

PERMANENT MISSION OF JAMAICA

TO THE UNITED NATIONS

**STATEMENT BY**

**HIS EXCELLENCY BRIAN WALLACE**

**PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAMAICA**

**TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**ON BEHALF OF**

**THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)**



**AT THE**

 **45TH PLENARY MEETING OF THE**

**TENTH EMERGENCY SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (RESUMED)**

**12TH DECEMBER 2023**

Mr. President,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the fourteen (14) Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Mr. President,

CARICOM deeply regrets the circumstances that have necessitated the reconvening of the 10th Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly today. We regret that despite genuine attempts to halt the unprecedented levels of death and destruction in Gaza, a way forward was not agreed.

We urge an immediate end to the alarming situation in Gaza and emphasize that there will be no winners at the end of this war. Instead, the mistrust, fear and insecurity that have come to characterize the relationship between Israel and Palestine will mount. On this note, Mr. President, CARICOM makes three critical appeals.

First, we call on all parties to lay down their instruments of war in the name of humanity. We the people of the United Nations have affirmed our faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, and in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small.

On this premise, we have resolved to unite our strength for the maintenance of international peace and security. The situation in Gaza demands this unity of purpose for the preservation of life and for the stability of the security environment in the Middle East. Guns, rockets and bombs cannot achieve these goals and will not broker security for Palestinians nor Israelis.

Second, we reiterate the call for immediate and adequate humanitarian access so that civilians can receive the support they so desperately need at this time.

A humanitarian ceasefire is urgently needed so that the United Nations and its partners can have the space and the conditions to reach the people of Gaza and to attend to their needs.

CARICOM’s third appeal, Mr. President, is for the parties to take steps that would allow for a return to the negotiating table. This includes the release of hostages taken on 7th October as well as the release of Palestinians, being held for unacceptable periods of time in Israeli prisons without charge. It also includes ending illegal settler violence against Palestinians in the West Bank and the infringement of Palestinians’ right to freedom of movement.

Mr. President,

A permanent resolution of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict requires very strong political will on both sides. Those with influence on the two parties must work to secure this political will for settling all the outstanding questions in the conflict.

Chief among those questions is the establishment of a state for the Palestinian people and guaranteed security for Israel. As Member States of the United Nations, we have a collective responsibility to devise ways of moving forward on these critical issues.

Previous resolutions of the Security Council, the General Assembly and other UN organs provide the legal and moral bases but we must now seriously contemplate how we take these forward. The status quo or worse must not be allowed to continue.

Mr. President,

CARICOM is at your disposal to advance these questions.

I thank you.