

Tourism Minister looks to Russian markets

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Ed Bartlett, Minister of Tourism, says he is looking to boost tourist arrivals from Russia by more than ten-fold, as part of the overall strategy to grow Jamaica's tourist arrivals. Mr. Bartlett, who is currently in Germany at the International Tourism Exchange, met with his Russian counterpart to discuss the possibilities.

He said discussions focused on overcoming barriers to Russians traveling to Jamaica, to increase the volume of Russian tourists from the current 3,000 to over 40,000.

Mr. Bartlett says that hope is driven by a sense that Jamaica can become an alternative to traditional Russian vacation hot spots in the Middle East; and North Africa, which has been rocked by civil unrest, in recent times.

He said the Director of Tourism, John Lynch, will be travelling to Moscow, later this month, for further meetings with Russian tourism interests, airlines, and tour operators, to devise ways to tackle the issue of direct air connectivity from Russia to Jamaica.

That is expected to pave the way for higher level meetings, with a view to securing whatever needs to be achieved in order to open channels to boost Russian arrivals in the Jamaican tourism market.