



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2015 Jamaica Charity Gala to Honor President and CEO of Sagicor Group Jamaica Limited, Mr. Richard Owen Byles and Monsignor Gregory Ramkissoon – FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 2015, MIAMI, FL

New York, NY (January 12, 2015) – The American Friends of Jamaica, Inc. (AFJ), celebrates over three decades of giving to help those in need in Jamaica. The 2015 Jamaica Charity Gala in Miami will be held on Friday, April 17, 2015 at the elegant JW Marriott Marquis Miami. Mr. Richard Owen Byles, President and Chief Executive Officer of Sagicor Group Jamaica Limited and Monsignor Gregory Ramkissoon of Mustard Seed Communities will be presented with the 2015 AFJ International Humanitarian Award.

“We are so pleased to honor Mr. Byles and Monsignor Ramkissoon with the 2015 AFJ International Humanitarian Award,” said President, Ambassador Brenda Johnson. “This prestigious award highlights their important contribution and helps bring awareness to causes in Jamaica that our audience can support.”

Mr. Richard Owen Byles is the President and CEO of Sagicor Group Jamaica Limited. He has demonstrated remarkable leadership in his stewardship of two of Jamaica’s top financial entities over the past 23 years; leading to record profits. He is Co-Chairman of Jamaica’s Economic Programme Oversight Committee (EPOC) which is charged with oversight of the implementation of the IMF Agreement with the Government of Jamaica since 2013. In the past year, he has received numerous accolades and has been awarded with the 2014 Gleaner Honor Award in the Business Category. The AMCHAM Civic Leadership Award for Excellence and the UTECH Corporate Entrepreneur of the Year 2014 for his strong sense of corporate culture, success and governance.

Monsignor Gregory Ramkissoon started Mustard Seeds Communities (MSC) in 1978. Monsignor has demonstrated strong social commitments. Nurturing faith and empathizing with the plight of the poor remains his central goal. Monsignor is tirelessly engrossed in the problems of society’s poorest people. He has devised practical solutions to help those in need.

Funds raised from the Gala will support the organization’s mission of improving the lives of Jamaicans by supporting initiatives that advance self-sufficiency, promote healthy communities and strengthen the nation. Former AFJ International Humanitarian Awardees include Robert Levy, Thalia Lyn, Coach Glen Mills, Maurice Facey, Orville “Shaggy” Burrell, Denis O’Brien, Dave Barger, Ralph & Ricky Lauren and Harry Belafonte to name a few.

About the AFJ

Founded in 1982, the American Friends of Jamaica is a charitable 501(c)(3) organization built on the principles of service and philanthropy; and is established to render assistance in the areas of Education, Healthcare, and Economic Development. The AFJ works with a broad coalition of Jamaican organizations and stakeholders to bring about change in the lives of Jamaicans in need. The AFJ Grant Cycle begins at the end of each year and grants are disbursed in April of the following year. To learn more about the AFJ and to purchase tickets to attend the Jamaica Charity Gala, please visit www.theafj.org.

The Gala was executed through a successful collaboration with the Jamaica Committee over the past two years. The Jamaica Charity Gala is the AFJ's premier fundraising event at which patrons have an opportunity to support the organization's mission and enjoy a splendid affair for the benefit of Jamaica.

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