



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

STATEMENT BY

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ON BEHALF OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)



NUCLEAR WEAPONS

**FIRST COMMITTEE
74TH SESSION OF THE UNITED GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 14 Member States of the Caribbean Community, CARICOM, and to offer our perspectives on the agenda item under consideration.

Mr. Chair,

CARICOM is alarmed by the continued reliance on and prevalence of nuclear weapons as a feature of security and military doctrines. The situation is made even more disconcerting by the obvious trend towards abandoning longstanding principles that have guided the international community's approach to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We are especially disturbed since the estimated total number of nuclear weapons, deployed and non-deployed, remains high.

Our fears about the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons have been heightened against the background of recent developments that have seen an increasing tendency to weaken disarmament treaty obligations. For CARICOM, it is imperative that the international community accelerates efforts towards nuclear disarmament commitments and fully abide by the ICJ's Advisory Opinion that reiterated the illegality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chair,

This overwhelming concern animated CARICOM's active engagement in the negotiations that culminated in the successful adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) which, we are pleased to note, has benefitted from a steady increase in the number of signatories. This past June, a special Caribbean Regional Forum on the TPNW was convened in Georgetown, Guyana that brought representatives from all over the region to discuss ways of furthering support for the Treaty. It culminated in the adoption of the *Georgetown Statement* and a reaffirmation of CARICOM's commitment to the TPNW. In addition, we are pleased to announce that during last month's treaty ceremony here at the UN, Dominica, Grenada and St. Kitts & Nevis signed the Treaty, with Trinidad & Tobago acceding

via ratification. Since that time, Dominica has become the 33rd country to ratify the Treaty, bringing the total number of CARICOM Member States to ratify the Treaty to 5 – Guyana, Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Trinidad & Tobago. We welcome the fact that the Treaty is now two-thirds of the way towards attaining the 50 ratifications needed for entry into force.

Mr. Chair,

2020 will be a seminal year for multilateral deliberations on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, with the convening of the 2020 NPT Review Conference. As a group, CARICOM has been closely monitoring the discussions in the various sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference, and we recognize the tireless efforts of the respective Chairpersons in trying to bring us closer towards consensus.

CARICOM welcomes the opportunity to move beyond the failure of the 2015 Review Conference to adopt recommendations towards ensuring that real progress can be realised in 2020. We must ensure that there is appropriate follow-up to nuclear disarmament obligations agreed to at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We must ensure the enduring success of the NPT and work steadily towards its universalization.

Mr. Chair,

One key area in which CARICOM would like to see more tangible results relates to the work of the Conference on Disarmament (CD). It remains a source of grave concern that despite substantive discussions at the 2019 session, the CD has not resumed negotiations. This not only compromises the Conference's ability to effectively discharge its duties but inhibits the proper functioning of the disarmament machinery.

We are also disquieted that the Disarmament Commission was unable to convene its substantive session in 2019 and could only engage informally on the substantive agenda item on nuclear disarmament. We hope that the Commission will revert to its normal format in 2020.

We would also encourage the Secretary-General's efforts, including through his agenda for disarmament, to ensure that Member States can "return to a common vision and path leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons."

Mr. Chair,

CARICOM Member States are proud to be Parties to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), which is in force for all 33 sovereign states of the region. We remain committed to promoting nuclear disarmament as a priority objective, as part of the first nuclear-weapon-free zone established in a densely populated region. We are especially proud that 2019 marks the 50th anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty and the establishment of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, and look forward to future work in this regard.

Mr. Chair,

As CARICOM Member States neither possess nor support the use of nuclear weapons given their grave humanitarian consequences, we are desirous of seeing steady progress towards the conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We view such arrangements as critical, especially in the face of new technological developments, means of delivery and related infrastructure.

I conclude by reiterating CARICOM's strong support for global efforts to ensure the diminished role and ultimate abolition of nuclear weapons as a feature of the international security landscape and we look forward to working with others in this regard.

I thank you.