DIAHANN J.T. GORDON HARRISON

ATTORNEY-AT-LAW

SUMMARY OF PROFILE:

An accomplished Attorney-at-Law and Executive Professional (based in Jamaica) with over 25 years of experience providing strategic legal counsel, guidance on governance, safeguarding oversight and organizational leadership across diverse settings, including a Commission of Parliament. Proven track record in litigation, policy & legislative development advice, advocacy, legal/judicial training development and execution, juvenile justice systems, family law, international child rights/human rights law, criminal law and stakeholder engagement.

OBJECTIVE

To utilize my legal skills to enhance protective frameworks and to improve accountability measures and programmatic results for vulnerable cohorts.

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CORE COMPETENCIES

Collaborative team player

Effective Leadership Abiliities

Ability to Work in Sensitive & High-Pressure Environments

Strong Ability to Analyze Situations Quickly

Adaptable to Change

Strong Verbal & Written Communication Skills

Public Advocacy & Media Relations

BOARD/ROSTER MEMBERSHIP

ISPCAN: 2020 – 2026

G100 Anti-Human Trafficking Wing: Jamaica Country Chair: 2024 - Present

National Parenting Support Commission: 2016 - Present

Justice Rapid Response Roster of Global Experts: 2019 – Present

Inter-Ministerial Committee on Human Rights: 2016 - Present

Caribbean Coalition Against Trafficking in Persons: 2024 - Present

Over the past twenty-six (26) years since graduating from the Norman Manley Law School and having been called to the Bar, I have practiced in diverse fields of law. These include criminal litigation, financial crimes and Mutual Legal Assistance, Family Law, Child/Human Rights Practice. Throughout my professional life, I have been recognized for leading high-impact organizations while maintaining the provision of legal services for children in diverse settings; initiating and implementing rights-based strategies; advising Ministers of government, parliament, Heads of Entities, boards, NGOs and foreign/overseas counterparts.

As of November 2019, as well, I have been offered certification to the Geneva based Justice Rapid Response Roster of global experts in international criminal law for potential deployment worldwide with a focus on crimes against humanity, war crimes and international human rights law.

Published contributor to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (UK)'s Handbook on Human Trafficking and the Research Handbook in Family Law on International Child Abduction (2023).

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

March 2015 – Present: **National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons**

- **Description:** In March 2015, I was appointed by the Executive arm of the Jamaican government (the Cabinet) as Jamaica's first National Rapporteur. I hold this post along with my other post as Jamaica's Children's Advocate and am the only such Rapporteur in the Caribbean Region. As the National Rapporteur on TIP, it is my duty to enable a grounded culture of accountability and coordination which promotes collaborative and sustained action in the fight to combat Trafficking in Persons in Jamaica. These targets are met through research, independent monitoring of the efforts of local stakeholders concerning the protection of trafficking victims and the observance of their rights, as well as preventative measures implemented by stakeholders and the rate of prosecution of Human Trafficking cases. Where necessary, recommendations which are aimed at improving Jamaica's anti-trafficking environment are made to the government of Jamaica.

Notable Achievements

- Developed & launched the *Human Trafficking Survivors' Handbook – A Guide to Rights and Support Services in Jamaica*. The information in this Handbook supports victims of trafficking along their path to recovery and healing through services they can access; informs them of their rights and tackles the stigma often attached to survivors of a trafficking experience. The Handbook also incorporated contributions from an actual survivor of trafficking from Jamaica who was trafficked while she was a student in the United States of America.

- Development of an e-learning tool on Human Trafficking which targets national stakeholders engaged in the fight against TIP. This was subsequently adapted and used as a precedent to develop a similar tool for the Caribbean Region.
- Conceptualized the ONRTIP's Conversations on Trafficking Series which is an annual event that identifies a topical issue in the field of Human Trafficking (for instance Sports Trafficking and tech-enabled trafficking) and gathers subject-matter experts to collaborate and craft workable solutions.
- Created and published comic book entitled ONRTIP's Guide to Prevent Cyber-Trafficking (2026) which is an educational resource that families can utilize to help prevent online exploitation. The Guide uses the story of a teenager named Sandy to show how traffickers exploit online spaces, highlighting grooming tactics, emotional manipulation and unsafe digital behaviours; it's a strong proponent of prevention through the practice of safe online habits.
- ONRTIP's Heightening Awareness to Combat Human Trafficking Course – launched in 2025, is offered free of cost to the end-user; it is designed to provide broad access to knowledge on Human Trafficking and to award online certification to persons who successfully complete the programme. Its aim is to build the skills and awareness necessary to identify and respond effectively to potential trafficking situations, to empower communities and strengthen national resilience. To date, over 500 persons have received certification.
- Caribbean Coalition Against Trafficking in Persons (CCATIP) – inaugural and current Chair of the (CCATIP), a regional mechanism designed to strengthen collaboration in anti-human trafficking efforts among Caribbean states.

January 9, 2012 – Present: Children's Advocate of Jamaica

- **Description:** As Children's Advocate, I head the Office of the Children's Advocate which is a Commission of Parliament that is charged with the responsibility of safeguarding and advancing the best interests and the rights of the child. The Advocate keeps under review policies and laws that may impact upon children and makes recommendations to the Parliament as is necessary on matters of this nature; issues guidance on best practice on any matter concerning the rights of children; investigates complaints about child rights' breaches and/or actions which negatively impact the best interests of children; provides legal representation for and on behalf of children; and educates children, those who work with them & the public at large about the rights of children.

Notable Achievements

- *Child Justice Guidelines* [www.oca.gov.jm]: originally issued these Guidelines in November 2013 (followed by a 2nd edition in 2026) for stakeholders in the justice

sector who interface with children to enable them to embrace child friendly justice principles and practices towards all categories of children who come in contact with the justice system and observe acceptable minimum standards.

- ***Planning & the Execution of Judicial & Other Justice Sector Stakeholder Training Seminars***: to date members of the judiciary, police officers, prosecutors, defence lawyers and Justices of the Peace have been trained in the use and application of these Guidelines through nationwide training seminars. Additional training has also been done with these target groups on child diversion, juvenile justice and the application of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- ***Anti-Sexual Grooming Handbook*: this handbook has been launched as a resource that parents and schools can utilize to prevent children from being groomed by sexual predators.
- ***SafeSpot – Jamaica's Child & Teen Helpline***: initiated and implemented one of Jamaica's key Covid-19 responses by establishing a 24-hour helpline that provides free, immediate and confidential psychosocial support exclusively for children by instantly connecting them to qualified counsellors. To date, SafeSpot. has supported in excess of 15,000 children.
- ***Special Report - Focusing on the Uncontrollable Child***: this special report was written by me and tabled in parliament; it focused on a cohort of girls who had been 'convicted' for the status offence of being "uncontrollable" and were slapped with correctional orders that were being served in an adult male penal institution. The report emphasized the inappropriateness of the State's response to these girls and based on in depth interviews which each of them along with research on how children with histories like theirs react over time, posited meaningful recommendations as to alternative approaches to these children. Chief among them was the need for them to have psycho-social interventions instead of being deprived of their liberty; particular focus was given to the fact that these girls were in an adult penal institution. This practice has since ceased and the offending provision has been removed from the legislation.
- ***Be Social … Be Smart Social Media Manuals*** [www.oca.gov.jm]: over a period of a year, the OCA conducted focus group sessions with high school students across the country to gather information on how they used social media – the times they would use it; the things that they would post; their privacy settings, etc. Our review of the information caused us to compile the research findings and to publish them and to create 3 separate guides with tips on how children can safely and responsibly navigate social media – one for children under 12 years; one for those between 12 – 17 years; and one for adults.
- ***Aria's Story*** [www.ariastory.com]: oversaw the development of an electronic cartoon-based series that was aired over a number of episodes. Aria's Story is still accessible via its own website or via a link through the OCA's website (viz. www.oca.gov.jm) and it defines and highlights the nature & extent of abuse that children experience in Jamaica with the objective of educating members of the

public as well as to empower children in abusive situations to take action and find solutions.

- *Inter-Ministerial Working Group*: Chair of this working group that proposed drafting instructions for the Evidence (Special Measures) Act, that successfully led to the implementation of legislation that allowed for vulnerable witnesses (including children) to give evidence via live link and video recordings.
- *Joint Select Committees of Parliament*: Oral & written submissions to different Joint Select Committee(s) of Parliament on Diverse Pieces of Legislation: one example - over a period of several months, a specially convened joint select parliamentary committee considered four pieces of legislation; I attended and made oral presentations over four (4) sessions. In addition to accepting many of the recommendations that I made, one very significant one was to introduce new provisions into the Sexual Offences Act which saw to the decriminalization of consensual sexual activity between minors who are close in age, once there was no deception, fraud or exploitative circumstances. The parliament accepted my proposition that close-in-age exceptions are to be included in the legislation and drafting instructions are to be given in line with my submissions.

March 2003 – January 7, 2012: Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

- **Post:** Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions/Ag. Senior Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions [February 2009 – January 2012]

  Acting Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions [May 2007 – January 2009]

  Assistant Director of Public Prosecutions – Acting and Confirmed [March 2005 – May 2007]

  Crown Counsel - Acting and Confirmed [March 2003 – March 2005]

- **Description:** The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions is responsible for all criminal prosecutions throughout the island of Jamaica and is the Office that represents the State in the Court of Appeal and at the United Kingdom based Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. In this Department my duties included assignments to all the Courts in the island of Jamaica. I therefore prosecuted cases in the Gun Courts, the Circuit Courts (both those in Kingston and in all the rural parishes of Jamaica) and complex matters in the Parish Courts island-wide. I also appeared on a regular basis in the Court of Appeal to argue appeals. Apart from court appearances, my duties also included doing rulings on a wide cross-section of files that came into the Office for legal opinions and decisions as well as a supervisory role within the Department and on occasion, acted as Officer-in-Charge while the Director of Public Prosecutions was travelling overseas.

Special Responsibilities

- ***Manager of the Mutual Legal Assistance/Financial Crimes Unit –*** facilitated international assistance to courts and investigative units overseas

and provided guidance to financial forensic investigators regarding relevant evidential material.

- ***Chairman of the Seminar/Training Committee*** – this role saw me organize a number of training seminars and also convene the first Commonwealth Caribbean Prosecutors' Conference in partnership with the UK-based Commonwealth Secretariat. This conference served as the foundation for the establishment of a Caribbean Association of Prosecutors.

- ***Member of the Steering Committee for Criminal Case Management*** - in Jamaica, the judiciary assumed the responsibility as the driving force behind case management within the criminal courts. A steering committee comprised of all the various stakeholders was formed by the Honourable Chief Justice of Jamaica; the purpose of which was to introduce and oversee the smooth implementation of criminal case management throughout the various criminal courts across the Island and to make recommendations where appropriate/necessary. This work of the committee successfully laid the foundation for the development of Criminal Case Management Rules which now guide the process and heavily contribute to an improved flow of cases for vulnerable cohorts (including children and their experience in court processes).

November 2010 – Present: **The Norman Manley Law School**
University of the West Indies
(Mona) Campus, Jamaica

- **Post:** Associate Tutor in Advocacy

- The Norman Manley Law School is a post-graduate institution which is tasked with the responsibility of accepting individuals who hold a Bachelor of Laws degree (LL.B.) and engaging them in a course of study which, if satisfactorily completed, will result in these persons obtaining a Legal Education Certificate which qualifies them to apply for admission to the Bar.

May 2007 – December 2009: **Ministry of Justice – Justice Training Institute**
Camp Road, Kingston, Jamaica.

- **Post:** Part-Time Lecturer

- **Description:** The Justice Training Institute had as part of its mandate the task to train individuals who aspire to work in positions falling within the ambit of the Ministry of Justice or those who are already employees of this Ministry but wish to pursue diploma or certificate courses. In my role as lecturer, I conceptualized and drafted a curriculum for a new course entitled *Legal Terminologies* and effectively introduced this course into the court reporting programme. I also imparted lectures to the students, set course work assignments throughout the course as well as the final examination paper.

- *Elements of the Law of Obligations*: Lecturer for this course which essentially focused on the law of Tort and Contract. All the legal principles in these areas of the law were imparted to the students by me via lectures and written notes that I compiled and circulated among them. I had the responsibility of setting course work and the final examination paper for the students.

- *Court Procedures*: Pursuant to a request from the Justice Training Institute, I conceptualized and drafted a curriculum in respect of this new course which had as its focus a practical approach to all the relevant procedures that obtain throughout the Courts of Jamaica: The Resident Magistrates' Courts, The Gun Court, The Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal. I also served as the lecturer of this course.

- *Human Rights*: Lectured in this course which had as its focus sensitizing students about the international conventions that focus on Human Rights as well as the aspects of the Jamaican Constitution that deal with the Fundamental Rights and Freedoms of the individual.

October 2000 – March 2003: Saint Ann Resident Magistrates' Court
Saint Ann, Jamaica

- **Post:** Clerk of Courts
- **Description:** The role of the Clerk of the Courts for a parish is one that comprises a prosecutorial component as well as a managerial/administrative one. While in that post I prosecuted all the criminal matters that came up for trial before the different Resident Magistrates assigned to the parish of Saint Ann. These matters included various drug prosecutions and other summary trials, all indictable matters at this level and the conducting of preliminary enquiries in the more serious offences of murder, rape, carnal abuse (as it then was), arson and manslaughter, to list a few. I also marshalled evidence in the Coroner's Court which convened once per month during my tenure as Clerk and processed many "family court" matters. My administrative functions included the efficient managing of the systems in place and the staff employed to the Courts Office to ensure that the business of the Courts throughout the parish was conducted to a high standard and the various litigants were served with satisfaction. I also used my managerial capacity to implement systems which enabled members of staff to maximize their efficiency and to better serve the citizens of Saint Ann. In addition, the task of manager gave me the opportunity to organize and execute social/community activities such as the Court's annual Christmas Party and Labour Day projects.

RELEVANT SPECIALIZED TRAINING/PARTICIPATION:

- **ANNUAL FAMILY LAW CONFERENCE (CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA): Faculty Presenter and Keynote Speaker: 2020 – 2026**

- **INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF FAMILY LAWYERS: Keynote Speaker (Santiago de Chile, 2024) & Presenter (Nairobi, Kenya, 2025)**
- **MEMBER OF JAMAICA'S OFFICIAL DELEGATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY SPECIAL MEETING ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING: New York - 2023 & 2025**

- **MEMBER OF JAMAICA'S OFFICIAL DELEGATION APPEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT FOR CIVIL AND POLITICAL REVIEW: 2025**

- **JUSTICE RAPID RESPONSE/INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS (The Hague, Netherlands: 2019)**

  This was a certification course for designation as a global expert who is eligible for deployment within the international community to investigate, analyze and report on situations where international criminal law & serious human rights violations may have occurred. I was successful and have been offered this designation.

- **PUSKAPA and Care & Protection of Children Learning Network/Viable and Operable Ideas for Child Equality (VOICE) Conference (Indonesia: 2018)**

  The theme of the conference was Finding Scientific Answers to the 21st Century Challenges for Families, Communities and Public Policy. The INSPIRE seven strategies for ending violence against children was a major plank of the conference and in depth analysis was done around - the implementation and enforcement of laws; norms and values; safe environments; parent and caregiver support; income and economic strengthening; response and support services; and education and life skills.

- **Association of Family Lawyers & Judges / National Family Law Conference (Brisbane, Australia: 2018)**

  As keynote speaker and subject-matter expert, I examined the power of the Family Law Courts in Australia to make certain Orders based on the Best Interest principle as well as other developing global trends that family law practitioners are increasingly faced with.

- **LUMOS International / Deinstitutionalization of Children (London, UK: 2018)**

  LUMOS is an NGO that was founded by author J.K. Rawlings. This course examined the practice of placing children into orphanages and a new category of orphanage trafficking that has manifested. The negative outcomes of rearing

children in institutions were in sharp focus and arguments were developed that exposed this practice to current and potential donors. Alternative strategies for children who need care were discussed.

- **Centre for Parliamentary Studies / Professional Certificate in Tackling Human Trafficking (London, UK: 2017)**

  The course of study focused on the phenomenon of Human Trafficking as a significant form of Organized Crime and recommended strategies to effectively deal with the crime.

- **Association of Family Lawyers & University of Lieden / World Congress on Family Law & Children's Rights (Dublin, Ireland: 2017)**

  The Congress themes included Justice & Equality; Child protection (abuse & neglect; violence & exploitation; immigration & separated children; children in conflict); Child Participation; Changing Family Forms (marriage equality; civil partnerships; surrogacy); International Families (international adoption; international child abduction; recognition & enforcement of judgments); Family Property.

- **WePROTECT Global Alliance / We Protect Children Online Global Summit (Abu Dhabi, UAE: 2015)**

  This Global Alliance and the summit focused on fostering worldwide cooperation to stop the crime of online child sexual abuse and exploitation.

- **National Children's Advocacy Centre / International Symposium on Child Abuse (Alabama, USA: 2015)**

  The focus was on Child Mal-treatment, physical abuse, exploitation, trafficking and prevention. While this session was 4 days, in March 2017, a similar symposium was attended for an additional four days - March 27 - 30, 2017.

- **Terres des Hommes / World Congress on Juvenile Justice (Geneva, Switzerland: 2015)**

  The focus was on children in conflict with the law and their experience in accessing juvenile justice systems that suitably reflected the UN principles that are applicable to them. There was a heavy collaboration with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. The UNCRC, the Beijing Rules & the Riyadh Guidelines were some of the points of reference throughout.

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST