

# The Honourable Olivia "Babsy" Grange, MP, CD



The Honourable Olivia Grange, CD, MP - Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport

**The Honourable Olivia Grange** has served as Member of Parliament for the constituency of Central St Catherine since 1997 and is currently the longest serving woman MP in the House of Representatives. She was appointed Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport in March 2016 following the mandate from the people of Jamaica for the Jamaica Labour Party to lead the government.

Miss Grange's wide portfolio includes: arts and culture; cultural and creative industries; entertainment and media arts; gender affairs; heritage; publications (legal deposits); national commemorative events; reparations; religious and faith-based organisations; and sport. In addition to leading the Ministry, she oversees twelve (12) agencies and five (5) statutory bodies — all charged with ensuring that their decisions and actions contribute towards delivering increased levels of prosperity to all, increased gender equality and harmony between men and women, and increased promotion, preservation and celebration of the Jamaican culture. Minister Grange also serves as chairman of the Jamaica National Commission for UNESCO.

Previously, Miss Grange served in the Cabinet between 2007 and 2011 as Minister with responsibility for Information, Youth, Sports, Culture, Women and Gender Affairs, Entertainment, Community Development and Special Projects. During this tenure, she led the development of the National Policy for Gender Equality, the Youth Entrepreneurship Policy as well as the National Sport Policy of Jamaica. Minister Grange also spearheaded the revival of national cultural celebrations through the reintroduction of the Independence Grand Gala, redevelopment of the Jamaica Festival programme, restoration of heritage sites and the declaration of Reggae Month annually in February,

In 2009, she had the distinction of being appointed as the Caribbean Community's (CARICOM) first Champion for Culture, with responsibility for advocating, among other things, capacity building for cultural industries, cultural institutions and individual artists.

Prior to her appointment to the Cabinet and election to the House of Representatives, Miss Grange served in the Senate as a Government Senator between 1983 and 1989, during which time she also served as Parliamentary Secretary with responsibility for Information and Culture (1983-1985) and Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister (1985-1989).

Miss Grange is a pioneer contributor to the development of the Reggae and Dancehall Music Industry in Jamaica, Canada and the United States. She has had a long, productive and inspiring career as a cultural activist, working at the grassroots level in developing and managing talent, including celebrated Reggae acts as Carlene Davis, Leroy Sibbles, platinum-selling artists Shabba Ranks, Lady Patra and Damian 'Jr Gong' Marley.

As a founding member and Director of the Jamaica Association of Composers, Authors and Publishers (JACAP), Miss Grange has been instrumental in introducing policy initiatives to support the development of the cultural industries and advance "brand Jamaica" in the international market. She has also assisted in the development of the Jamaican Copyright Legislation.

Notably, Miss Grange co-founded Contrast, Canada's first black community newspaper and in 1982, she won the City T.V. Iris Award for production of Special Music Events in Toronto, Canada.

In 1997, she was nominated for Woman of the Year in Jamaica.

**Source:**

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