



PERMANENT MISSION OF
JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

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Mr. Chairman,

The Jamaican delegation is indeed delighted to see a member from our region guiding the work of such an important Committee. Like other delegations which have spoken before us, we are confident in your leadership abilities and commitment to guide the work of this Committee to a successful conclusion. Please accept our best wishes and assurances of our full cooperation. I also express congratulations to the other members of the bureau on their election.

Mr. Chairman,

Jamaica associates itself with the statements made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) the delegation of Mexico on behalf of the Rio Group and Haiti on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Mr. Chairman,

Jamaica remains steadfast in its commitment to the principles enshrined in the UN Charter and is convinced that multilaterally agreed solutions must be at the centre of efforts to tackle political instability and proliferation of weapons that exist throughout the world which threaten regional and international peace and security. This instability is often fueled by extremism and intolerance, which are neither limited in scope nor confined to national borders.

We continue to advocate that progress made on the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda is essential to lessening the threat of nuclear catastrophe and the proliferation of these weapons. Central to achieving this objective is a balanced consideration of all threats to international peace and security, while ensuring that actions taken do not run counter to the principles and purposes on the UN Charter.

Mr. Chairman,

Jamaica supports the right of all States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy as stipulated in Article IV of the NPT. At the same time however, concomitant with this right is a corresponding responsibility to commit to the IAEA verification, monitoring and safeguard provisions. This is a mandatory responsibility which we urge those States engaged in the development and use of nuclear energy to undertake, with the utmost transparency and full cooperation with the IAEA thereby providing the guarantees necessary to build confidence and uphold the integrity of the NPT.

It remains our fervent hope that serious efforts will be made by States Parties to the NPT towards ensuring the success of the Review Conference which is scheduled for 2010 as we continue to advocate for the universality of the Treaty and the full compliance of nuclear weapons States with their obligations and commitments under the Treaty.

Mr. Chairman,

We are deeply concerned at recent events on the Korean Peninsula which threaten to undermine the significant gains achieved over the past four years and which at its very core will challenge the integrity of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). We urge the players in the six party talks to reopen the channels for discussion and to work towards a long-term solution that addresses the concerns of all parties and which will provide the assurances necessary to allay the fears of the international community.

Jamaica continues to hold to the belief that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee that such weapons will never again be the unmitigated source of unspeakable death and wanton destruction on our planet.

In this regard Mr. Chairman, Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zones are decisive in promulgating the objective of nuclear disarmament. The long-standing Treaty of Tlatelolco, in Latin America and the Caribbean provides a shining example. Nuclear-

Weapon-Free-Zones act as a confidence building measure while serving to develop trust and reducing tension. Jamaica welcomes the creation of such Zones in other parts of the world and call for urgent inter-governmental dialogue for the creation of such Zones where none currently exists. This is of particular urgency in the Middle East, where the climate of unabated political tension and insecurity continue to require the urgent attention of the international community, given the serious threat posed to the preservation of regional and international peace and security.

Mr. Chairman,

Jamaica welcomes the agreement of the text of the Convention reached at the Dublin Diplomatic Conference on Cluster Munitions held last May and looks forward to its quick entry into force after its signing later this year in December. Jamaica does not have cluster munitions; however we felt it important to give political support to this just cause and therefore participated in the negotiations which framed the text of the convention. We are optimistic that it will inspire confidence in the disarmament agenda and serve as a catalyst in the work towards the elimination of weapons which have an indiscriminate and lethal impact on the lives of civilian populations.

Mr. Chairman,

The state of the disarmament machinery remains a source of concern to the majority of us. Despite the setbacks of recent years, Jamaica supports the work of the Disarmament Commission and calls for constructive, consensus-building dialogue to create a platform to move the work of the Commission forward in the next cycle. Similarly, we endorse the efforts of the Open-ended Working Group to consider the objectives and agenda, including the possible establishment of the Preparatory Committee for the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament (SSOD-IV) and look forward to its reconvening at an appropriate time.

Mr. Chairman,

Our intense efforts to combat terrorism, transnational organized crime, and elimination of nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction must not marginalize the need for decisive action to curb the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons which facilitate internal violence in many of our countries and result in high levels of homicides. Indeed, as my Prime Minister stated in his statement in the General Debate, “for countries such as Jamaica, small arms and light weapons constitute weapons of mass destruction”.

The easy access to illegal weapons and ammunitions and its connection to the narco-trade place a tremendous burden on the Jamaican Government, having to divert scarce resources from national development budget to arrest its debilitating effects.

We welcome the successful outcome earlier this year of The Third Biannual Meeting of States (BMS-3) to Consider the Implementation of the UN Programme of Action (POA) to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. We also note that during the Conference, one of the overriding concerns of many States was their inability to implement the POA due to their lack of financial and technical capacity to do so effectively. It is our desire that developing countries will receive the requisite assistance in a timely manner, to satisfactorily implement their commitments. Decisive action must be taken to prevent these weapons from falling into criminal hands. That is why we will continue our call for the establishment of a system for the marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons and that ammunitions be incorporated into the POA as a matter for serious consideration and action.

Jamaica looks forward to the report of the work of the Group of Government Experts established in accordance with GA resolution 61/89, “Towards an Arms Trade Treaty: Establishing Common International Standards for the Import, Export, and Transfer of Conventional Arms”. In the same breath, and as a logical step forward,

Jamaica supports the establishment of an arms trade treaty to impose strict controls on the trade in small arms and light weapons. Such a treaty should include, *inter alia*, the export, re-export, import, transfer, transit and trans-shipment of all conventional arms, including components, ammunition and the technology for their manufacture.

Mr. Chairman,

Jamaica supports the work of the UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Latin America and the Caribbean particularly in the area of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and hope that the renewed efforts by the Office for Disarmament Affairs through this office will continue to develop and expand its operations for the benefit of the entire region. We wish to acknowledge the tremendous support provided by the Regional Centre to the Member States of CARICOM.

Mr. Chairman,

Jamaica urges all delegations to renew their commitments to redouble efforts to advance the work of this Committee. We pledge our support to work arduously towards this end, especially to create a more conducive atmosphere in which the basis for a breakthrough in the stalemate on the disarmament agenda can be achieved, in this session. As a key component of the UN disarmament machinery, the First Committee must continue its on-ward thrust to devise constructive ways to resolve the outstanding issues surrounding the threat to global peace and international security, posed by nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

I thank you.