

Britain seeks to strengthen ties with Jamaica

The United Kingdom plans to help create more than 10,000 jobs, strengthen crime-fighting efforts, and improve Jamaica's preparedness for natural disasters as it increases its development commitment to the Caribbean over the next four years.

The announcement was made over the weekend by Andrew Mitchell, Britain's secretary of state for international development. Mitchell was in Jamaica on an official visit to improve international relations between the two countries.

The 75 million pound sterling plan for the year falls under the UK Department for International Development's (DFID) Regional Programme.

The Jamaica Gleaner reported that the UK's assistance to Jamaica is expected to target 50 volatile inner city communities. An estimated 142,000 persons are slated to get access to basic services such as reliable water supply and garbage collection. A total of 13,000 persons should also receive training and job opportunities.

The UK will also support law enforcement agencies engaged in seizing assets of organised criminals across the eastern Caribbean in a plan to confiscate 5 million pounds sterling worth of the proceeds of crime over the next four years.