



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

**STATEMENT BY**

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OF JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**AT THE  
SMALL ARMS DEBATE  
OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL**

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Mr. President,

The Jamaican delegation welcomes this opportunity to participate in this open debate on an agenda item which is of critical importance to the international community. We view this debate as a chance for the international community to renew its focus and commitment to ending the catastrophic consequences caused by small arms and the need to garner the political will necessary to create and implement the appropriate measures, to curb the illicit trafficking of these weapons. In this connection, Mr. President, my delegation welcomes the report of the Secretary-General; S/2008/258 dated 17<sup>th</sup> April 2008, to this body.

Mr. President,

Jamaica reaffirms its commitment to the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects and continues to work towards effectively implementing its provisions in our domestic legislation. To further consolidate this position we have ratified other related international conventions including the United Nations Firearms Protocol.

At the same time however, Jamaica continues to be concerned with the lack of progress towards curbing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Indeed while we acknowledge that a few steps have been taken in the right direction with regard to specific areas of the Programme of Action, my delegation remains strongly of the view that if we are to achieve meaningful and sustainable outcomes to the POA, greater emphasis must also be placed on the area of ammunition.

In taking stock of the implementation of the Programme of Action, we are also of the conviction that the global effort should also focus on the need to examine how implementation can be made more relevant, given that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is still prevalent, since the POA was adopted seven years ago. This of course will necessitate consideration of an approach that will encompass the wider work and activities of the United Nations. In this regard, we look forward to the upcoming “Third Biennial Meeting of States on the Implementation of the Programme of Action”.

Mr. President,

As noted in the Secretary-General’s report, the illicit proliferation of small arms facilitate a wide array of human rights violations relating to: murder, rape and other forms of sexual violence, kidnapping, torture and the trafficking in persons including children. We fully agree that where armed violence becomes the established means for resolving grievances and conflicts, legal and peaceful dispute resolution mechanisms could be eroded and as a consequence, pose severe difficulties in upholding the rule of law and ensuring the dispensation of justice. In such scenarios, the devastating effects caused by illicit small arms and light weapons are usually felt most by the most vulnerable in our societies, including women and children and ultimately challenges the development priorities of States by diverting efforts aimed at attaining the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr President,

It is indeed not surprising that the Small Arms Survey informs that much “more is known about the number of nuclear warheads, stocks of chemical weapons and transfers of major conventional weapons than about

small arms". The international community has failed to respond to this alarming threat, especially where it affects developing countries, and where the real impact of these weapons in criminal, gang related and narco-trafficking activities are felt daily, at an astounding rate. To reverse this trend, it is important that all Member States cooperate and engage in meaningful action, including the exchange of information amongst law enforcement authorities and implement such measures which will lead to the reduction in the illegal trade of the reported approximately 875 million small arms and light weapons, currently in circulation globally.

Since 2001 our efforts in Jamaica, with the assistance of our partners, to reduce the number of illegal guns and ammunitions from our streets, has met with some success. My delegation would like to use this opportunity to express our appreciation for the assistance provided to Jamaica at the bilateral and regional levels which has allowed for the implementation of the Programme of Action in areas such as the provision of training for legal officers, policy makers, law enforcement and custom officials. We also express our gratitude to the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-LiREC), for its assistance in training programmes for law enforcement officials. We certainly look forward to continued cooperation and support in other areas, as we seek to comprehensively implement the POA.

Mr. President,

Jamaica hereby reiterates its call for the international community to work resolutely and steadfastly towards the adoption of a legally binding instrument to allow States to identify and trace illicit small arms and light weapons. At the same time, with the constant changes in global patterns of supply of small arms and light weapons, there is an equal need for the

international community to examine and come to terms with the problem of illicit brokering, a situation which presents the greatest risk for the diversion of these weapons to the underground market and consequently into illegal hands. As stated by the Secretary-General in his report, "it is of the highest significance that countries enact effective laws and regulations to govern the wide spectrum of present-day arms brokering". My delegation welcomes this very important and timely injunction by the Secretary-General which emphasises the need for the international community to proceed to take urgent action in this critical area.

Mr. President

The nexus between small arms and light weapons and ammunitions is inseparable and accordingly, while paying due attention to illicit small arms, we must also be resolute in our commitment to regulate the illicit proliferation of ammunitions. This is of prime concern to Jamaica. A gun without ammunition is merely a mechanical contraption; a device that is practically useless and so, all efforts to curb, regulate or stem the flow of illegal small arms and light weapons must be accompanied by similar multiple efforts to effectively regulate the illegal flow of ammunition.

Mr. President,

As a member of the Peacebuilding Commission, Jamaica is fully aware of the arduous task faced by the Commission in restoring and maintaining stability in post-conflict situations. The issue of illicit small arms and light weapons is relevant to the work of the Commission as the levels of illegal weapons circulating in the countries concerned, are usually higher at the end of the conflict. In this regard, we support the view that the strategic frameworks developed by the Commission could benefit from coordination

with existing instruments such as the Programme of Action and the UN Register of Conventional Arms and also with the work done in other fora on curbing the proliferation of illicit small arms. The Jamaican delegation certainly looks forward to supporting efforts towards this end, as the Commission continues to develop the tools necessary to assist in facilitating the total recovery from conflict and towards sustainable development of all countries faced with such situations, in particular those countries currently on its agenda.

Finally, Mr. President, Jamaica is currently reviewing the recommendations posited by the Secretary-General in his report on small arms and will express our views in the upcoming Biennial Meeting and in other pertinent fora.

I thank you.

