

Mr. Lipton Matthews

I understand the Ministry is overloaded with daily work and there might be general info on their website.

Anyway I'll try to give a short memo on what an Honorary Consul for Jamaica to Sweden does.

Honorary means that you're not paid, I usually say to jamaicans asking for money. You have to pay everything from your own pocket including telephones and stamps. Jamaicans in trouble contact the consulate and ask for economic assistance. But there are no funds for such arends. Also Jamaican dignitaries as Ministers, former Prime Ministers, High Commissioners etcetera await to be transported and have lunch and dinners etcetera paid during their visit to Sweden. If you're invited to London or Kingston to meetings, diplomatic conferences you have to pay everything yourself.

The first mission is to handle consular arends. A consulate is not authorized to issue new passports but we have to assist jamaicans with stolen/lost or renewal of new passports to fill in application form and to certify the identity. I issue visas for tourists wearing foreign passports needing visa to enter Jamaica, see www.jhcuk.com, students, business, work for people living in Sweden, Denmark (the consul died 3 years ago), Finland (the consul resigned last November), The Baltic and other countries. If sent by mail you have to go to the post office yourself to pick and resend by insured mail. Certify peoples' identities. Jamaican authorities don't understand that a swedish extract from population register is the only official paper you'll get corresponding to a jamaican Birth Certificate. You'll need that with our legalizing to get married in Jamaica. We do legalize documents for eg business with jamaican companies. Companies as Ericsson, Astra Zeneca, Wartsila, Orion Pharma, Novo, Pihl&Son from Sweden, Finland and Denmark.

A second mission is to support trade between Sweden and Jamaica. Just now I'm preparing an invitation list for a Jamaican Investment Forum led by Prime Minister Bruce Golding 1-2 December in Moby. Newly I met High Commissioner Anthony Smith Johnson in London and he asked me to give priority to find the right companies and persons in the Nordic countries. Last year together with the swedish ambassador to the Carriibbean countries, Mr Claes Hammar, we prepared a study visit of five from Jamaica's Ministry for Economic Affairs, about public pension systems. It was a request from IMF. Minister for Trade Samuda asked us to prepare a one week long visit with meetings with important swedish and danish companies. Both these visits were cancelled with short notice (a week or two).

Then you have to handle jamaicans in trouble. For the moment I have two in prison. One 4 years for robbing a money transport. The other 22 years old, got 2 years for rape. His mother often calls me from Kingston sometimes in the middle of the night (she doesn't understand there's a time skill of 10 hours). Same thing happens with borderline police, journalists, ordinary jamaican people who intend to study, work in Sweden or ask me to give the address and phone number to "Lars in Stockholm" who made me pregnant here in Negril..... Another girl wanted me to get a nursery to her daughter while she looked for the father "Fredrik in Stockholm". Jamaicans need Schengen visa to visit Sweden and don't understand that they should go to the swedish consulate in Kingston. The other day I got a letter from a man in Kingston asking me to send the address to the swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Stockholm. In Sweden we have some 90 Jamaicans with only Jamaican passport and some 350 persons with one or both parents from Jamaica. A few of them are well educated. The others not. 2002 I formed Jamaica-Sweden Community www.jamaica-sweden.se. Around August 6th we've celebrated Independence Day with a family party in Stockholm. But all of a sudden someone thought that the Community not should have the consul as chairman. Then with a new chairman the committée started internal quarrells and fell apart. Four jamaicans just now are seeking divorce. Lots of children problems. Some of them await me to be their unpaid defence lawyer or want me to accompany them to their layers and trials. Some time ago I did help one reggae artist accused for rape. I saw him four times while he was in custody and wasn't allowed to see anyone but his defender and me. I spent two days at the court. Talked to the judge and jury. The judge wanted to send him to prison for two years. The two ladies in the jury released him. His defender whispered to me - if he's not out of Sweden tomorrow afternoon the judge will sustain and he will be in custody next day. So I bought him a single ticket with SAS and British Airways for USD2000 from my own pocket. Gave him one of my own bags to bring his luggage and got jeans and clothes from my son (both were extremely thin and had same size). Drove him in my car to the airport. Gave him a

letter from the consulate and asked the board police to contact me if any questions (they called me at every boarder because he had illegally stayed in Europe too long and I explained he had been into custody). Last thing I did was to give him USD100 to buy food. His last word was: "Mr. Lennart, look at my shoes. I can't meet my mother in these. Please give me money to buy new shoes." I never heard a "Thank you."

Anyway. Most of the Jamaicans in Sweden are very nice people. They appreciate my assistance and we're even good friends. Some bring a gift - a t-shirt, Blue Mountain Coffee or a bottle of rum when they return from a visit to Jamaica or as a thank you for helping me to bring my 10 year old daughter from Jamaica to Sweden. I'm very keen to put the child's best first, which some time give me enemies. Most Jamaicans are very grateful to me as their consul. I'm easy to get in touch with. They get prompt answers and assistance. The staff at Jamaican High Commission in London is very polite, easy to find and they help me to solve any problem. They understand that I have a job to support me and my family together with my mission as honorary consul.

Now the young boy is calling me from the prison. Hope this short report was a kind of answer to your mail.