



PERMANENT MISSION OF
JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT BY

His Excellency Mr. Stafford Neil
Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations

TO THE

58TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ON

**THE REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL
ON THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION**

New York, October 6, 2003

[FINAL TEXT]

Mr. President

Jamaica aligns itself with the statement made this morning by the Permanent Representative of Morocco, speaking on behalf of the G77 and China.

Our review of the work of the United Nations over the past year comes at a significant time in the history of the Organization. The events over the year have brought new challenges and questions concerning the future of our system of collective security. This Assembly now provides a timely opportunity for assessment and reflection since we are clearly at a point where we should contemplate some reshaping of the international system.

Jamaica congratulates the Secretary General for his leadership in the past year and we have studied his Report which, as usual, gives a comprehensive review of activities of the United Nations over the past year. It was a difficult and eventual year for the United Nations dominated by intense pre-occupations in the area of peace and security. The war in Iraq was deeply divisive and challenging to the role and relevance of our system of collective security. It was damaging to the Organization as well as to relations within the international community. Lessons are to be learnt from that experience, the most important of which is that there is no safe alternative to multilateralism and our collective system which is the foundation for international security. What is needed is to strengthen the effectiveness of the system in decision-making and enforcement mechanisms; and improve adherence of the membership to the obligations of the Charter and the rules of international law.

By precept and by practice the United Nations must be democratic in its decision-making; it must be equitable in its policies; it must be principled in its actions; and it must be impartial, objective and non-discriminatory in the application of its rules and standards. The shocking and outrageous events of August 19, which we have all condemned, must indicate the importance of maintaining the image of the United Nations commanding respect as an impartial arbiter acting in the interest of all nations and peoples in the global community.

Mr. President, there are some points of detail in the Secretary General's Report on which we are constrained to express reservations with regard to interpretation of context and circumstances. It is important that in such matters that there is balance in the respective roles of the Secretariat and of the member states and that in cases where UN assistance is given, it is not construed in terms which give a misleading impression. Paragraph 95 of A/58/323 and Paragraph 59 of A/58/1 are the subject of these concerns.

However, in general, we are satisfied that his Report reflects the mixed record of the Organization's achievements and setbacks since our last session.

In the field of disarmament we share his disappointment at the weakening of international commitment to disarmament norms and at the stalemate in the negotiating

bodies. We must all be concerned at the danger of the spread of weapons of mass destruction. But we are also concerned about proliferation of conventional small arms and light weapons. They should be addressed in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner and take into account the security concerns of all states.

With regard to terrorism, there was increased cooperation in counter-terrorism over the year but there is need to broaden the strategy which should not be confined to military and financial measures. There should also be combined with a strategy of prevention by careful analysis and action to eliminate the root causes.

Mr. President, the work of the United Nations has had its share of success in Africa but it is clear that more resources are necessary to strengthen the foundations for peace and stability in post-conflict environments.

Important achievements were also made in meeting humanitarian commitments but here again resource constraints are hampering the work of the Organization, especially in combating dangerous diseases and providing emergency assistance for disaster relief and in alleviating food shortages.

In relation to the Millennium Development Goals, we note that limited progress has been achieved but there seems to be, in significant areas, some loss of momentum. The implementation of the Monterrey and Johannesburg commitments are moving at too slow a pace towards the targets set within the prescribed timeframes. The sluggish growth in the world economy might explain this in part but it is apparent also that the political solidarity and commitment to international development cooperation is still far below desirable levels to meet the objectives of Goal 8 of the Programme. We believe also that too often development assistance is being conditioned on specified political criteria and the achievement of these conditionalities are given a greater priority than the substantive needs that exist in relation to poverty reduction and economic welfare in the developing countries. But the critical problem remains the quantum of resources and we commend those donor countries which have consistently met the prescribed target for ODA and urge that their example be followed. We also continue to urge that priorities in economic development cooperation reflect concerns of vulnerability as well as poverty levels in the developing countries.

We would also wish to say that overall development needs and the achievement of MDGs require that the UN play a more important role in the formulation of policies affecting the development process. Currently these are still largely determined by the Bretton Woods Institutions within a system of governance in which little voice or influence is allowed to developing countries. This results in the formulation of substantive policies in finance and trade tailored to ideological prescriptions rather than the economic and social dynamics and the diversity of circumstances existing in the developing countries. For this reason, we need the United Nations to bring a greater influence and play a more central role in determining the policies guiding international economic relations; For these have a profound bearing on security and stability within the global community. We recognize that some steps have been taken towards

coordination, but we need to go further and develop a mechanism within the United Nations which would oversee development issues and devise prescriptions for development problems as they arise.

Mr. President, the Secretary General emphasized the need for reform. We support the Secretary General's intention to appoint a high level panel of Eminent Persons to consider the issue and we look forward to its results. However, this should not delay our efforts to make progress at this session. Mention has been made of the need for radical reform but we have our doubts whether what is needed now is radical reform for we believe the fundamentals are in place. What is needed are adjustments and changes to bring the existing structures in line with the Charter principles and current needs. Reform must be in the direction of achieving more democratisation and revitalization of the role of the principal organs. And we should remember that democratisation is not simply about structures and procedures; it is about transparency and open participation and an environment for the free exchange of views and for an inclusive process of decision-making which takes into account the views and interests of all States.

What should also be borne in mind is the importance of revitalization in relation to the political commitment of member states. A major part of the problem we face today results from a failure to observe the obligations of the Charter and to honour its principles; the sovereign equality of states; mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, self-determination and the peaceful settlement of disputes. In the absence of strong commitment to adherence, it will not matter what kind of structures or procedures are devised if states will not honour their obligations. For the international system to operate effectively and enjoy the confidence of the world, all states must be bound by its common rules without exception. Whatever may be the degree of military power or level of development, each must abide by this obligation and all are entitled to equal security and opportunity to share in global prosperity. Our reform efforts should seek to achieve these objectives.

Thank you, Mr. President

*Permanent Mission of Jamaica to the United Nations
New York
October 6, 2003*