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JAMPRO hosts inward trade mission from Cuba as Agency seeks to boost export to Caribbean region

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Following its Caribbean Market Mission initiative to boost regional export, Jamaica's trade and investment promotions agency, JAMPRO, is this week hosting a Cuban delegation representing 10 organisations for a week-long trade mission from July 17-to 21, 2017.

The trade mission, a result of JAMPRO's Cuban market development programme, will have representatives from Cuban State Agencies such as the National Bank of Cuba, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment, Ministry of Domestic Trade, the Chamber of Commerce of Cuba, and key enterprises like QUIMIMPORT (chemicals), CORALSA (food), QUIMIMPEX (exports and imports), CUBASOL S.A. and IMECO (construction). CUBASOL S.A. is an entrepreneurial group composed of important agencies and enterprises related to the Tourism industry. Jamaican companies will get the opportunity to promote their products for export to Cuba through factory visits organized by JAMPRO, as well as meetings with the Cuban companies to initiate negotiations for the sale of locally manufactured products. The Cuban representatives will tour Jamaican companies, to understand the country's capacity for manufacturing to meet the demand of the Cuban market, with a population of 11 Million. The delegation will also meet with Jamaican government counterparts to discuss improving the

exporting process to Cuba. The mission will end with the “Doing Business with Cuba” seminar hosted by JAMPRO to provide companies with the knowledge necessary to do business in the country. A highlight of the seminar is a presentation on the CARICOM-Cuba trade agreement.

*“Having targeted the Cuban market through our many missions there, especially to FIHAV, The Havana International Fair, and hospitality trade fair HostelCuba, we needed to take the next step to cement the relationships we had initiated and concretise the demand we had identified,”* said Diane Edwards, President of JAMPRO.

Vice President of Export and Market Development at JAMPRO Robert Scott added that the inward trade visit represents a leap forward for Jamaican companies, and suggests that Jamaica is now on the radar of the Cuban buying authorities. VP Scott said, *“Success in the Cuban market requires persistent interactions over several years to encourage relationship building and knowledge of what is needed in that market. This mission is a breakthrough as it means our companies now have the opportunity to build relationships with key Cuban business organisations and buyers in the Jamaican space. For those who are already in contact with Cuba, they can now showcase the professionalism of their operations and convince the delegation of their ability to supply consistently high quality. We are excited about the possibilities for this mission, and we are pleased to receive support from the Embassy of Cuba in Jamaica and our embassy in Cuba. They have proactively encouraged business and dialogue between Jamaica and Cuba.”*

According to His Excellency Bernardo Guanche Hernández, Cuba’s Ambassador to Jamaica, the mission is part of a continuous effort to build trade between Jamaica and Cuba and encourage knowledge sharing between both countries. He explained, *“Thanks to the efficient and gracious work by JAMPRO, the Cuban delegation will visit Jamaica to fulfil an extensive agenda. The visit is part of the efforts carried out by both countries to increase trade and businesses in concordance with the excellent level of bilateral relations between Cuba and Jamaica.”*

*This trade mission gives continuity to the visit by Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade and Investment of Cuba (MINCEX), Ileana Nunez Mordoche, in May 2016, as part of a tour to the Caribbean, signaling the commitment we have made to boost trade. I am pleased to say that we believe we’re making significant headway in this effort, and I look forward to the outcomes of the mission to Jamaica.”*

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