



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

STATEMENT BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY BRIAN WALLACE PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF JAMAICA TO THE UNITED
NATIONS**

ON

**AGENDA ITEM 38: "NECESSITY OF ENDING THE ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND
FINANCIAL EMBARGO IMPOSED BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AGAINST
CUBA"**

**IN PLENARY AT THE 78TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

NEW YORK

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Mr. President,

At the outset, my delegation extends its warmest welcome and conveys best wishes to His Excellency Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba.

Jamaica aligns itself with the statements delivered by Grenada on behalf of the Caribbean Community, Honduras on behalf of CELAC, Iraq on behalf of the G77 and China and Uganda on behalf of the Non-aligned Movement.

Jamaica thanks the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his regular reports on this very issue and considers that this forum is critical for UN Member States to articulate their perspectives on this unilateral policy. Jamaica continues to believe that this embargo is a flagrant violation of international law and contrary to the very purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

Jamaica joins the international community in expressing its unwavering solidarity with the Government and people of the Republic of Cuba in the call for the removal of this decades-old blockade on Cuba. The embargo continues to inflict unnecessary wounds to the Cuban economy, and stifle the development aspirations and the growth potential of the Cuban people.

Mr. President,

Jamaica considers this prolonged blockade against Cuba, to be contrary to the norms and ethos governing friendly relations among states, international trade and navigation. It continues to be the main obstacle to the prosperity and to the realization of the genuine aspirations of the Cuban people. This blockade is hindering progress on Cuba's National Plan for Economic and Social Development, the implementation of Agenda 2030 and attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, which was consensually agreed by Heads of State in this very Hall in 2015.

The embargo has frustrated efforts by the Government of Cuba to contribute to

the global fight against climate change, transnational crime and poverty. It has hampered initiatives aimed at women's empowerment, social protection for the most vulnerable and transformation of the economy and society in a constantly changing global environment. The embargo against Cuba has stymied economic, commercial and financial activities, thereby hindering regular access to bilateral trade, importation of goods and access to financial mechanisms through formal and institutional channels.

Mr. President,

It is abundantly clear that the Embargo has substantially undermined Cuba's ability to respond to exogenous shocks, including the impact of natural disasters such as Hurricane Oscar that claimed 6 lives last week, as well as global food, energy and health crises. Such crises have had significant negative and lasting effects on women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities, and vulnerable groups in Cuba.

The embargo has significantly exacerbated Cuba's challenges in its efforts to maintain its electric power grid, an essential tool for economic activity and the provision of the most basic essentials of life for the Cuban people. Fuel and spare part shortages resulting from the embargo have stymied the Government's best attempts to stabilize the power supply, with the attendant deleterious consequences for the economy and for the entire population of Cuba, especially the most vulnerable, including children, the sick and the elderly. This is unconscionable.

As a result of the embargo, access to technologies is limited, since the prohibition prevents Cuba from acquiring American products or technology being manufactured by American subsidiaries. The embargo makes it difficult, if not impossible for the Government to access credit on the international capital market or financing from the IFIs.

The unmerited inclusion of Cuba on the United States' list of State Sponsors to Terrorism further restricts entities from conducting legitimate business with Cuba and deepens the challenges for third states engagement with Cuba on trade, investment, developmental aid, international cooperation on

transnational organized crime, and provision of technical assistance.

Cuba's inclusion on such a list restricts its ability to procure oil supplies since oil cargo companies, insurance companies and other parts of the supply chain require additional charges from Cuba to hedge their risks.

These are but a few of the real-life consequences of the embargo for the ordinary people of Cuba.

The international community has been seized of this matter since the first tabling of this resolution at the 46th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1991. Every year since 1992, the international community has consistently and resoundingly expressed support, as evidenced in the favourable voting outcomes, for the need to end this blockade against Cuba.

Mr. President,

Jamaica welcomed the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States in 2015, which then served to ease restrictions in a number of areas.

Notwithstanding this positive step in the right direction, we saw reversals in the more recent past. In any event, even those measures were not far-reaching enough and cannot be a substitute for the lifting of the embargo to allow the Cuban people's access to critical financial resources, health products and services, inputs for industrial activities, and, importantly, their right to development.

We also note that the United States' Government's decision in May this year to remove Cuba from its list of countries not cooperating fully in its fight against terrorism while simultaneously maintaining its designation as a State Sponsor of Terrorism remains incongruous with the principles of international law, the sovereign equality of states, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, and the right to self-determination and peaceful co-existence.

In this regard, Jamaica supports the renewed call for Cuba's removal from the

US list of countries considered state sponsors of terrorism. We firmly believe that unjustifiably maintaining Cuba on the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism limits opportunities for collaboration and cooperation within the region to address the pressing and intersecting challenges of our time.

Mr. President,

We wish to take this opportunity to applaud Cuba's remarkable advancements in healthcare and medical research, despite these many challenges, as well as its unwavering commitment to deepen South-South cooperation amongst developing countries. We commend the commitment, tenacity, resilience and innovation of the Cuban people, who stand as an inspiring example of strength and determination in difficult circumstances.

Jamaica reiterates its calls for advancing dialogue and diplomacy between Cuba and the United States. Jamaica reaffirms its commitment to stand in solidarity with the Government and people of Cuba, in concert with the majority of the members of the United Nations, and call for the removal of the embargo and for the full inclusion of the Republic of Cuba in the international community. The people of Cuba must be enabled to access the benefits of international development cooperation, which remain unreachable as long as Cuba is unreasonably deprived of opportunities to participate in and contribute to our collective vision of a safe, just, sustainable, prosperous and progressive world, leaving no one behind.

Before I close, I would like to say that, at a time when multilateralism is under severe stress, and faith in the principles of the UN Charter is being undermined, with conflict across the globe, we have a unique opportunity in this moment to restore faith, trust and confidence in multilateralism, by making right the historical wrong.

Jamaica will therefore vote in favour of resolution A/79/L.6.

I thank you.

