



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

STATEMENT BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY E. COURTENAY RATTRAY
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAMAICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

ON

**AGENDA ITEM 68: *PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF
THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN***

**IN THE THIRD COMMITTEE
SEVENTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Mr. Chair,

Jamaica aligns itself with the statements delivered by CELAC and CARICOM under this agenda item.

We thank the Secretary-General for the reports prepared on the promotion and protection of the rights of the child. We are pleased to note the progress highlighted in these reports, and remain focussed on the work that remains to be undertaken to attain the relevant Sustainable Development Goals. The innovative approach reflected in the 2030 Agenda provides a unique opportunity to comprehensively and inclusively treat with children's rights.

Our children are tomorrow's leaders. By virtue of this fact, we cannot leave them behind for to do so would be to the detriment of our future. Jamaica is, therefore, determined to place children at the very heart of Agenda 2030.

We are committed to the protection of our children and youth and are actively working towards fulfilling Goal 16, specifically SDG target 16.2, related to the elimination of all forms of violence against and torture of children.

In July of last year, Jamaica joined the Global Partnership to end Violence against Children as a Pathfinder Country, demonstrating its commitment to protecting the rights of children. The glaring statistics that *"every five minutes, a child dies as a result of violence and that an estimated 120 million girls and 73 million boys have been victims of sexual violence"* speaks volumes to the responsibility that Member States have to ensure our children are raised in an environment that is free from violence and exploitation.

Our Ministry of Education, Youth and Information recently hosted a stakeholder's consultation to review and update Jamaica's "National Plan of Action for an Integrated Response to Children and Violence (NPACV), 2014-2020". This long term strategic plan is underpinned by a holistic, rights-based approach, focussed on resolving challenges relating to children as victims, perpetrators and witnesses of violence in all forms.

Mr. Chair,

Jamaica asserts the urgent need for the implementation of appropriate measures to prevent and protect children from all forms of violence, including bullying, in keeping with its revised Safety and Security Manual for schools (2015).

Approximately 6 in 10 children between the ages of 2 and 14 worldwide, almost a billion children, are subjected to physical punishment by their caregivers on a regular basis. The Government of

Jamaica prohibits corporal punishment for children in places of safety and early childhood institutions. In continued efforts to protect our children in schools, we have developed alternative systems of discipline and behavior management. In this regard, in March of this year the Prime Minister announced plans to amend the Education Act to explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in schools.

An effective and efficient child care protection system is indispensable for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child. To this end, our Ministry of Education, Youth and Information is currently overseeing a merger of two important bodies within this framework– the Child Development Agency (CDA) and the Office of the Children’s Registry (OCR). Additionally, the Government is pursuing the modernization of the child protection sector, including through a child case management system that will allow electronic sharing of information among key players in the child care and social protection sector.

As it relates to the specific case of the girl child and noting the transformational impact of education on girls, we are pleased to note the progress regarding access to education highlighted in the Secretary-General’s report on The Girl Child. The Jamaican Government reaffirms the importance of reintegrating school-aged mothers into the formal school setting to ensure that girls are not denied opportunities of empowerment and self –sufficiency. This, we believe, will minimize the risk of our girls falling prey to criminal elements, including trafficking, prostitution and sexual abuse.

Mr. Chair,

My delegation wishes to emphasize the need for greater opportunities to exchange views, experiences and best practice among Member States, including on the importance of international cooperation in fulfilling obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. To this end, Jamaica will continue to work assiduously and in close cooperation with all relevant stakeholders to safeguard the future of our children.

I thank you.