



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

**STATEMENT BY**

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

***AGENDA ITEM 43: NECESSITY OF ENDING THE ECONOMIC,  
COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL EMBARGO IMPOSED BY  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AGAINST CUBA***

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

**31<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2018**

Madam President,

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the G77 and China, CELAC, the NAM and CARICOM, and offers the following remarks in its national capacity.

Madam President,

Jamaica expresses its profound disappointment at the continued need for this Assembly to meet for yet another year in this manner, to consider the draft resolution on the *"Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba."*

Jamaica has consistently argued against the imposition of the embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba in violation of international law. This embargo stands as an affront to the collective expression of the international community that has consistently called for it to be lifted. The overwhelming view of the international community was yet again made manifest last year by the fact that 191 Member States voted in favour of the resolution to lift the 56 year old policy of economic blockade.

Madam President,

Jamaica is concerned that despite progress made in recent years towards a rapprochement between the United States of America and Cuba, we now witness increasing moves towards the strengthening of the embargo, thereby weakening the prospects for meaningful dialogue between both countries. Jamaica sees evidence of the strengthening of this policy in the following actions:

First, the restrictions on Cuba's international financial transactions, including those with multilateral organisations, have intensified;

Second, the US administration tightened the blockade against Cuba with the signing on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2017 of the National Security Presidential Memorandum entitled, “Strengthening the Policy of the United States toward Cuba”;

Third, the US Departments of Commerce, the Treasury and State issued, on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017, new regulations and provisions to put into effect the afore-mentioned Memorandum;

Fourth, on 10th September 2018, the US administration extended the application against Cuba of the *Trading with the Enemy Act* until September 14, 2019, thus maintaining the legal framework on which the policy of blockade against Cuba of 1962 is based.

We are further concerned that tourism from the US to Cuba remains effectively illegal, despite the restoration of diplomatic relations in 2015 and its removal of Cuba from the list of state sponsors of terrorism.

We note, moreover, that the US Departments of the Treasury, Commerce and State are being used to investigate and prosecute those who establish, or consider establishing, normal financial, commercial and economic relations with Cuba. The extra-territorial application of US laws not only violates international law, but the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Indeed, it stands as a permanent threat to the stability of a Member State of this Organisation and contravenes the principles of multilateralism.

Madam President,

I would point out that although US policy and law technically make an exemption for the trade in raw materials for food and medicine, in conformity with international humanitarian law, the extra-territorial reach of the US sanctions and the implications of de-risking by correspondent banks effectively results in blocking basic humanitarian trade. In fact Cuba is even unable to trade food and medicine with subsidiaries of US companies in third party countries.

The situation is made even more worrying against reports of the continued impact that the embargo has on the existence of ordinary Cubans. In an environment in which the international community has agreed to focus its attention on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it seems ill-advised that the embargo should be maintained even as we proclaim the need to leave no one behind. The embargo constitutes the principal obstacle to the development of the Cuban economy.

In addition to the attainment of the SDGs, the embargo hinders Cuba's National Plan for Economic and Social Development. This confirms, therefore, that the embargo represents a transgression of the right to peace, development and security of a sovereign state.

Madam President,

Jamaica has always maintained that engagement with Cuba remains essential. We have had a long and fruitful relationship with Cuba, one of our closest neighbours, which has witnessed the development of a vibrant and dynamic cooperation framework, despite the challenges wrought by the embargo. This relationship has prompted the Government of Jamaica to approve a motion, for the past 9 years, by the Houses of Representative in support of our Cuban brothers and sisters.

It is for these reasons that we will, Madam President, vote in favour of this draft resolution, as originally tabled, as we have done over the years.

I thank you.