



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

STATEMENT BY

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JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

ON

AGENDA ITEM 119:

**COMMEMORATION OF THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY
AND THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE**

**SEVENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Mr. President,

Jamaica thanks the Secretary-General for his report being considered today under this agenda item.

We extend our gratitude to the United Nations Office for Partnerships, which has, over the years, managed the Trust Fund established to support the Permanent Memorial. UNOP has operated at the highest levels of professionalism and accountability, demonstrating once again that as Member States we can be justly proud of the high calibre of the staff serving our Organisation.

I offer special thanks to our Secretary-General and to the Deputy Secretary-General, whose support for the Permanent Memorial initiative has been unwavering from the outset. Their support has not only been symbolic but also manifested in specific ways that directly contributed to the success of the project. In fact, the very selection of UNOP as an entity specifically designated to support the implementation of the project attests to the importance that was accorded to it by the SG.

UNOP played a critical role throughout all stages of the project's implementation and ensured that it remained on track and was completed on-time and on-budget. In addition, it partnered with the Permanent Memorial Committee, as well as UNESCO, to organize the international competition that resulted in the selection of the winning design; the Ark of Return. The Permanent Memorial Committee benefited immensely from the professional support provided by UNOP, under whose custody the Trust Fund was held, and I take this opportunity to place on record the Committee's sincere gratitude.

Mr. President,

As demonstrated in the Report of the Secretary-General, Member States provided the vast majority of the voluntary contributions used to undertake the Permanent Memorial initiative. We owe an immense debt of gratitude to all Member States for their consistent support of the project. Our special thanks go to the over one hundred Member States that made financial contributions, which came from a wide range of developed and developing States drawn from all geographical regions, whether or not directly affected by the Transatlantic Slave Trade. This demonstrates the importance that we have collectively attached to the Permanent Memorial, not just as a tangible symbol to honour the victims and recognize those who struggled against the horror of Slavery, but also for the role the memorial plays as a reminder of the legacies of Slavery and the need for us to take action to address them.

Mr. President,

Civil society, the private sector and private individuals also contributed meaningfully to the Fund. We thank these partners for their commitment and support. Their inclusion among the contributors demonstrates that the noble ideals surrounding this project resonated with people across the world. It is indeed gratifying that the Permanent Memorial represents part of the United Nations commitment to one of its founding tenets, which is that our work here must always be on behalf of “We the Peoples of these United Nations”.

Mr. President,

The Ark of Return is already attracting numerous visitors, including those who are participating in events and tours at the United Nations. We are confident that its aesthetic appeal and universal message will endure and that all who visit it will be impacted by its enduring message.

We recall that its design is purposefully sustainable, including its use of solar energy for its lighting, and the use of recycled water for its teardrop and fountain features. We fully support the decision of the General Assembly that the balance of funds in the Trust Fund should be retained by the United Nations to ensure the maintenance and upkeep of the Memorial, and take due note of the information provided in the Secretary-General’s report that this is being undertaken.

We look forward to the Permanent Memorial continuing to be a source of pride and inspiration to all its visitors over the years to come.

I thank you.