



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

**CLOSING REMARKS BY**

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF  
THE LAUNCH OF THE REPORT OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF  
THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN  
*“PROTECTING CHILDREN AFFECTED BY ARMED VIOLENCE IN THE COMMUNITY”***

**UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK  
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Excellences,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The presentations we have heard today underscore the urgent need to protect our children from violence. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children (Ms. Marta Santos Pais) pointed to encouraging recommendations from the Report, which offer us a way forward. I take this opportunity to commend the extraordinary and committed work of Ms. Santos Pais undertaken in the execution of her mandate. UNICEF (Mr. Ted Chaiban), UNODC (Ms. Simone Monasebian) and UNHCR (Ms. Ninette Kelley) have affirmed the multi-agency and collaborative approaches required in our efforts, and in playing its part to address armed violence, 'Fight for Peace' is making an invaluable contribution to the cause. We applaud Mr. Luke Downey as Founder for its conception and his drive for global impact. Wanderson Oliveira, Douglas de Souza Andrade and Wellington Andrade, featured in the 'Fighting for Peace' documentary, demonstrate to us what is possible with an enduring fight to end armed violence affecting our children.

Many of our children across the globe remain trapped in armed violence in the communities where they live, inhibiting their right to grow up in an environment free from violence. The Report has identified several of the factors fueling the armed violence affecting our children and serves as a reminder that we must find solutions. As highlighted in the Report, high levels of armed violence contribute to increased mortality, aggressive behavior, as well as negative psychological effects in children, threatening social harmony and peace in our communities from an early stage. In keeping with SDG target 16.2, it is through efforts such as this launch, supported by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, and the work of NGOs such as 'Fight for Peace' that we seek to have communities where children are safe and can live free from violence. The recommendations outlined in the Report should serve to guide policies and programmes for reducing the impact of armed violence on children's rights.

Jamaica has had a high incidence of crime and violence which had an impact on children, especially in their communities. We have therefore given particular attention to addressing violence against children. Under the purview of the Ministry of National Security, the Jamaica Crime Observatory – Integrated Crime and Violence Information System (JCO-ICVIS) facilitates assessing the level of violence against children. With the support of UNICEF, Jamaica has managed to expand violence interruption programmes in communities targeting children and adolescents.

In July 2016, Jamaica joined the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children as a pathfinder country demonstrating its commitment to protecting the rights of children. Multi-stakeholder consultations are underway in order to complete a national roadmap under the aegis of the Global Partnership. Fight for Peace, through its Safer Communities Incubator project, is also helping to make an impact in addressing crime and armed violence affecting youths in Jamaica. [As we have just heard,] In September 2016, Fight for Peace formalized its activities with the Government of Jamaica through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of National Security.

I sincerely thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children for organizing this event, as well as fellow co-sponsors: the Permanent Missions of Japan and Switzerland; the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Fight for Peace. In our pursuit of creating sustainable communities, it is imperative that we continue to call attention to the challenge of armed violence and its impact on our children. It is even more pertinent that we remain steadfast in our work as we derive and implement solutions. Let us advance in our commitment, undeterred to 'leave no one behind', by working together to end the cycle of violence which deprives our children of the future they deserve.