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**JAMAICA DEFENCE FORCE OFFICER RETURNS**  
**FROM TOUR OF DUTY IN AFGHANISTAN WITH CANADIAN FORCES**

In a first-of-its-kind exchange, Lieutenant (Lt) Carl CLARKE of the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) recently returned from a nine-month deployment to Afghanistan, as part of an agreement between the Canadian Forces (CF) and the JDF.

Lt CLARKE acted as Squadron Engineer Duty Officer with the Construction Management Organization of Joint Task Force Afghanistan Head Quarters. He spent much of his time helping with the reconstruction effort in Afghanistan, working out of Forward Operating Bases (FOB) in Canada's area of operations in Kandahar Province. Through this, Lt CLARKE acquired experience and a skill set he will be able to impart to his colleagues upon his return to Jamaica.

The Honourable Peter MacKAY, Canada's Minister of Defence and Minister of the Atlantic Gateway said "the Canadian Forces is proud that we were able to have Lt CLARKE join us in our important work in Afghanistan." He added that "working cooperatively with the JDF is an important part of Canada's contribution to the security pillar of the Government's Americas Strategy in the Western Hemisphere."

Similarly, the Minister of National Security, Senator the Honourable Dwight NELSON praised Lt CLARKE's return from his tour of duty in Afghanistan saying that "this is a manifestation of the proud history of contribution to international forces as they address various security developments worldwide. Lt CLARKE's accomplishments serve as eloquent testimony to the training rendered by the JDF and the professionalism of many of its soldiers."

To prepare for his deployment, Lt CLARKE underwent the same pre-deployment and theatre specific mission training that all members of the Canadian Forces being deployed to Afghanistan receive. Prior to deployment, Lt CLARKE was attached to 14 Construction Engineer Squadron in Bridgewater, NS.

As part of the Joint Task Force Afghanistan Headquarters, the Construction Management Organization travels to communities in Afghanistan and hires local labour to complete their reconstruction projects.

Lt CLARKE's deployment to Afghanistan was as a result of the long-standing and close working relationship between the CF and the JDF, which was strengthened further during two major military exercises held in Jamaica in 2008.

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