

# AMBASSADOR SHORNA-KAY RICHARDS

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## Her Excellency Shorna-Kay Richards

A career diplomat, Her Excellency Shorna-Kay Richards has been a member of the Jamaican Foreign Service for 30 years and has served as Ambassador of Jamaica to Japan, with concurrent accreditation to Australia, Indonesia, the Philippines, South Korea, and New Zealand since 2020.

Ambassador Richards previously served as the Director for Bilateral Relations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (2016-2020) and as the Deputy Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations, New York (2012-2016). Her other overseas postings include the Jamaican High Commission in South Africa (2009-2012), the Permanent Mission of Jamaica to the Organisation of American States in Washington, D.C. (1998-2001), and the Jamaican Embassy in Washington, D.C. (2003-2004).

She was appointed as a member of the United Nations Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters (ABDM) in January 2022 and the Board of Trustees of the UN Disarmament Research Institute (UNIDIR). Since January 2024, she has served as the Chair of both bodies. Ambassador Richards was also a United Nations Disarmament Fellow in 2005.

Ambassador Richards has extensive experience in both bilateral and multilateral diplomacy. In the bilateral arena, she has worked to support the management of Jamaica's relations with key partners, facilitating increased access to official development assistance, technical cooperation, human resource development, and trade and investment opportunities. At the multilateral level, she has played a significant role in the field of international security and disarmament. During her assignment to the United Nations, she served as Vice-Chair of the UN Disarmament Commission and was a facilitator for the Arms Trade Treaty negotiations. She was also a lead negotiator for the UN Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty process and was actively involved in negotiations on oceans and the law of the sea, as well as reform of the UN Security Council.

Ambassador Richards holds a Master's degree in International Policy and Practice from the Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University, USA. She also obtained a Bachelor of Arts from the University of the West Indies. In May 2024, she was conferred with an Honorary Doctorate *honoris causa* from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, where she also delivered the Commencement Address.