

## Jamaica receives PATWA award

Jamaica has secured yet another award after the destination was recognized as the "Best Emerging Tourism Market" by PATWA (Pacific Area Travel Writers Association) at the organization's annual Awards, held at the International Tourism Exchange (ITB Berlin), the world's biggest tourism trade fair, on Thursday March 10.

Minister for Tourism, the Hon. Edmund Bartlett, who was the guest speaker at the event, received the award minutes after his presentation, which focused on his vision of a Tourism Global Mandate concerning an eco-friendly and sustainable future for the tourism product.

On receiving the award, Minister Bartlett said "it has been a significant and proud year for Jamaica in terms of being recognized by many of our peers for our tourism product offering and this award for Best Emerging Tourism Market by PATWA is no exception."

"What has made this year's PATWA Awards even more significant was the attendance of Taleb Rifai, Secretary General for the World Tourism Organization. His presence and input can only strengthen the strategic path that both PATWA and Jamaica are currently heading down," Minister Bartlett added.

PATWA serves as a helpful and useful medium for all agencies involved in the travel and tourism industry, to exchange their ideas, experiences and disseminate information about new developments in their respective areas of activity, in newsletters, which serve as a vehicle to carry vital information.

Minister Bartlett commented that "Jamaica has always been a strong partner of the PATWA organization as its ethos for a global sustainable tourism product is in line with Jamaica's development strategy.

The Minister in his speech expressed that "tourism is one of the key primary drivers for growth in terms of the world economy but its development is accompanied by sustainable related challenges. Therefore, I feel that my vision for this mandate will, in the long term, create economic wellbeing in addition to bringing people of different cultures and ethnic backgrounds together in harmonic relationships and ultimately promote peace. This is already something that Jamaica does very well, both historically and in the present day."

Minister Bartlett added that "the challenge now is to mobilize and maximize tourism investment, so as to provide better access to the tools and financing for small and medium sized enterprises. This needs to be channeled through Governments and international organizations and also through public and private partnerships. This will then enable countries like Jamaica to drive policy, support and subsidize investment in green tourism and thus support a green and sustainable economy."

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