



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Jamaica Welcomes Millionth Passenger

Montego Bay, Jamaica, 15 August 2021 // Today, a team of tourism officials welcomed Jamaica's millionth passenger at Sangster International Airport (SIA) since the country opened its borders on June 15, 2020.

Daynel Williams who arrived on Jetblue flight from New York at 12:54 pm with her parents and 2 children were greeted by the Minister of Tourism Hon Edmund Bartlett, Director of Tourism Donovan White and other tourism partners.

Ms. William and her parents were surprised and stated "I am speechless, I was not expecting this and we are really happy to be back in Jamaica." Ms. William's parents have been travelling to Jamaica for the last 30 years and did not visit last year due to the pandemic.

"The arrival of Daynel Williams, our millionth visitor since safely reopening, is an exciting milestone in Jamaica's tourism recovery," said Bartlett. "This moment is a testament to the hard work from all of our tourism workers and the success of the Jamaica CARES program, which has above all else, prioritized the health and safety of Jamaican citizens and visitors."

Since reopening, Jamaica has successfully implemented the Jamaica CARES program, which includes extensive health and safety protocols, entry testing, COVID-19 training for hospitality workers and travel authorization for every guest visiting the island. COVID-19 compliance certification is also required for hotels and attractions to ensure the safety of staff and guests.

"This is the fastest we have achieved one million visitors starting from zero arrivals and we are already seeing the signs of recovery with tourism workers being back on the job and earnings reaching US\$1.5Billion," added Minister Bartlett.

The extensive health and safety protocols have contributed to the continued rise of Jamaica's visitor arrivals. Tourism levels for 2023 are currently projected to hit 3.7 million visitors and \$3.5 billion in revenue, with 2024 on track to surpass 2019 levels with 4.2 million visitors and \$4 billion in tourism revenue.

"We're so proud of the Jamaica tourism sector and honoured by the influx of support since reopening 14 months ago," said White. "Jamaica has so much to offer visitors, and I'm thrilled to see one million guests take advantage of our country's diverse amenities and attractions."

Meanwhile, Chief Executive Officer of MJB Airports, Shane Munroe said that he is pleased with the positive trend in arriving traffic for 2021 and states that July numbers represents 70% of 2019. He added that he is satisfied that over 5,000 airport workers have returned to work and that MJB has positioned the airport to be ready for when traffic reverts to 100% with major infrastructural projects currently being undertaken.



Audley Deidrick of Airports Authority of Jamaica added “The arrival of the millionth visitor at MBJ is a clear signal that our travel and tourism industry is on the recovery path. Commendation is in order for the stakeholders of this very powerful and important industry to our economy for their commitment in seeing to this milestone achievement, as we focus on full recovery in the shortest possible timeframe.”



Minister of Tourism, Hon Edmund Bartlett (C), greets Daynel Williams, 4th L, Jamaica’s one millionth visitor at the Sangster International Airport in Montego Bay (MBJ). Sharing in the milestone moment are, from L-R, Director of Tourism, Donovan White, Shane Munroe, CEO MBJ Airports Limited, Kerry Ann Quallo-Casserly, Commercial Director, Royalton, Nadine Spence, Area Chair, Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA), Audley Deidrick, President & CEO, Airports Authority of Jamaica (AAJ). Daynel’s family, Father, Austin Williams (2nd L) Mother Jennifer Williams (front row) and children Keon and Keona Francis, were also present.

About MBJ Airports:

MBJ Airports Limited, operator of Sangster International Airport, connects Jamaica to more than 60 international destinations. A record of 4.7m passengers used the airport in 2019. MBJ operates SIA under a 30-year concession awarded in 2003 and the airport provides employment to more than 7,500 persons. SIA has been named the Caribbean’s Leading Airport by World Travel Awards for 13 years as well as Conde Nast Traveler Readers’ Choice Awards 2020 – Top 5 Best Airports in the World.

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