

**NEWS RELEASE
EXTERNAL TRADE BULLETIN**

April 2008

August 7, 2008

The January to April 2008 External Trade Bulletin released by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica showed that Jamaica's expenditure on imports during the review period amounted to US\$2,531.4 million. This was an increase US\$556.5 million, or 28.2 per cent above the amount recorded for the similar 2007 period.

A total export was valued at US\$835.3 million. An upward movement of US\$78.7 million, or 10.4 per cent.

At the end of the period, the trade deficit stood at US\$1,696.2 million. When compared to the amount recorded for the similar period of the previous year, the trade gap widened by US\$477.8 million or 39.2 per cent.

"Mineral Fuels, etcetera" was the chief commodity group imported and was valued at US\$938.9 million accounting for 37.1 per cent of the country's total import bill. "Machinery and Transport Equipment" was valued at US\$419.8 million, an increase of US\$5.3 million or 1.3 per cent. "Chemicals" during January to April 2008 review period was valued at US\$314.6 million, growing by US\$64.4 million or 25.8 per cent. "Manufactured Goods" amounted US\$ 281.8 million were imported during the period under review. "Food" imports were US\$278.5 million. This was 46.2 million greater than the US\$ 232.3 million recorded in 2007.

Domestic Exports for the first four months of 2008 were valued at US\$808.9 million, growing by 9.3 per cent. Re-exports for the period were valued at US\$26.4 million, an increase of 9.8 million or 58.8 per cent, of which "Machinery and Transport Equipment" earned US\$18.8 million an increase of US\$ 7.6 million or 68.6 per cent.

Traditional domestic exports during the January to April 2008 period earned US\$551.7 million which account 68.2 per cent of total domestic export. When compared to the US\$517.1 recorded for the similar 2007 period. Non-traditional domestic exports were valued at US\$257.2 million, increasing by US\$34.3 million or 15.4 per cent.

Imports from CARICOM during the period January to April 2008 totaled US\$436.3 million, increasing by US\$82.4 million or 23.3 per cent. Total exports to CARICOM partners earned US\$20.5 million, increasing above the US\$18.0 million earned the comparable 2007 period. At the end of the period the trade deficit was US\$415.9 million, widening the gap by US\$80.0 million or 23.8 per cent.

The April 2008 External Trade Bulletin outlines additional information and may be obtained at our Distribution Office, 7 Cecelio Avenue, Kingston 10. Data is also available on the STATIN website at www.statinja.com.