

DON WEHBY'S OPENING REMARKS
AT THE SIGNING OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
(USAID) AND THE GRACE AND STAFF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
FOUNDATION AND THE GRACEKENNEDY FOUNDATION
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2011 @ 11AM IN THE MULTI-FUNCTION ROOM,
GRACEKENNEDY HEAD OFFICE, 73 HARBOUR STREET, KINGSTON

Dr. Karen Hilliard, Mission Director, USAID, Mr. James-Moss-Solomon, Chairman, Grace and Staff Community Development Foundation, GraceKennedy Executive Chairman, Douglas Orane, members of the Grace and Staff Community Development Foundation Board, and the Board of the GraceKennedy Foundation, other GraceKennedy Executives, Representatives from corporate entities, other specially invited guests, ladies and gentlemen, members of the media, it is with profound pride that I stand here this morning, to welcome you all to what is a very significant day for GraceKennedy. Those of you who are here from corporate entities share our belief in and passion for nation building, particularly through education. The signing of this memorandum of understanding today, will give us even more power to help even more, in making an even bigger difference in changing lives, and changing Jamaica.

This would not be possible without the kind assistance of the United States Agency for International Development, whose contribution to Jamaica's development should be recognised and commended. I want to also make special mention of Dr. Karen Hilliard, and the wonderful work she has been doing in her role as Mission Director. Jamaica is better off for it.

We have some very distinguished individuals from different corporate entities this morning who believe very strongly, as we do, in corporate social responsibility. You have even collaborated with us on some occasions on different projects. Welcome to you, and thank you for your dedicated interest in building Jamaica.

I also want to thank the people from our end who have been working assiduously behind the scenes to make this MOU a reality, especially our Executive Chairman, Douglas Orane. This partnership is a natural fit, as both GraceKennedy and the USAID share the same objectives.

We both want to see Jamaica become better, through the alleviation of poverty, suffering and distress, the facilitation of education for those who cannot otherwise afford it, the improvement of economic, social and environmental conditions in vulnerable communities, and the reduction of crime and violence through economic opportunity. We are trying to effect all of this through the tireless work of the GraceKennedy Foundation, and the Grace and Staff Community Development Foundation. It is work of which we are exceedingly proud. The Memorandum of Understanding being signed today will help to ensure that our efforts are bolstered, and that the work continues.

Of course not many people would be aware of the work we are doing through our Foundations without the help of the media, and so we thank you for helping us spread the good news of GraceKennedy. Thank you for your presence here today, and we look forward to your help in keeping the word out there about the work we continue to do.

Through this memorandum of understanding, we intend to improve the academic performance of students in targeted areas attending primary and secondary schools, improve health care among vulnerable groups, improve access to proper and effective medical treatment, and provide skills for employability. Through this partnership, we will be doing our part in contributing to the advancement of Jamaica's national development strategy, Vision 2030. We recognise that we have a responsibility beyond our basic responsibility to our shareholders – a responsibility to our stakeholders, customers, employees, and the people of the community, and by extension the country within which we operate.

I would like to thank each of you for taking time out of your schedules to be with us to share in this occasion. You will witness today another bold step in our bid to take what is good for Jamaica and make it good for GraceKennedy. Thank you very much.