



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

STATEMENT BY

HIS EXCELLENCY RAYMOND O. WOLFE  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON AGENDA ITEM 116:  
**PERMANENT MEMORIAL TO AND REMEMBRANCE OF THE VICTIMS OF SLAVERY  
AND THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE**

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

NEW YORK

THURSDAY, 9<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2010

*Please check against delivery*

Mr. President,

My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statements made by the representatives of Trinidad & Tobago on behalf of the 14 Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and by Mauritania on behalf of the Member States of the African Group of countries.

At the outset, let me express my delegation's appreciation to the Secretariat for the reports under consideration during the session, under Agenda Item 116. We note that a number of countries, including Jamaica, have taken steps to implement the annual resolutions on slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. In the case of Jamaica this relates both to the inclusion of the history and lessons learned about the system of slavery in school curricula, as well as remembrance activities. However, we note that this information is not shared at the international level. We hope that this will be corrected soon, and look forward to exchanging ideas and information with other Member States on this very relevant historical issue in the very near future.

Mr President,

As the General Assembly turns its attention to the issue of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, not only do we recall the horrific period of forced uprooting of millions of men, women and children, their transportation like animals across the Atlantic, and the suffering they endured under the system of slavery; we also remind ourselves of the moral imperatives arising from the end of that pernicious system, and the legacies of slavery that linger on today in many countries. We remain convinced that it is our moral obligation as members of the international community to ensure that the world will never again endure a another tragedy of such immense proportions, which today is commonly referred to as a crime against humanity.

As stated in the theme for the permanent memorial initiative, we acknowledge the tragedy, considering the legacy, lest we forget...

Today, in addressing this issue in the General Assembly, we stand up for fairness, equity, inclusion, and a common resolve to address the ills of the past, which still affect many States across the world; and we reaffirm our resolve for dignity, particularly for persons of African descent. It is in this context that my delegation seeks the support of other delegations for the full implementation of all General Assembly resolutions under this agenda item. In so doing, the annual International Day of Remembrance will be placed on equal footing with other resolutions on similar issues, securing stable and predictable funding.

Mr President,

I take this opportunity, as Chair of the Committee, to provide a brief update on the activities of the Permanent Memorial Committee in 2010. We started the year by initiating and attempting to solidify our engagement with the Caribbean Diaspora, through the respective Consuls General, as well as community organizations in the New York tri-State area. We are hoping to establish a similar engagement with the wider African Diaspora in 2011. Throughout the year the Committee focused, among other things, on its fundraising drive and with the assistance of its Advisory Board is currently revising the fundraising strategy.

We have made advances with a dedicated website for the initiative, which we hope will be launched at the end of the year. Member States will be provided with information on the website in due course.

The Committee also concluded consultations on the project design, and the criteria for artists and judges for the international design competition, as well as a draft Memorandum of Understanding for engagement with UNESCO. We look forward to the early conclusion of discussions with that organization in this regard. We also anticipate broad participation by Member States when the international design competition is launched, hopefully early in 2011.

Mr President,

I am delighted to report that during the course of this year, the following countries made contributions to the Trust Fund, **Australia, China, Denmark, Finland, India, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Turkey**. It will also be noted that the Governments of Jamaica and Grenada have made modest pledges during the course of the year. I am particularly pleased to highlight the contribution made by the Government of India, of \$250,000 dollars, representing the single largest voluntary contribution to the Trust Fund to date and we commend and thank the Government of India. In this connection, I refer to document A/65/597 which reflects the current status of voluntary contributions.

With your indulgence, I also wish to express sincere appreciation for the kind generosity of all the Governments of those countries that have already made donations to the Permanent Memorial Trust Fund. We are thankful for the show of solidarity in acknowledging the legacy of this dark period of history. We envisage that other countries will follow in their footsteps in making contributions to the permanent memorial Trust Fund to enable us to reach our target of 4.5 million dollars for implementation.

Before closing, I would like to thank the members of the Committee, **Brazil, Ghana, the Netherlands, Portugal, Qatar, Senegal, Suriname, the United Kingdom, and the African Union**, and, in particular, the United Nations Office for Partnerships for their invaluable support, technical advice and assistance towards implementation of the permanent memorial initiative. The Committee also continues to welcome the inputs of the respective Chair of CARICOM and the Chair of the African Group of Ambassadors.

President,

In conclusion, I would like to express my delegation's sincere appreciation to all those who constructively engaged in the informal consultations on the draft resolution. I am confident that this draft resolution, like similar ones in the past, will be adopted by consensus, in particular in view of the strong support by Member States. We are indeed grateful for the broad co-sponsorship by Member States across all regions.

Finally, let me express particular appreciation to the Member States of Africa and the Caribbean Community, which continue to play a primary role in advancing the permanent memorial initiative.

I thank you for your attention.