



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

STATEMENT

**ON BEHALF OF
THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)**



BY

**H.E. MR. E. COURTENAY RATTRAY
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAMAICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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

SEVENTIETH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
27th October 2015**

Mr. President,

I have the honour to address the General Assembly on behalf of the 14 Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

CARICOM aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of the Group of 77 and China, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

The Caribbean Community continues to reiterate its unequivocal opposition to the United States' imposition of the economic, commercial and financial Embargo against Cuba, which has been opposed by the overwhelming majority of the international community for the past 23 consecutive years. The unilateral imposition of extraterritorial laws on third States is contrary to both the letter and the spirit of the United Nations Charter, and the Embargo itself runs counter to the principles of multilateralism, international law, sovereignty, and free trade that this Body consistently champions.

The punitive Embargo is of particular concern to CARICOM, which shares a history, culture and brotherhood with the people of Cuba. Cuba is the most populous State of the Caribbean region, and an integral part of the Pan-Caribbean process. Caribbean ties with Cuba have historical significance, cemented by years of active cooperation at various levels. The member states of CARICOM continue to maintain close relations with Cuba through a wide range of programmes of cooperation in areas including trade, health care, infrastructure, and human resource development. Our future regional development is, in many ways, reliant upon our collective advancement and progress. In that context, we view the Embargo not just as a punitive act against Cuba, but as an impediment to our shared regional development.

Mr. President,

CARICOM welcomes the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States. We believe that this is an important positive step in the process towards the normalization of bilateral relations between the two states. We also applaud President Barack Obama's expressed intention to open a new chapter in the relations between both nations. We commend him for recognising that the blockade is harmful to the Cuban people, and for urging the United States Congress to put an end to the punitive policy.

While the regulations issued by the Departments of Commerce and the Treasury on January 15, 2015 concerning travel to Cuba, telecommunications and remittances are steps pointing in the right direction, they are still limited in scope and only modify some aspects related to the implementation of the blockade.

We remain guardedly optimistic that the recent overtures made by the United States will be accompanied by an increased willingness to consider the opinions and concerns of its international friends and partners. On this issue, global opinion can hardly be conveyed in a more convincing or consistent manner. Our welcoming of the recent pronouncements and

actions of the United States government carry with it an expectation that the remaining historical wrongs will be righted expeditiously.

Mr. President,

CARICOM reiterates its support for the right of the Cuban people to self-determination, in a manner beneficial to their social and economic development. Indeed, Cuba's peaceful, generous and cooperative international stance merits nothing less. We therefore call once more for an end to the Embargo that has preserved a state of tension between two neighbouring countries, and generated great concern and widespread unease throughout our sub-region.

CARICOM continues to enjoy friendly relations with both Cuba and the United States. Our two neighbours – a mere 90 miles apart – have produced great scholars, scientists and global leaders. They possess proud and noble histories, and are populated by friendly, open and loving peoples. Recent developments have renewed our hope for the full normalisation of Cuba–US relations. However, we consider the lifting of the Embargo to be a prerequisite for any meaningful rapprochement.

It is within this context that CARICOM States declare our unstinting support for the draft resolution on the *Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba*.

I thank you.