



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

STATEMENT BY

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



**THEMATIC DEBATE: OTHER DISARMAMENT MEASURES
AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY**

**FIRST COMMITTEE
SIXTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the fourteen Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Our remarks will focus on the issue of women and disarmament. We are indeed pleased that the First Committee will once again address this issue and particularly welcome the growing attention, both within and outside of the Committee, to the gender aspects of disarmament. We also welcome the Secretary-General's second Report on Member States' implementation of Resolution 68/33 on *Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control* and take special note of the actions being undertaken at the local, sub-national, national and regional levels, as well as within the UN system to promote, support and strengthen the effective participation of women in all decision-making processes related to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, in particular as it relates to the prevention and reduction of armed violence and armed conflict. The work being done at the level of civil society is also noteworthy and much appreciated.

Numerous reports have attested that women and girls disproportionately suffer serious human rights violations during armed conflict and war, in particular sexual violence. This situation was clearly addressed in Security Council Resolution 2117, which highlighted the fact that the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons fuel armed conflicts and have a wide range of negative human rights, humanitarian, development and socioeconomic consequences, in particular on the security of civilians in armed conflict, including the disproportionate impact on violence perpetrated against women and girls.

While in the CARICOM region we are not affected by armed conflict, we face insurmountable challenges as it relates to armed violence in many of our countries. According to statistics, approximately 70% of homicides within the region feature the use of a firearm. While most men are often the victims of gun crimes, it is the women who are often left to become the sole bread-winner for families and risk falling into poverty. They also have to deal with the resulting emotional and mental trauma that follows in the wake of such crimes.

It is therefore worth repeating that CARICOM States support the view that decisions on disarmament must consider the effects on both men and women; that we cannot create agreements for the entire international community and not consider one half of the world's population. Our support for this issue is fully embodied in the annual resolution on *Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms Control* introduced by our fellow CARICOM Member State, Trinidad and Tobago.

We are, therefore, pleased that this year's text of the resolution as contained in document L.47, has been updated to reflect significant developments, including the provision on gender-based violence in the Arms Trade Treaty, which obliges States Parties to take into account the risk of conventional weapons being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence against women and children. This is a huge step forward. Against the current backdrop of high

levels conflict and armed violence worldwide, we cannot overemphasize the importance of implementing such criteria on the ground.

It is particularly timely and noteworthy that one of the key findings of the review of the implementation of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons at the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States this past June, was the need to facilitate the participation and representation of women in policy-making, planning and implementation processes related to small arms and light weapons.

Equally important are the comprehensive measures that States agreed to undertake in the way forward to address this shortcoming, including through women's access to training, as well as through awareness-raising and education. This positive development builds on 2012 Review Conference of the Programme of Action, which underscored the need for the further integration of women into efforts to combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

Another key update in Resolution L. 47 is its recognition of the need to strengthen the collection of data and evidence to better understand the impacts of armed violence, and in particular of small arms and light weapons on women and girls. Such information, we believe, will assist the international community at all levels to better address the challenges associated with the proliferation and use of weapons in situations of armed violence.

Mr. Chairman,

Almost 15 years ago, Resolution 1325 on *Women, Peace and Security*, which was unanimously adopted in the Security Council brought to light one of history's best kept secrets, the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women and girls. Recognised as a historic and unprecedented document, the impetus for its adoption was strong. Indeed, this resolution and successor resolutions have established a broad spectrum of norms on women, peace and security. We are pleased that in 2010, the General Assembly, through the First Committee began to consider the specific implications of resolution 1325 for disarmament with the adoption of resolution 65/69 on *Women, disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation*.

While there have been some advances, we need to make greater progress on entrenching the gender perspective in disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation policies and programmes. Resolution L.47 provides an opportunity to solidify our consideration of this issue as a core and cross-cutting agenda item. We therefore look forward to its adoption by consensus, as in previous years.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, while we welcome the growing representation of women in the First Committee over the past few years and I am proud to be represented among this number, CARICOM perceives the need for far greater progress to be made in achieving gender-balance through increased representation of women in this critically important aspect of our Organisation's work.