

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

July 2, 2024

### **HDC recovers \$millions during its Collection Drive**

During a Sitting of the Senate held on Tuesday, July 2, 2024, the Honourable Camille Robinson-Regis, Minister of Housing and Urban Development, was asked to provide the circumstances surrounding what was deemed as, “the sudden evictions of HDC tenants in April 2024”.

Below is Minister Robinson-Regis’ response:

“Mr. President, contrary to the assertion made by the question, these evictions were not sudden. The HDC has adhered to a structured and transparent process, ensuring that tenants receive ample notice and multiple opportunities to address their arrears before any eviction occurs.

The HDC, in collaboration with its Subsidiary - the Asset Management Company Limited (AMCoL), is continuing its Collection Drive throughout the country and since its inception in 2005, the HDC has primarily evicted illegal occupants of units because of illegal occupancy or arrears of rentals.

- In 2009 there were eighteen (18) evictions;
- In 2010 there were twenty (20) evictions;
- In 2011 there were twenty-eight (28) evictions;
- In 2012 there were thirty-three (33) evictions;
- In 2015 there were eight (8) evictions;
- In 2016, there were fifteen (15) evictions;
- In 2017, there were eighty (80) evictions;
- In 2018, there were fourteen (14) evictions;
- In 2019, there were ninety (90) evictions;
- In 2022, there were (13) evictions;
- In 2023 there were seven (7) and
- In 2024, thus far, there have been twenty-three (23) – five (5) of them being for illegal occupancy, seventeen (17) for arrears and one (1) for subletting.

Mr. President, from the 394 evictions conducted over the period 2009 to 2024, 376 were for illegal occupancy. And in 2024, the evictions are for arrears and for subletting.

Mr. President, the Tenants who have been evicted in 2024 for arrears were to pay monthly rentals of either \$800, \$1,200, \$1,500 or \$1,800. These tenants did not respond to the HDC's numerous attempts to encourage them to pay their arrears either by way of lump sum payments or through a payment plan. They also did not inform the HDC of any issues or challenges that prevented them from paying their arrears or honouring their monthly commitments.

Mr. President, the units from which these persons were evicted are being reallocated to other persons on the HDC's database. It is expected that evicted tenants will still settle their arrears.

As of April 30, 2024, the arrears are for rent-to-own units and the amount owing to the HDC and its Subsidiary is two million, one hundred and five thousand, nine hundred and fourteen dollars and thirty-two cents (\$2,105,914.32).

For persons in the Licence-to-Occupy Units (LTOs), the arrears are at ninety-one million, four hundred and seventy-eight thousand, three hundred and fifty-five dollars and sixty-six cents (\$91,478,355.66).

For Rental Units, the arrears stand at seventy-six million, seven hundred and forty-five thousand, three hundred and eighty-three dollars and seventy-nine cents (\$76,745,383.79).

For Mortgages that have been given by the HDC as in-house mortgages, the arrears are at sixty-seven million, seven hundred and twelve thousand, six hundred and twenty-one dollars and nineteen cents (\$67,712,621.19).

And, for the commercial properties, the arrears stand at three million, six hundred and ninety thousand, one hundred and eighty-six dollars and ninety-two cents (\$3,690,186.92).

Mr. President, the HDC continues to extend its responsibility to taxpayers and must collect outstanding arrears. Failure to do so may lead to evictions in various housing developments nationwide, and we will not resile from this.

This measure is necessary to recover unpaid rent, totalling two hundred and forty-one point seven million dollars (\$241.7 million), to prevent the exploitation of State resources that have been allocated to provide affordable housing to those in greatest need.

The average collection per month for the last nine (9) months since we started the eviction with the exception of November 2023 and December 2023 was approximately six million dollars (\$6,000,000).

It is imperative to highlight that the Collection Drive has yielded significant results, and thus far as at April 2024, the collection has yielded an amount of nine million dollars (\$9,000,000) collected from errant tenants.”

Minister Robinson-Regis was responding to the question raised by Senator Wade Mark.

**END**