President,

Jamaica reaffirms its unwavering support for the Polio Eradication Strategy 2022–2026 and the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. As a nation that has been polio-free since 1982, we understand that as long as polio exists anywhere, we all remain at risk of re-importation.

We have taken decisive steps to bolster our defences. Following a national catch-up campaign, Jamaica achieved a significant post-pandemic recovery, with Polio3 coverage jumping from 89% in 2021 to 100% in 2023, 99% in 2024 and 96% in 2025. To further strengthen our routine programme, Jamaica is preparing to introduce the Hexavalent vaccine in 2026. This transition will see our national requirements move to three primary doses of IPV, and providing our children with the highest possible level of protection.

Jamaica remains vigilant to the risk of re-importation and committed to meeting international epidemiological surveillance indicators for Acute Flaccid Paralysis and reverification of the absence of storage of any infectious poliovirus materials, fulfilling our containment obligations.

While we celebrate local successes, we recognize that the global fight is in a critical phase, particularly in conflict-affected settings. Jamaica joins the call for sustained international commitment, predictable financing to finish the job and targeted measures to reach zero-dose children in the most vulnerable communities.

Jamaica remains a committed partner in the journey toward a polio-free world. We must not allow the finish line to slip away.

Thank you.