

# IRASCOM TRIP REPORT

*Report from The Inlversal RasTafari Community (IRASCOM)  
Jamaica Gathering  
August 25<sup>th</sup> -30<sup>th</sup>, 2004, Kingston, Jamaica*



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IRASCOM

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foremost all praises and honor is due to the one deserving of all glory, H.I.M Emperor Haile Selassie I, Jah Ras Tafari who has made all things possible.

We would like to extend our sincere apprecilove to the individuals and organizations that have contributed their ideas, time, facilities, resources and support to this gathering. Give thanks to all of the various Mansions of the RasTafari Movement and their respective elders and representatives who took part in these reasonments. To the Ancient Order of The NyahBinghi, especially the Pit Four NyahBinghi Center and its executive committee, Dawtas of Zion, the Imperial Ethiopian World Federation and their administration, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church in Jamaica and its ordained leadership, the Bobo Shanti Order, the Congress of the Ethiopian Africa Black International Church of Salvation (EABIC) Bull Bay, the Twelve Tribes of Israel, the Haile Selassie School of Vision and the entire Blue Mountain family.

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Ras Berhane Mariam would like to say special thank you the IRASCOM MSN Web-group Online Family: Empress Makeda Blake Hannah (Chief Advisor), Elder Dion Hanna (Legal Advisor), Ras Rohan (Co-chairman) & Ras Evrol (Publicist), Rasyen (Operations Coordinator), Empress Denise (Administrator), Ras Sedzro (RDA Project Manager), Sista Zionz & Empress Diane (Accountants), Ras Eastway (Assistant Online Manager), the Amsterdam family and the entire Interim Steering Committee of IRASCOM, knowing that without the support and encouragement of these persons, InI would not have been able to walk under the mantel of leadership and humility set before I. InI give thanks many times for lifting InI hands up in the wilderness, may you all continue to be instruments in the hands of the Almighty.

## INTRODUCTION

On November 6th, 2003, IRASCOM Cooperative was launched under the name "Universal Rastafarian Community" Initiating Ras Jahvarrie from the Bahamas with RasYen from the USA and Sista Claudette from the UK, joining together as founding members of IRASCOM. Jah started blessing the organization with writers, accountants, educators, painters, musicians, business owners, and many other skilled Rastafari Bredren and Sistren holding various trade skills and college/university degrees. Noted and Respected Elders and Eldresses started supporting the movement. IRASCOM Co-op, started with a message board on which Rastas worldwide can post their topics, comments and questions of choice as they relate to Rastafari.

Based on the postings, IRASCOM was able to make a grasp of the physical, mental and social illnesses that plagued the Rastafari Community, to identify our strengths and weaknesses as a community, given the support from many Rastas who were represented. Rastas from The Bahamas, Jamaica, St. Croix, St. Thomas, The United Kingdom, Greece, Peru, Chile, Mexico, Spain, France, The United States of America (including Alaska and Hawaii), Canada, Greece, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Canary Islands, Israel and several other nations joined in the forum to represent Rastafari in their state. Based on the information gathered, founding members began outlining plans for the establishment and formation of what came to be known as The Inlversal RasTafari Community Co-operative (IRASCOM Co-op). The first document came to be known as the IRA 2004 (Inlversal RasTafari Agreement 2004), which declared the assenting of the document to be the Constitutional Draft for a Sovereign Nation of RasTafari.

In March of 2004, the initial plans were made for IRASCOM to host an Interim Committee Gathering in Jamaica, given that its International Administration represented the Bahamas, USA (New Jersey), England and Jamaica at the time. Representatives from the Netherlands, USA (Florida & Massachusetts) and St. Croix later joined the Interim Committee.

The Jamaican Reparations Movement (JaRM), under the guidance of Empress Makeda Blake Hannah, was also planning a National Reparations Conference in which IRASCOM was invited to participate in. The dates were set, August 18<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 2004 scheduled around the same time as the JaRM Conference. Due to an unexpected turn of events the dates were pushed back to August 24<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>, 2004, providing a few extra days for efficient planning and maneuverings. The IRASCOM delegation at this stage had been confirmed as the following from The Bahamas: Ras Jahvarrie, United States: RasYen, and Jamaica: Ras Rohan, Ras Evrol, and Chief Advisor of IRASCOM, Empress Makeda Blake Hannah.

The Interim Steering Committee Members unable to make the trodding were busy constructing the PowerPoint presentations, organizing trip details and goals, speeches and topic selections and finalizing other matters connected to the gathering.

Six topics were proposed, with the committee members gathering the necessary information, conducting the needed research and collecting whatever aids and data would be needed for the team traveling to Jamaica. Empress Denise was responsible for overseeing the production of presentations and finalizing the material to be used via PowerPoint and/or speeches.

Examples are:

- *The Impact of IRASCOM* – RasYen
- *Finance* – Sista Lisa & Empress Diane
- *RDA Census* – Ras Sedzro
- *The Operation of IRASCOM* – Ras Jahvarrie
- *The Tabernacle* – Ras Eastway

Ras Jahvarrie & Empress Denise later edited all documents. Ras Evrol was selected to present The Tabernacle Presentation and Ras Rohan the RDA Census on behalf of RDA Project Manager, Ras Sedzro.

There were three main goals for this IRASCOM Gathering in Jamaica:

- (1) To provide an environment for the Interim Steering Committee members to have the opportunity to meet each other face-to-face, having labored together for nine months via emails, telephone calls and other electronic means of communications.
- (2) To introduce the organization of IRASCOM to the Elders and Rasta Leaders of the various mansions and Rasta Organizations in Jamaica.
- (3) To present each mansion with a copy of the IRASCOM IRA Document concerning the structure and operation of IRASCOM. The IRASCOM delegation was headed by Ras Berhane Mariam (Jahvarrie), under the guidance of Empress Makeda Blake Hannah and Prophet Bobo Greg and staffed by international delegate RasYen and Jamaican delegates Ras Rohan and Ras Evrol. This delegation focused upon the importance of an organization like IRASCOM in the worldwide Rasta Community and how IRASCOM can become the reasoning table between the numerous Rasta Mansions and Organizations, while providing a forum for these mansions to work together in the areas of socio-cultural developments, economic improvements, agricultural stability, Rasta entrepreneurship, the global unification of the Rasta Community and the sovereign establishment of a Rastafari Nation.

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A team of five Executives of the Inlversal RasTafari Community Co-operative (IRASCOM) held a historic meeting in Jamaica from August 25th-30th, 2004 to introduce the IRASCOM Proposal to the leaders of Rastafari mansions. The IRASCOM document had been in preparations for 7 months formulating a proposal to unite all Rastafari Men, wombmen and Youths into an international organization livicated to improving the cultural, social, legal and economic rights of Rastafari worldwide, guided by the life and teachings of His Imperial Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie I.

The group consisted of Ras Berhane Mariam (Jahvarrie), Interim Chairman, based in the Bahamas, RasYen based in New Jersey, USA, Ras Rohan and Ras Evrol, based in Jamaica and Empress Makeda Blake Hannah, also of Jamaica.

## TUESDAY, AUGUST 24

Ras Yen arrived in Jamaica and was met by Ras Rohan, with whom he stayed and who provided transportation for the group.

## WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 25

Ras Rohan and RasYen, met briefly with Ras Evrol, who agreed to meet with them later, before arriving at Empress Makeda's Gates to get acquainted and review the Presentations for the meeting on Friday. Empress Makeda and the team was later invited to a pre-arranged dinner with her friends Errol and Clarissa Barrett and their young son at their St. Andrew home. Errol is the son of Carlton Barrett, drummer with Bob Marley and the Wailers, and he regaled the team with stories of his life growing up in the Tuff Gong camp, as well as showing rare videotapes of interviews with Marley. Ras Evrol later called from Makeda's gates and the team decided to meet up with him the next day.

Ras Jahvarrie arrived in Jamaica later that afternoon and was met by his friend Bro Milton an employee of IRIE-FM, with whom he stayed in Ocho Rios. He was given a brief tour of the New Kingston area, and several prominent Rasta Communities and sites. Arrangements were made to meet with the rest of the team early the next light allowing him to rest and review the trip schedule and details that was subject to changes as His Majesty directed. Bro. Milton was truly a good friend and dedicated to the cause of IRASCOM and its' workers, commuting Ras Jahvarrie to and from Kingston each morning and evening and making other necessary journeys required by the Delegation.

## **THURSDAY, AUGUST 24**

Ras Rohan and RasYen arrive at the Knutsford Court Hotel in Kingston, and after a brief period are met by Empress Makeda, Ras Jahvarrie and Bro. Milton. The team had brief introductions before inspecting the meeting place then proceeded to The Courtleigh Hotel & Suits to make payments and finalize arrangements. Payments were secured and receipts were drawn up and received. The party then forwarded to a shopping center and acquired data materials to be used the following day at the gathering.

Ras Jahvarrie had indicated a desire to be baptized in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church during his stay as instructed by His Imperial Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie I, as there was no EOC church in the Bahamas. Accordingly, Empress Makeda had instructed him to study the Sacraments and Teachings of the EOC, while Empress Makeda asked an EOC priest to facilitate his baptism on the Sunday morning during his visit.

At very short notice, the EOC priest Kes Haile Giorgis called to say that a baptism would be taking place the following morning and that Ras Jahvarrie should come immediately for his Baptism class. That evening, Ras Rohan collected the team and they drove to Papine towards Gordon Town, stopping at Big Daddy's Rastarant and Fruit Shop at Lookout. Ras Tekeskie 'Big Daddy' is founder of the EOC village of Debre Zeit, a small community of people living a natural country life in the hills on the other side of the Hope River.

His shop at Lookout is a famous stopping point overlooking the city of Kingston, where several small shops have sprung up under Big Daddy's patronage. There Kes Haile Giorgis gave a detailed talk on the teaching of the EOC, explaining the Church's Seven Sacraments, the belief in Iyesus Kristos and the veneration of the Holy Mother Maryam, as well as points of history. The baptismal class was very informative for the IRASCOM delegation as the EOC priest received questions from the delegation about the EOC faith and its connection to the Rastafari Community.



## **FRIDAY, AUGUST 25**

At 6 am Ras Jahvarrie and Empress Makeda arrived at Big Daddy's, where everyone that got baptized met. These included a young wombman and three babies, whose parents and siblings accompanied them. The drive was up the road to the point where Debre Zeit residents descend the hillside and cross the river to their community. The river was flowing sweet and clear as everyone carefully climbed down the rocky slope.

Kes Haile Giorgis, who set up an altar on a low rock and lit fragrant incense in a burner, conducted the baptism service. With his maskel (Ethiopian cross) always in his right hand, the priest recited the liturgy in English, Amharic

and Geez. The faithful participated with Amharic Chants, the Lords Prayer and the Prayer of the Virgin Mary. The priest then blessed the river with his maskel and the baptism began.

After the three infants were baptized, it was Ras Jahvarrie's turn. Assisted by Ras Haile Malekot, his baptism godfather, and Ras Gabre, he was submerged in the water three times. When he emerged the third time, Kes Haile Giorgis gave him his new, Ethiopian name: BERHANE MARYAM "Light of the Virgin Mary". Berhane was the name given to Bro. Bob Marley when he was baptized on his deathbed. The name Maryam was also given to all who were baptized, as this day was the last of the Feast of St. Maryam.

After baptism, a brief stop was made to Big Daddy Tekeskie, who gave Ras Berhane a talk as an Elder Ras, congratulating him on his baptism and explaining how much better able he would now be to do the work of His Majesty. He explained that Berhane's baptism did not negate his Rasta-ness, but rather enhanced it. "*We are Rasta already,*" Tekeskie explained, "*and we know what we know.*" Big Daddy went on to prophesy the oncoming of IRASCOM and Ras Berhane Mariam and their work in the Rasta Community, having not been informed of IRASCOM or its mission, but speaking with a prophetic authority, Big Daddy shared how he saw the coming of IRASCOM and its effectiveness to represent that Global Rasta Community. Big Daddy made several private commitments to the organization.

Ras Berhane's baptism was a personal blessing both to him and Empress Makeda, and a good omen that it was re-scheduled to take place before the start of his activities in Jamaica.

The remainder of the morning was spent in meditations revising the presentations to be made later. Prophet Bobo Greg later joined the team at Empress Makeda's gates as Ras Makonnen prepared fried plantain, fresh avocado and fruit juice for lunch, before the team rested up and then made the journey to the Knutsford Court Hotel to meet with the rest of the delegation prior to the start of the meetings.

**THE PRESENTATION: *Friday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2004***  
**3:00PM – 7:00PM**

Knutsford Court Hotel in New Kingston is where the venue for the meeting was held, with its beautiful property often used for important gatherings. The presentation was held in Boardroom 1, outside which fruits, juices, teas and vegetarian sandwiches were laid out on a table. Inside were 20 seats around a large table, with a video screen and projector at one end to which we attached a laptop from which IRASCOM's Power Point presentations were screened.

Those present were: Representatives from the NyahBinghi Organizing Committee, Dawtas of Zion Association, the Imperial Ethiopian World Federation (IEWF), an Ambassador from the Ethiopian Africa Black International Congress (Bobo Shanti Order), and representatives from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the Twelve Tribes of Israel (TTI).

The meeting began with brief introductions and an overview by the Chair, enacted by **Empress Makeda**. She began the presentation, explaining how she, the empress came to be involved with IRASCOM and why she endorsed its principles. Then individual introductions to the delegation were made.

**Ras Berhane Mariam** (formerly Ras Jahvarrie) took the mantle and stated that IRASCOM wished to Inite Rastafari around Emperor Haile Selassie, whose primacy was the one factor that all Rastafari agreed on, no matter the doctrinal differences of the various mansions. He said that the IRASCOM Interim Steering Committee desires to have the Rastafari Elders in Jamaica, endorse and approve its proposals now that a Draft Document had been produced, as Jamaica was the foundation of Rastafari. Initiating the PowerPoint presentations as he read along, improvising where necessary for clarity, and covering the Purpose, Proclamations, and proposed Governance of IRASCOM, the message was effectively expressed, and received applause from the Representatives and Elders present from the IEWF, Bobo Shanti, NyahBinghi, Twelve Tribes, and the EOC.

**RasYen** followed up the Introduction of the main functioning of IRASCOM by Ras Berhane, with his presentation on the Global Effect of IRASCOM, which was written and not done in PowerPoint. He explained the benefits of IRASCOM on the International Community, focusing on speeches of Haile Sellassie I and implementation of them, and adherence to H.I.M's Word. The Representatives and Elders truly accepted RasYen's presentation, as it solidified and gave more clarity to the Proposal.

**Ras Berhane Mariam** went on to the Finance PowerPoint Presentation, as the accountants linked with IRASCOM were unable to attend. This Presentation gave insight into the Fund Acquisition, and an overview of how Fund Management will be incorporated within the organization. The Financial Presentation showed the theoretical framework explaining how IRASCOM intends to efficiently and effectively utilize funds for projects benefiting the community, and introducing, implementing, and maintaining IRASCOM programs.

**Ras Rohan** with the RasTafari Development Assessment (RDA) Presentation in PowerPoint, made the next presentation. The RDA is the instrument to be applied for Data Collection of the Inlversal RasTafari Community, and to identify, assess and address the needs of the Community. It therefore allows IRASCOM to better determine the specific course of action to effectively handle occurring necessities. The RDA Presentation stated

- *The Objective Scope Methodology and*
- *The Plan of Activity and Budget of the Projects.*

The RDA warranted agreement and was received well by all present.

Finally, **Ras Evrol** presented the proposal for an Inlversal RasTafari Tabernacle. This Presentation started with the Purpose for such a Tabernacle, primarily Inified worship, as opposed to segregated worship. Ras Evrol then went on to cover the proposed Church Administration, Order of Congregation, the Royal RasTafari Priesthood, Church Funding, Building, and the advantages of this proposal. This presentation preceded effectively outlying IRASCOM's position as an international organization and the need for an Inted Rasta Tabernacle.



Discussion followed, especially led by a senior NyahBinghi Elder. He congratulated IRASCOM for its proposal, saying that this was an idea whose time had come. He said that many unsuccessful efforts had been made in the past to Inite Rastafari, but said that because this effort had prioritized Emperor Haile Selassie I as the central focus of its' work, that this would provide the foundation for success. He said that the principle of Inity under His Imperial Majesty was one that all Mansions would overstand and accept, and promised to take the IRASCOM document for further discussion in his Mansion.

The elder expressed doubt that the idea of a Tabernacle would be accepted by all Mansions, and said that discussion on this topic should wait until IRASCOM had succeeded further in gathering membership of all Mansions.

Another senior NyahBinghi elder, also heartily endorsed IRASCOM's proposals, saying that the fact that the organization used computer technology to communicate was a welcome advantage to the growth of the Rastafari Nation. He applauded the youth of the presenters, saying that it was good to see the new generation of Rastafari, their zeal and their commitment to H.I.M. As author and publisher of a Rastafari magazine, and also founder of a radio station in Malawi (from which he returned one year ago) he emphasized the need for an international Rastafari publication, and acquisition of other media such as radio and TV stations.

The Dawtas of Zion representative said she was pleased to be representing Rastafari wombmen, and said that her organization worked with the IEWF on several Education and empowerment projects in Kingston's inner cities. Lending their support to the Tabernacle proposal, and agreed to the need for a formal RasTafari Church, highlighting the realistic, negative effects of not having such a structured Church. Some of the issues she brought up were regarding RasTafari Burials and Thanksgiving Services. Her comments brought an air of sobriety to those present mentioning the church established by Dawtas of Zion 11yrs ago.

The chair then asked the EOC to make comment, which the representative gave an historic account stating that the concept of a Tabernacle had been abandoned after the Pentecost, and was no longer being practiced anywhere in the world. He then said that the idea of RasTafari Initiating in Worship is a positive move forward for the RasTafari Movement. The representative from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church also expressed delight at IRASCOM's proposals, especially the fact that the teachings of His Majesty were the guiding principles. He said he was glad to have been invited to the meeting as representative of the EOC, and hoped that members of IRASCOM would be guided by Ras Berhane's example of baptism in the faith of His Majesty. The EOC representative gave guidance to the Tabernacle proposal, by suggesting IRASCOM first establish the difference between worship and church, as it relates to the Rasta Community, because some mansions keep church, while other mansions hold worship.

One Senior NyahBinghi representative then requested clarification on the selection of mansions that were to guide the priesthood according to the Inlversal RasTafari Tabernacle Presentation. Empress Makeda as Chair then suggested Ras Berhane restates the Purpose, Proclamation and Governance of IRASCOM, as one of the NyahBinghi Elders had arrived a few moments after we begun. Ras Berhane settled the matter brilliantly by emphasizing the Purpose of IRASCOM is not to divide or create new divisions within the Movement, but to build upon what is common among us all. He emphasized the motives of IRASCOM in highlighting the fact that IRASCOM is willing to put aside anything that may threaten to divide the RasTafari Movement, so that we may move forward on common ground and realize our ultimate goal of Inity and Strength within the Inlversal RasTafari Community.

The repeating of the Purpose, Proclamation and Governance of IRASCOM, brought a greater clarity to the Twelve Tribes Rep and the NyahBinghi Rep who had arrived at a

later time, allowing them to appreciate even more the whole of the Proposals being brought forth in the Meeting. One of the NyahBinghi Elders stood up smiling and stated with hands together that so long as IRASCOM Integrated the Teachings of His Imperial Majesty into all aspects of IRASCOM Operations and Functions, his approval of IRASCOM's IRA is secured. The EOC representative gave his nod of approval, and the IEWF and Dawtas of Zion, followed suit.

Prophet Greg, Ambassador representing the Bobo Shanti Order and supporter of IRASCOM, was equally positive about IRASCOM. Once again, IRASCOM was congratulated for placing the Teachings of His Imperial Majesty as the guiding principles of the organization. This, he said, would avoid the doctrinal disputes that often prevented Rastafari Inity, as all Rastas would be able to identify through the Emperor and participate in the Inity while maintaining their individual beliefs and positions. He had informed IRASCOM that he had spoken with the Priests at Bull Bay, Bobo Congress who had invited IRASCOM to visit with them at the Hill to introduce the aims and objectives of IRASCOM. This was arranged for Sunday afternoon.

The Twelve Tribes of Israel (TTI) Mansion was represented by a businessman and active TTI member, endorsed the IRASCOM principles and carried the document and presentation report forward to the TTI leadership.



Each Representative received the IRA Draft, and copies of RasYen's presentation. In concluding the meeting, it was decided that those present should be formed into a Jamaican Advisory Committee, and that NGO status would be sought for this IRASCOM Jamaican Advisory Committee. The meeting, which began at 4 p.m. concluded at 8 in the evening, after much informal discussion among those present. After the meeting, the delegation went to dinner at **Livity**, a vegetarian restaurant run by members of

the EOC of whose children had been baptized earlier that morning. Veggie-burgers and tofu wraps, with juice was served.

### **Saturday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2004**

Around noon, Ras Berhane Mariam, Ras Rohan and Rasyen held closed session discussions, over lunch prepared by Ras Rohan assessing the trip thus far, sharing their excitement and recounting the overwhelming support and welcome for IRASCOM from Elders, Rasta Leaders and locals, organizations and mansions from all walks of life and faiths of Rastafari. The goals of the trip had been declared successfully achieved only

halfway through the trip, and the remainder of the trip would be used for follow-up, community outreach and feedback and networking.

Members of the delegation attended the Sabbath Services held at Papine Square by the Haile Selassie I School of Vision (HSSV), a community lead by Priest Dermont Fagan living in the Blue Mountains and attended by Rastas from different mansions, the same vision as the Inited Rastafari Tabernacle.

Rasses, Empresses and Youths filled the park center gathering around the banner of His Imperial Majesty, dressed in splendid colors and militant dress, though some were casual. Ras Chung-Li, Minister of Transportation for the HSSV, introduced Ras Berhane, RasYen and Ras Rohan to the leader of the HSSV, and the community elder, Priest Dermont Fagan, who shared with the delegation the mission of the HSSV. Many Rasta had brought crafts such as pins and some were given as gifts. RasYen received a pin depicting white Rasta as part of the Lion.



Afterwards, the rains broke out and the crowds huddled under a tarp to avoid being soaked, and then the teachings began. The Elder spoke upon the times we are living in and the instigation of the evil plans for the mark of the beast, which he spoke of as a biochip for registration and tracking of the population. He was well spoken and clear to the point.

The Teachings ended with a prayer and the start of the Drum Rhythms. NyahBinghi Music and

Chants filled the park and surrounding streets with powerful energy, attracting onlookers who were warned in songs foretelling the Judgment of Jah. The Chants and drumming went on for hours with the delegation participating in the chanting and music. Ras Berhane Mariam was able to photograph the gathering, and tape-recorded the chants.

Ras Rohan took Ras Berhane and RasYen to meet with some community leaders, and to view possible Committee members for IRASCOM's various Committees to be established. These leaders expressed their grave disappointments with the present Rasta Organizations who claim to seek Inity. They also expressed their dissatisfaction with promised aid, in the form of farming land and music production that was never received from these other organizations. These community leaders also had great anticipation and faith in IRASCOM and look forward to the coming of this body.



Later in the evening, we returned to Livity Restaurant for the album launch of Ras Berhane Mariam's Godfather, Ras Haile Malekot. Ras Haile Malekot has lived in Debre Zeit for most of his Rastafari life, and has been a performing poet for the past 10 years. He performed several tracks from the album "Destiny of Man" which is recorded and distributed by Tuff Gong Records. Ras Malekot, who was accompanied by a 3-piece live instrumental band and a 3-piece Binghi Drumming Band, gave special thanks to Sister Rita Marley for her assistance with the production.

Later in the evening, the Delegation attended Ras David Williams "Togetherness" conscious dance party, held at Backyard – a spacious open-air venue owned and operated by Marley granddaughter, Donisha

Prendergast. The music for the evening focused on reggae hits of the 70s and 80s, and we all spent a relaxing hour there enjoying the irie vibes and beautiful evening under the full moon and stars, sipping the complimentary fish tea and coconut water.

### Sunday 27th August 2004

Ras Rohan and RasYen met Ras Berhane, Empress Makeda, and her son Ras Makonnen at the Ethiopian Orthodox Holy Trinity Church in Kingston on Maxfield Avenue. The service, which lasted approximately 3 hours was conducted by four priests, and attended by a large congregation – many of whom wore white Ethiopian clothing. The service included worship, psaltery, playing of instruments, and Communion was given to all newly baptized members, including Ras Berhane.

Kes Haile Giorgis introduced the members of IRASCOM to the congregation and gave a short talk about his meeting with them. Then he invited Ras Berhane to address the congregation who explained further the mission of IRASCOM. Berhane gave a brief assessment of the works accomplished thus far and outlined some of the future plans of IRASCOM as he was greeted by Ethiopian cheers.

When the service was over, we all met and talked with church members in the yard outside the church, and visited the Elders Home and bakery on the premises. Following this, we were invited to have breakfast with the Priests. Among those present were four students from the Theological College who were visiting the EOC for the first time. We dined on ackee and saltfish, tofu and cauliflower, green bananas, fried dumplings, avocado pear and mint



tea. A priest was delegated to maintain contact with Ras Berhane with a view to visiting the Bahamas and starting a branch of the EOC there.

We left the EOC after noon and met Prophet Greg, our Ambassador to the Bobo Shanti headquarters at Bull Bay. We drove to Bull Bay along the coast road out of Kingston heading east, and then turned up a rocky road to Bobo Hill. On arrival, we were received in the Embassy lodge at the gate, where we explained our mission, had our names recorded in the Visitors Book, and then faced the east for prayers, which were said by Prophet Greg. The view of the sea and hills was spectacular. We were met by two Priests who led the way to the office at the top of the hill, where shoes and sandals were removed before entering.

Soon thereafter three priests received us in the office of the EAIBC, where Prophet Greg who gave an outline of the IRASCOM presentation introduced them. Empress Makeda introduced IRASCOM Interim Steering Committee Members, Ras Berhane Mariam, Ras Yen, Ras Rohan, and Ras Makonnen who was accompanying them. After his introduction, Ras Berhane began to explain the Organization's Purpose and Implementation. The Bobo Shanti Priests sitting under a large banner of His Imperial Majesty listened to Ras Berhane skillfully explained the ideas and mission of IRASCOM. The Priest stood and gave his agreements and then responded by emphasizing how pleased they were that IRASCOM had recognized that any effort at Inity had to begin and end at Emperor Haile Selassie I. They congratulated IRASCOM for placing the Emperor and his teachings foremost in their activities, and said they wished the venture all success.

As we had been joined by a few other Rasses from Bobo Hill, who mainly stayed by the entrances to the office as one entered and presented his concerns. Further discussions alleviated any ambiguities and clarified any misconceptions. We did agree that there has been much progression in certain areas of developing, and assured that we would utilize these areas of advancement only to the benefit of the movement in whole. It was clear that all parties would benefit from adopting the Organization. The Priests spoke at length about Repatriation and Reparations, saying these were the primary objectives of Rastafari. Empress Makeda spoke with them about her work with the Jamaica Reparations Movement and the forthcoming conference on Reparations. The Priests presented Makeda with a copy of their Proposal for Reparations for African Descendants worldwide, and the invoice of costs, asking her to include them in the JaRM Reparations document being presented to the Jamaican Parliament. The meeting was extremely cordial, conducted as a meeting of diplomats and ambassadors.

Empress Makeda took a photo of Ras Berhane presenting the IRA Document to the Priests, and group photos followed, to commemorate the Acceptance of Bobo Shanti and the Ethiopian African Black International Congress in Bull Bay Jamaica, as an affiliate of IRASCOM.

On our way back to Kingston, we stopped at the Cable Hut beach, where we sat and talked about the visit, the various people we had met, the wonderful things that had

happened and the work that lay ahead of us. We knew that we had been specially blessed by Emperor Haile Selassie I for all the magical and great events and meetings that had taken place in the name of H.I.M. through the divine guidance and protection granted to I&I over the past three days.

We watched the sun set, as the noises of children playing happily in the sea, seagulls and the distant sound of reggae music accompanied InI meditations. Then as we drove back in the car to Kingston, we said a prayer of Thanksgiving and Blessings and Shouted ISES of JAH RASTAFARI for the many blessings he has bestowed upon the IRASCOM Delegation during these troddings. For truly like one of the Senior NyahBinghi Elders had said "IRASCOM is an Organization whose time has COME!"

The Delegation gathered again for the last time on this particular trip at Empress Makeda's Gates and greetings and love was exchanged as Ras Berhane Mariam made preparations to forward back to The Bahamas and Rasyen would remain in Jamaica for a few extra days to wrap up links and for his personal edification.

*Personal Comments from Empress Makeda Blake Hannah, Chief Advisor of IRASCOM*

The visit of IRASCOM was historic and unprecedented. The greatest accomplishment was to be able to meet and be received by such a wide representation of Rastafari in Jamaica in just 3 days. An even greater achievement was to be received with such positive vibrations and welcome. All went smoothly, as if guided by the divine hands of JAH. The full moon that shone each night was an even greater Light illustrating how blessed was the visit and visitors. IRASCOM can now go forward with confidence and assurance of success.

Special Thanks to Ras Rohan, Prophet Greg, Milton, Makonnen, Kes Haile Giorgis and Big Daddy



## CONCLUSION

The three primary objectives for the IRASCOM Jah-Maker Gathering August 24<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>, 2004 have unilaterally yielded positive results in form of support, innovative collaboration, logical anticipation, receptiveness by the Elders and Rasta Leaders and ongoing community feedback and support. We are pleased with the current outcome and achievements made by our delegation in attendance and those unable to attend, but at home overseeing home based activities and making preparations to deal with the momentous accomplishments of our delegation. We will continue to share our vision of a **FORWARD UPWARD SOVEREIGN RASTA NATION**. Some of these agreements and resolutions include, but are not limited to:

1. The reinforcement that the principles and teachings of H.I.M shall remain the one true and primary SEAL of IRASCOM.
2. The establishment of "The IRASCOM Jamaican Advisory Committee" founded August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2004 in Kingston, Jamaica.
3. The full endorsement by the NyahBinghi Executive Committee Chair and Co-Chairman for IRASCOM & their commitment of promote IRASCOM to the NyahBinghi Community.
4. The need for IRASCOM to be represented on all global and national Rasta Delegations organized by the Rasta Community.
5. The desire by the NyahBinghi for representatives of IRASCOM to consider attending and tabling the organization of "IRASCOM" at the next Caribbean Rastafari Organization (CRO) in Guyana.
6. The need for IRASCOM, according to H.I.M will, to eventually seek a more global sanctioning from the worldwide Rasta Community, after the organization has been fully grounded.
7. The need for IRASCOM to play a leading role in the Re-Iducation of Rastas (Movement), by Rastas (Elders & Leaders) about Rasta (Doctrines & Teachings of H.I.M).
8. The development and usage of the media in the Re-Iducation process of Rastas.
9. To acquire and distribute to Rastas, copies of the resolutions from the United Nations Durban Conference on Racism and Reparations.
10. To re-establish the role of the Rasta Community as the forerunners and leading voices calling for Repatriation *with* Reparations.
11. To determine the difference between worship and church as it relates to the Rasta Community before proceeding with the project to build an Inited Rasta Tabernacle.

12. The full endorsement of all Elders and Rasta Leaders attending the conference for IRASCOM to proceed with its plans to conduct an International Rasta Census sponsored by Rastas, about Rastas and for the development of Rastas.
13. The agreement by IRASCOM, upon its complete establishment, to assist local Rastas in the Jamaica area with small business development, conscious music production, agriculture investments and real estate development.
14. The invitation by Big Daddy (Ras Tekeskie), for IRASCOM to play a pivotal role in the development of Mount Debre Zeit EOC and the offering of land to IRASCOM to build a Rasta Tabernacle in that community.
15. The acquiring of temporary office space and a post office box in Jamaica provided by Ras Rohan, for the efficient facilitation of IRASCOM's efforts and availability in Jamaica.
16. The involvement of Ras Makonnen "wiz kid", former Junior Minister to the Jamaican Minister of Technology & Commerce and the first Rastafari, since H.I.M to address the U.N, to ensure online security and IRASCOM website development & management.
17. The commitment from the representatives of Ancient Order of the NyahBinghi, the Imperial Ethiopian World Federation, Dawtas of Zion, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church in Jamaica, Twelve Tribes of Israel and the Bobo Shanti Priestly Order, to provide continuous support for IRASCOM.
18. The commitment from the Congress of the Ethiopian African Black International Church of Salvation (EABIC), Bobo Hill, Bull Bay, Jamaica, to receive the IRA document and submit any comments & suggestions deemed necessary to ensure the Congress full endorsement of IRASCOM.
19. The commitment of Mt. Debre Zeit recoding artist Ras Haile Malekot to lend support to IRASCOM for the purposes of fundraising and/or promotions.
20. The agreement to re-introduce IRASCOM to the Jamaican and International Rasta Community by:
  - a) Holding a follow-up conference during the month of February, extending invitations not only to the elders and Rasta Leaders, but also to the administrators and laborers interested in building IRASCOM.
  - b) To host our first open/public fundraiser concert/beach-fest in Jamaica during the month of November to commemorate the 2<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of IRASCOM while launching the first ever "International Rastafari Week Celebrations."
  - c) To consider the dates of February 24<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>, 2005 to host this follow-up conference and fundraiser event in Jamaica.

**IRASCOM Jah-Maker RasTafari Leaders & Elders  
Gathering 2004**

TOPICS

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§ ***“That which was spoken shall come to pass, the birth of The Iniversal RasTafari Community”***

Intro: A brief Summary about the groundation and establishment of IRASCOM and how this Community came to fulfill that which was spoken of.

Presenter, Empress Makedah Blake Hannah

§ ***“Jah is Not the Author of Confusion, in Decency and in Order shall HIM will be done”***

Intro: A brief summary about the operations, branches, committees, leaders and international functioning of IRASCOM.

Presenter, Ras Berhane Mariam

§ ***“The Global Effect of the Iniversal RasTafari Community”***

Intro: A brief summary about the potential impact of IRASCOM on the Global Rastafari Community

Presenter, RasYen

§ ***“The strongest foundation of our independence is the development of our economic resources” - His Imperial Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie I***

Intro: A brief summary about the IRASCOM Membership (Citizenship), IRASCOM shareholding, IRASCOM Limited, RasTafari Development Account and the financial operation and accounting for IRASCOM.

Presenter, Ras Berhane Mariam

§ ***“RasTafari Development Assessment Census (RDA): Determining Our Collective & United Efforts”***

Intro: A summary about the RDA initiative, its purpose, plan of administration and the importance of the RDA report in the effective planning of a Rasta Nation.

Presenter, Ras Rohan

§ ***“Iniversal Haile Selassie I Tabernacle: A step in the Direction of ONE Rasta”***

Intro: A summary about the need for a Inited Rasta Tabernacle, it's plan of establishment, operation and ways of making the Tabernacle accessible to all Rastafari Mansions.

Presenter, Ras Evrol

## Appendix B

### Financial Expenditure Report

<b>IRASCOM INC.</b>		
<b>Statement of Expenses</b>		
<b>For the period August 25, 2004 to August 30, 2004</b>		
	<b>JAD</b>	<b>USD</b>
<i>Air and Ground Transportation</i>	\$ 61,328.40	\$ 1,022.14
<i>Food</i>	9,060.00	151.00
<i>Media Rental*</i>	8,000.00	133.33
<i>General Administrative Expenses</i>	6,600.00	110.00
<i>Hall Rental</i>	4,800.00	80.00
<i>Communications</i>	3,000.00	50.00
<i>Accommodations</i>	2,400.00	40.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 95,188.40</b>	<b>\$ 1,586.47</b>

*\* Amount does not include rental from UWI.*

#### *Berhane Mariam and other committee members*

	<b>Currency</b>	<b>Base Amount</b>	<b>X-rate</b>	<b>JAD</b>	<b>USD</b>
<b>Airfare</b>	USD	506.20	60.00	30,372.00	506.20
<b>Car &amp; Gas</b>	USD	60.00	60.00	3,600.00	60.00
<b>Accommodations</b>	USD	0.00	60.00	-	-
<b>Telephone</b>	USD	40.00	60.00	2,400.00	40.00
<b>Committee meetings</b>	USD	60.00	60.00	3,600.00	60.00
<b>Photocopying and flyers</b>	USD	30.00	60.00	1,800.00	30.00
<b>Conference hall rental</b>	JAD	4,800.00	60.00	4,800.00	80.00
<b>Projector</b>	JAD	8,000.00	60.00	8,000.00	133.33
<b>Food</b>	JAD	7,260.00	60.00	7,260.00	121.00
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	USD	0.00	60.00	-	-
				<b>61,832.00</b>	<b>1,030.53</b>

**Ras Yen**

	<b>Currency</b>	<b>Base Amount</b>	<b>X-rate</b>	<b>JAD</b>	<b>USD</b>
<b><i>Airfare</i></b>	USD	435.94	60.00	26,156.40	435.94
<b><i>Car &amp; Gas</i></b>	USD	20.00	60.00	1,200.00	20.00
<b><i>Accommodations</i></b>	USD	40.00	60.00	2,400.00	40.00
<b><i>Telephone</i></b>	USD	10.00	60.00	600.00	10.00
<b><i>Food</i></b>	USD	30.00	60.00	1,800.00	30.00
<b><i>Miscellaneous</i></b>	USD	20.00	60.00	1,200.00	20.00
				33,356.40	555.94

## **Appendix C**

### **Contact Information**

Blessed love, Inl give thanks for taking the time to receive and Idiate on this report as presented by the Delegation and Officials of IRASCOM, with respects to our Jamaica Gathering 2004. IRASCOM is in need of support and resources (both financial and physical) to assist Inl in this movement about our Father's business in these times. If One and Ones are interested in making a financial pledge/donation, or volunteering their time, skills, talents and/or resources, please do not hesitate to contact us at any of the following addresses listed below. Any questions or comments, feel liberated to drop Inl an email, letter or note expressing Oneselves to Inl.

## **HEADQUATERS: JAMAICA**

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**IRASCOM Cooperative  
c/o Jamaican Representative  
#24 Hampton Street  
Allman Town, Kingston 4 Jamaica  
West Indies**

**or**

**The Inlversal RasTafari Community Cooperative  
c/o Jamaican Representative  
#24 Hampton Street  
Allman Town, Kingston 4 Jamaica  
West Indies**

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## INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

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***\*The following is a list of the Interim Steering Committee and International Representatives From IRASCOM; all members can be reached at email: [irascom@yahoo.com](mailto:irascom@yahoo.com) or at the postal address on the previous page.***

### ***Interim Steering Committee***

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IRASCOM's Jamaican Advisory Committee of Elders & Ancients (I.J.A.C.E.A)

Eldress Makeda Blake Hannah, Chief Advisor, Jamaican Official

Prophet Bobo Greg, Independent Advisor

Ras Berhane Mariam, Chairman, The Bahamas Official

Ras Rohan White, Co-Chairman, Jamaican Official

RasYen, Operations Coordinator, USA (New Jersey) Official

Empress Denise Riley, Administrator, USA (Massachusetts) Official

Sista Zionz, Investments Manager & Accountant, USA (Ohio) Official

Empress Diane, Accounts Manager, U.K. Representative

Ras Evrol, Public Relations Officer, Jamaican Official

Sista Claudette, Deputy Public Relations Officer, U.K. Official

Empress Audra, Assistant Public Relations Officer, USA (Oregon) Official

### ***International Representatives From IRASCOM***

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Ras Sedzro, Ghana Official, RasTafari Development Assessment Coordinator

Ras Eastway (Sebulon), Netherlands, Tabernacle & Membership Official

Empress Ashaki, USA (Florida) Representative

Empress Kristy, Education Coordinator, Trinidad Official

Empress Serenity, Education Representative for the U.K, U.K Official

Empress Sari, Education Committee Deputy Coordinator, British Virgin Islands

Bobo Kailash, Antigua, Education Consultant

Ras Ijahmin, French Official & Translator, France