



**PERMANENT MISSION OF  
JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**STATEMENT BY**

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OF JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**ON BEHALF OF  
THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)**

**AT THE 65<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**ON**

**AGENDA ITEM 74: OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA**

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*Please check against delivery*



Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on Agenda Item 74 on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) namely: Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and my own country, Jamaica.

CARICOM welcomes the Report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/65/69, as well as the addendums to this report, as we examine the state of the implementation of international legal agreements governing the oceans and seas and the role of the UN in assisting States on specific issues relating to such implementation.

We were pleased to have marked the observance by the UN of World Oceans Day, on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2010, and appreciate the work done by the DOALOS in observing the day and in promoting and facilitating international cooperation on the law of the sea and ocean affairs.

Mr. President,

The UNCLOS, to which all CARICOM Member States are States Parties, provides the legal framework for all activities related to our oceans and seas. We look to the Convention for guidance on matters relating to the exploration and exploitation of both the living and non-living resources in our maritime zones. Nevertheless, we recognize that, as developing countries, we are sometimes unable to realize the full benefits from these resources, due to limited scientific or technological capacity. Consequently, we welcome the emphasis placed on the issue of capacity building and the transfer of technology in the Secretary-General's Report.

The Convention contemplates the cooperation among States either directly or through, *inter alia*, regional arrangements in the implementation of its provisions, as well as in the conservation and management and sustainable use of the resources of our oceans and seas.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Informal Consultative Process on Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, which examined issues relating to: "*capacity building in ocean affairs and the law of the sea, including marine science*", provided a better understanding of resource and the related science.

It is our view that the transfer of technology is also an essential tool for our better understanding of the resources and would assist us in implementing the provision of Part XIV of the Convention on the Law of the Sea.

CARICOM fully supports the need for increased international cooperation and the strengthening of capacity-building initiatives to address existing gaps in marine science and in the transfer of technology at the national and regional levels.

In tandem with the Report of the Secretary-General, CARICOM also sees the need for greater coordination of capacity-building activities to ensure implementation of international rules for maritime safety and security, the conservation of marine resources, the protection of the environment and the conservation and sustainable use of marine bio-diversity.

Capacity-building and the transfer of technology is also important as it relates to the implementation of the provisions of Article 76 of the Convention. Without the requisite technical assistance, some CARICOM Member States would find it difficult to make submissions to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf in order to establish the outer limits of their continental shelf. Consequently, we applaud the efforts of the DOALOS in mounting training workshops involving current and former members of the Commission on the complex scientific and technical issues involved in making submissions to the Commission.

Mr. President,

We welcome the strides made by the Commission in discharging its mandate under Article 76 and Annex II of the Convention, in the examination of submissions of Coastal States seeking to establish the outer limits of their continental shelf and to make the necessary recommendations to the respective States. Nevertheless, we remain concerned with the projected workload of the Commission and therefore support the work of the Informal Working Group to devise solutions to address the Commission's workload.

We welcome the increased trust being placed in the Authority by its members, who through the Council, at its last session held in Kingston, Jamaica, decided to request an advisory opinion from the Seabed Disputes Chamber of the ITLOS on the responsibility and liability of sponsoring States for activities in the international seabed Area. This underscores the increased importance of the work of the Authority to all of its members. Similarly, we commend the work of members of the ISA, which led to the adoption of the regulations on polymetallic sulphides at its last session.

It is our expectation that work would progress for the finalization of the draft regulations on prospecting and exploration for cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts in the Area at its 17<sup>th</sup> Session in 2011.

As host country of the Authority, Jamaica continues to honour its obligations under the Headquarters' Agreement, so that the Authority is able to carry out its duties consistent with the provisions of the Convention.

Mr. President,

The resolution of disputes relating to the interpretation and application of the provisions of the Convention is indispensable to the maintenance of peaceful relations among States, as it relates to the management and sustainable use of the resources of the respective maritime zones. It is for this reason that CARICOM welcomes the recent referral by States of disputes under the Convention to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.

Mr. President,

The economic livelihood of CARICOM States is continually linked to the surrounding seas. As Small and Vulnerable Island Developing States, the Caribbean Sea plays a significant role in our economic activities, particularly covering shipping, fisheries, tourism, trade in goods and services and other viable commercial activities at the regional and international levels.

CARICOM welcomes the recent adoption of resolution entitled "Towards the sustainable development of the Caribbean Sea for present and future generations" which reaffirms the reliance of most Caribbean economies on their coastal and marine environment for sustainable development. We also acknowledge with appreciation the work of the Caribbean Sea Commission (CSC) in advancing the designation of the Caribbean Sea as a special area within the context of sustainable development and inviting the international community to continue its support of the Commission.

Efforts to promote maritime commerce must, therefore, include improvements in regulations governing the safety of navigation, the structure of vessels, and other pertinent standards in the maritime shipping industry. Ships must also be able to operate under international rules in safe, secure and crime-free environments, and in this regard, we recognize the need for additional safety measures necessary for the maintenance of international rules and standards in maritime safety, as well as to combat growing threats to marine safety.

CARICOM, therefore, welcomes the new international goal-based ship construction standards for bulk carriers and oil tankers, and other new standards relating to the safety of ships, which were adopted by the Maritime Safety Committee of the IMO in May 2010.

We note the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) aimed at strengthening international cooperation and consultation in nuclear, radiation, transportation and waste safety, particularly in the shipment of radioactive materials. We appreciate the IAEA's delivery of programmes and training activities to raise the awareness of issues relating to the transport of dangerous goods.

CARICOM continues to express its concern over the danger posed by the transportation of radioactive wastes and other hazardous materials through the Caribbean Sea, which are potential risks to lives, health, our environment and economies in the event of accidents during transportation.

Mr. President,

CARICOM welcomes efforts to improve the standards of training of seafarers, the safety of navigation and life at sea and the protection of the environment, through the amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch-keeping for Seafarers and its Associated Code, which were adopted in June 2010 under the auspices of the International Maritime Organization (IMO). We also welcome the proclamation of 25<sup>th</sup> June as the Day of the Seafarer.

The UN must also redouble its efforts to counter threats to marine safety at the national, regional and international levels, including acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea, terrorist acts against shipping, and transnational organized crime.

The illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances continues to be conducted, mainly by sea. This remains a challenge for many States and regions, including the Latin American and the Caribbean regions, which have limited resources and institutional and law

enforcement capacities to effectively counter these threats. In this regard, we support the work and efforts of the UNODC to promote programmes and initiatives for increased regional and international cooperation to address the issue and its attendant problems.

Mr. President

In this International Year of Biodiversity, we must renew and strengthen our commitments to significantly conserve marine bio-diversity and reduce biodiversity loss, as the current rate of loss is a serious threat to environmental sustainability and poverty eradication.

Our focus on natural resource conservation should also entail increased emphasis on the protection of the marine environment from harmful effects, such as oil spills and other forms of pollution at sea.

Mr. President,

CARICOM supports the establishment of the Regular Process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects, as recommended by the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

In this regard, we are encouraged by cooperation among States and we endorse the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole at its meeting in 2009, to develop a strategy and timetable for the production of an integrated assessment of the world's oceans and seas, as well as the recommendations adopted at its meeting during 30<sup>th</sup> August to 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2010, for further progress on the modalities for the implementation of the Process, including institutional arrangements and financing.

We note, with appreciation, the contributions made by Member States to the Voluntary Trust Fund for the operation of the first five-year cycle of the Process, as well as for training programmes and support for developing states. We urge further contributions from Member States and other entities to help move the process forward, as the assessments are necessary for effective decision-making.

CARICOM supports the relevance of the UNEP marine and coastal strategy, which was launched last year to promote marine conservation, as well as the productive and sustainable use of marine resources through regional cooperation and partnerships. The strategy is in line with international efforts to address the growing degradation of the marine and coastal environments and the fragile ecosystems, which provide much needed services for vulnerable people.

CARICOM fully supports the pilot projects undertaken by the Caribbean Environment Programme for the further implementation of the regional action plan, including a proto-type Caribbean Regional Fund for Waste Water Management and the hosting of pollution prevention national seminars on the ratification and implementation of MARPOL 73/78, Annex V.

We embrace the review of the achievement of the Caribbean Environment Programme, which was facilitated through the 14<sup>th</sup> Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Programme and the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, held in October 2010 in Montego Bay, Jamaica.

Mr. President,

Climate Change remains a priority issue for CARICOM and other Small Island Developing States, particularly given growing concerns and its projected adverse effects on marine biodiversity and the marine environment, including rising seas levels, increasing acidity, loss of marine biodiversity, and shifts in the distribution of marine species. Caribbean States are particularly concerned with the damaging impact of climate change to corals and other marine organisms, especially in tropical seas. Within this context, CARICOM encourages increased activities at the national, regional and international levels to mitigate the impacts of climate change, with specific focus in addressing the unsustainable use of natural resources, inadequate watershed management, coastal development practices and poor waste management.

Mr. President

In conclusion, CARICOM wishes to emphasize that, without viable and sustainable oceans and seas, our way of life is lost forever given their vital role in international transport, global trade, sustaining the lives and livelihoods of billions across the globe and supporting essential ecosystems. The UN continues to play an important role in the governance of our oceans and seas, and CARICOM for its part, will continue to extend its full support to the Organisation in this important area of activity. The efforts of the UN must be complemented with the promotion of the universality of the Law of the Sea Convention, which provides the legal and regulatory framework for all activities in our maritime areas. CARICOM, therefore, reiterates its call for all those States which have not yet done so to ratify or accede to this important international legal instrument.

I thank you.

