



PERMANENT MISSION OF  
JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

**STATEMENT BY**

**AMBASSADOR E. COURTENAY RATTRAY  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAMAICA**

**ON**

***THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING FOR SIGNATURE  
OF THE ARMS TRADE TREATY***

**UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK  
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*Please check against delivery*

Madam Chair,

Today's opening for signature of the Arms Trade Treaty is a timely reaffirmation of multilateralism at work for large and small, developed and developing States alike. More profoundly, it is a reassurance to our peoples that they are at the centre of our multilateral action. It is therefore a singular honour to sign this historic Treaty on behalf of the Government and people of Jamaica as my first act on assuming duties today as the Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations.

The Government of Jamaica is proud to participate and be among the first signatories at this momentous event. Our decision to be an original signatory is not only a strong demonstration of the highest priority we accord to the establishment of common global standards to regulate the international trade in conventional weapons, but also of the great urgency we attach to the early and effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty. Our sense of urgency is borne of a firm conviction that this Treaty can contribute significantly to reducing the suffering of many Jamaicans and countless peoples around the world, especially women and children, who are living daily under the deadly and devastating impact of the illicit trade in arms and ammunition.

As is widely known, per capita murder rates in the Caribbean are among the highest in the world and 70 per cent of murders in the sub-region involve small arms. While we do not manufacture these weapons or import them in any significant quantities, our region has been disproportionately affected for far too long by the disastrous impact and tragic consequences of the illicit trade. It is against this backdrop as well as a strong belief in concerted global action in tackling this trans-boundary scourge that Jamaica and other CARICOM States joined and actively participated in the UN Arms Trade Treaty process, which began in 2006. Throughout the process, we remained steadfast in our commitment to achieve a robust, implementable and legally binding instrument as a necessity to closing the significant loopholes in the global legal trade in arms. Today we celebrate this achievement.

Madam Chair,

We take great pride in the fact that during the negotiating process CARICOM's voice was significant. Our voice was buttressed by the incalculable support of a formidable cross regional coalition of like-minded States and inter-governmental organisations sharing a common vision of ending human suffering and contributing to international peace and development. This coalition was sustained and nurtured by a deftly organized civil society whose steadfast advocacy served as the moral conscience of the process and whose technical advice provided substantive input for the negotiations. We pay special tribute to this coalition of government, civil society and international organisations in delivering the ATT, as well as to Ambassador

Peter Wolcott of Australia and Ambassador Garcia Moritan of Argentina who ably led the long and arduous process of negotiations.

On 2 April 2013, with its vote in favour, Jamaica supported the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty; an instrument commended to the world by the vast majority of the Member States of the United Nations. Indeed, the conclusion of the ATT is a major contribution to peace, security and development worldwide. Jamaica is particularly satisfied that the ATT provides clear obligations for States Parties to prevent the diversion of conventional arms, including small arms and light weapons, into the illicit market.

Today's opening for signature is the beginning of a chapter in the work which lies ahead in bringing the Treaty into being. Early entry into force and universal and effective implementation will be the true measures of success of our action. It is for this reason that during the negotiations, Jamaica and other CARICOM countries called for strong provisions on international cooperation and assistance as key components of the Treaty to assist States with capacity and legislative challenges. Enhanced sharing of information, best practice and intelligence among States are critical to the Treaty's implementation. So is a dedicated and properly resourced Secretariat.

Madam Chair,

We are confident that the very effective coalition that existed during the negotiations will be transformed into a vibrant and meaningful partnership for implementation and we greatly welcome early indications from a number of States that they will be providing technical and financial resources to assist with implementation efforts.

In signing the Treaty today, Jamaica remains fully engaged in the process and pledges to work vigorously to ratify the Treaty at the earliest opportunity. We will also play our part in encouraging as many countries to do likewise so as to ensure its entry into force and universal adherence.

It is with confidence and renewed hope that we press forward within the framework of multilateralism to take further steps towards a better and safer world. This will lead, we confidently expect, to greater advances in arms control and disarmament.

I thank you.