

## New Jamaica PM Makes Minor Cabinet Shifts

Jamaica's new prime minister appointed his government on Tuesday, leaving nearly all ministries unchanged while making relatively minor shifts that he said would accelerate administrative and economic reforms.

Prime Minister Andrew Holness said his Cabinet represented a "new direction" for the Caribbean island while also providing stability. Yet his picks represented more continuity than change. Holness kept many of the top ministers of predecessor Bruce Golding, who abruptly announced in late September that he was stepping down. Among the holdovers were the ministers of justice, foreign affairs and energy. "The Jamaican people want to see decisive, instrumental and quick action because their challenges and problems are urgent," Holness said Tuesday night. "In striking that balance you have to contend with a limited learning curve so you want to have change, but you certainly do not want to have chaos in change." As prime minister, Holness kept the education portfolio he had in Golding's administration, while shifting planning responsibilities to the ministries of finance and housing. He appointed Sen. Arthur Williams as a minister without portfolio in charge of public service and information while shifting Daryl Vaz from the Information Ministry to a post in the prime minister's office overseeing telecommunications and public sector efficiency. Lawmaker Shahine Robinson became the second woman in Holness' Cabinet, overseeing housing, environment and local government issues. Last year, Robinson was forced to defend her northeastern St. Ann parish seat after revealing that she held U.S. citizenship in violation of constitutional law. On Monday, he announced he was retaining the ministers of finance and national security. Holness had vowed in his Sunday inauguration to continue many of the previous government's policies, including tax reform, poverty reduction, anti-corruption measures and fulfillment of obligations with international partners. Many analysts believe Holness will call general elections soon instead of allowing tough economic realities to weigh down his early days as prime minister. The country has seen two quarters of slight economic growth this year, but average Jamaicans continue to struggle.