

Good evening.

Thank you for inviting me, at such an esteemed level, into your club, the Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica. This is a very great honour for me.

You have just watched something about my past, how I came to be here tonight.

When I started Island Records in Jamaica, it was because I was captivated by the musical talent and natural showmanship I saw at the concerts that used to take place at Palace Theatre in East Kingston. That's where I saw Wilfred Edwards, Laurel Aitken and Owen Gray, the three first artists I recorded, with the first three singles I produced - they each went to No.1 in the Jamaican charts

My Granny specially loved Little Sheila, the song Laurel Aitken recorded and she said ' that 's gonna be a hit ! That's what you should do!

A year or so later, Dr No, the first James Bond movie was filmed here in Jamaica I was the local production manager.

This was the first of what was to become the most successful franchise in the history of the film business.

The James Bond character was born in Jamaica Ian Fleming wrote every book at Goldeneye his winter home in St Mary.

After the production here was completed I went to England and formed Island Records to market to the Jamaican community who was thirsty for this new music from home.

But I was not able to widen the market beyond the West Indian community in England until the big break came with My Boy Lollipop by Millie Small which became a huge hit internationally . The musical arrangement was done by Ernest Ranglin, another Jamaican and a World class jazz guitarist

- like what Saturday Night Fever did for disco music and Blackboard Jungle did for rock n' roll - The Harder They Come, directed by Perry Henzell did for Jamaican music. Because of Perry's film a Worldwide interest in

Jamaican culture was set on its historic course:

Soon after, we launched the album called 'Catch A Fire' by Bob Marley and he took his music across Europe then America and now Jamaican music is being played in every corner of the World.

People were puzzled as to why an island of less than 3 million people should have had such an enormous impact on the rest of the planet. And all this was even before Lennox Lewis became world champ and Usain Bolt the fastest human of all time and in fact the whole Jamaican athletic team who are collecting more gold medals than it seems possible.

In 1989, I went to Miami to do a video for one of the artists I was working with, and I recognised the potential of what at the time was the rundown area of South Beach; and so after I sold the record company I invested in a number of hotels, including the Marlin and The Tides. I was one of the first people to invest in South Beach and create its renaissance - I believed in it - I saw what it could become - I see the same potential in Jamaica today

One of the reasons I sold Island Records was to form Island Outpost and expand my interests in Jamaica by developing a smaller up market type of resort that would focus on the natural beauty of Jamaica and its people.

I developed Strawberry Hill - Sally and Jason Henzell developed Jakes - Bertram and Greerann Saulter developed The Caves and now Island Outpost is expanding by building and selling 22 waterfront cottages and introducing a new destination spa at Goldeneye. Yes the same place James Bond was born.

I would like to thank DBJ, Milverton Reynolds, FCIB, PanJam and NCB.

I know we will continue to attract the very finest visitors from the worlds of finance, entertainment, the arts, fashion and media and through that, international publicity and positive press coverage about Jamaica.

The fact that the third international airport is located within 15 minutes of Goldeneye will assure it builds on its reputation as one of the Worlds most beautiful resorts

A large part of the purpose of the Goldeneye project is to act as a spark to ignite further development of the Oracabessa area as Jason has with Jakes at

Treasure Beach.

I have long had a deep seated belief in destination tourism, through which visitors will be made to feel sufficiently at ease to explore the locations in which their hotel is located and other seaside towns or mountain villages and meet the people and support the small businesses the people will clearly benefit, and the visitors will keep returning to Jamaica instead of going somewhere else just because the hotel rooms may be 5 dollars cheaper.

I would like to admit here that these are not new ideas - this direction was that of my great hero and mentor, the late John Pringle who built Round Hill which is still after sixty years the hotel that attracts the top international clientele.

This, of course, is part of the philosophy that urges us to act locally but think globally. And, based on my previous experience, I can only say that if you think Jamaican, you can uplift the entire planet.

Simply said, we have a natural and unique product here....we don't have to change it....we only need to build upon it. We don't have to imitate what anyone else has...we already have what they want so let's keep it real! Let's keep it simple.

We must protect the environment we must encourage the arts

I am proud to be involved with Dr Nigel Clarke in launching a new initiative in the National Youth Orchestra of Jamaica

We have a lot to celebrate ...successes in music, entertainment, athletics and agriculture.

But let us also generate an excitement about the future...that is what I aspire to do.

Let's keep a close eye on what is yet to come.

In fact, I believe that the best is yet to come...

Finally, thank you again, on behalf of myself and all those who made my success possible...I am truly honoured

