



# **STATEMENT**

**Delivered by**

**H.E. Carolyn Rodrigues Birkett, Permanent Representative  
of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana to the United Nations  
during the General Debate of the First Committee  
78<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly**

***Conference Room 4  
October 2, 2023***

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Guyana delegation, I congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your election to lead the First Committee during the 78<sup>th</sup> Session. We are confident that the Bureau will ably discharge of its mandate and assure you of our full cooperation and support.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of Jamaica on behalf of CARICOM, Indonesia on behalf of NAM and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on behalf of CELAC. In our national capacity, we would like to emphasize the following additional points.

Mr. Chairman,

The world today faces unprecedented levels of global security threats and instability. Driven by complex geopolitics and interlocking crises, we are witnessing today, a much broader range of threats. Not only are we confronted with increasingly dangerous and extreme nuclear weapons rhetoric, more violent conflicts, and cyber-attacks;

we are also witnessing the continued proliferation of illegal arms and the spread of weapons of mass destruction, not to mention increased environmental challenges with security implications. All the while the spectre of increased terrorism continues to loom large.

We cannot go on like this. The world cannot continue to be held hostage by the pugnacious attitudes and provocations of a few. As members of this community of nations, we have a common responsibility to pursue peace and must find more permissible ways of articulating and addressing our strategic security concerns.

In this vein, we each have a duty and an obligation to return to the path of disarmament and to recommit to peace, diplomacy, and cooperation as the only means of overcoming security risks and conflicts.

Mr. Chair,

My delegation maintains that nuclear weapons have no place in our world and that their use and threat of use are contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations and to the spirit of the Charter.

We demand that all Nuclear Weapon States urgently comply with their legal obligations and fulfill the commitments which they have undertaken on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We urge those states that have not yet done so, to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) which is complementary to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT).

My delegation also reiterates its call for Annex 2 States to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and bring it into force.

We further wish to call attention to the continued proliferation of illegal arms and ammunition which threatens the peace, safety, security and stability of our region. The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons has devastating impacts on our socio-economic development and must be stopped. The governments of our Region have embarked upon an ambitious roadmap to tackle the illicit arms trade and its impacts.

Our efforts, however, require the support of weapon-producing states to safeguard against the illicit diversion of these weapons. We urge exporting states to ensure proper export controls and to improve the implementation of existing instruments.

My country advocates for a holistic approach in tackling the challenges before us, through partnership and collaboration, and pledges to work constructively with all UN Member States and civil society.

We fully support the full, equal, meaningful, and effective participation of women in decision-making processes at all levels and are committed to working with Member States to ensure that their valuable contributions are reflected in the decisions on disarmament matters.

Mr. Chair,

On cyber security, my delegation places great value on the benefits of ICTs and remains deeply concerned about increased incidents of cyber-attacks against critical infrastructure. We reaffirm the applicability of international law in this domain and will continue to support all efforts to operationalize and strengthen international norms on cybersecurity. We also recognize that while contributing to development, ICTs are used for various criminal activities. We look forward to the conclusion of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of ICTs for Criminal Purposes, and the adoption of a convention that will strengthen our ability to combat such offences at national and international levels.

Mr. Chair, Excellencies,

The magnitude and complexity of global security challenges cannot be overstated. Amidst growing tension and mistrust, we must find a way to rebuild trust and goodwill. By intensifying our commitment to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, we can and must build the future we want and further the cause of global peace and security.

I Thank You!