
**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND
TOBAGO TO THE UNITED NATIONS**



STATEMENT

ON BEHALF OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)

by

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE**

OF

**THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
TO THE UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK**

DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

71ST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**ON ALL DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY
AGENDA ITEMS (ITEMS 89 TO 105)**

**UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK
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Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 14 Member States of the Caribbean Community on All Disarmament and International Security Agenda Items.

Mr. Chairman,

CARICOM extends its congratulations to you on your election as Chair of this Committee and we offer our congratulations to the other members of the Bureau on their election. Please be assured of CARICOM's full support as you embark on your Chairmanship.

We also express our appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Karel Jan Gustaaf van Oosterom of The Netherlands, for his stewardship during his tenure as Chair of the First Committee during the 70th Session.

CARICOM aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non Aligned Movement and the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the Dominican Republic on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. Chairman,

According to the World Economic Forum (2016), "global instability is the new normal". From CARICOM's perspective, the unprecedented scale and reach of international terrorism, the increasing influence of non-state actors, new proliferation threats and the escalation of strife and conflict between States is "the new normal".

This is a concern for all States, including Small States which rely on the rule of law at the national and international levels in order to guarantee their right to a secure, sovereign and peaceful existence. CARICOM therefore strongly encourages all States to act consistently within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations on all matters related to disarmament and international security.

Mr. Chairman,

The prevalence of gun related fatalities due to the proliferation of illegal arms and ammunition, illicit drugs, money laundering, cyber-crime and other dimensions of trans-boundary criminal activities pose the most significant threats to the security of CARICOM.

As a demonstration of our commitment to the people of our sub-region, Member States of CARICOM have pooled their efforts to fight the scourge of small arms and light weapons proliferation and have established a regional mechanism known as the CARICOM Implementing Agency for Crime and Security (CARICOM IMPACS). In early 2011, CARICOM Heads of State and Government adopted the CARICOM Declaration on Small Arms and Light Weapons. CARICOM has also devised a mechanism, articulated in the CARICOM Strategic Plan 2015-2019 to build resilience in the face of these clear and present dangers.

Mr. Chairman,

These activities undermine our socio-economic development as very valuable financial and other resources in our national budgets have to be set aside to tackle this pernicious menace. Although we have crafted regional solutions to tackle these problems, we are all cognizant of the need for cooperation at the multilateral level and this is why CARICOM States subscribe fully to the object and purpose of the Arms Trade Treaty and are moving assiduously towards the full implementation of the ATT in our jurisdictions.

We remain firm in our conviction that the ATT can contribute significantly to reducing the suffering of many of our citizens and countless people around the world, especially women and children, who live daily under the deadly and devastating impact of the unregulated trade in conventional arms. For this reason, are pleased that all 14 CARICOM Member States are Parties to the ATT.

As the life of the ATT progresses beyond the recently concluded Second Conference of States Parties, CARICOM wishes to underline that for the ATT to be a success, it must be implemented in good faith by all States Parties including the major manufacturers, exporters and importers of conventional weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

CARICOM has found non-binding legal agreements to be of tremendous assistance in our attempts to address the illicit arms trade in our region. We therefore reiterate the importance we place on the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all Its Aspects (UN POA), as an important instrument in mobilizing international cooperation to curb the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

For this reason, the region demonstrated heightened participation in the recently concluded Sixth Biennial Meeting of States to consider the implementation of the UN POA (BMS6). The BMS6 was the first to convene after the entry into force of the ATT and during a time in which

ratification and accession of the Treaty had been gaining momentum. CARICOM fully welcomed the consensus outcome document which included language on the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 16, that sustainable development cannot be realized without peace and security. We applaud the tireless efforts of the Permanent Representative of Jamaica, who chaired the BMS6 process to a successful outcome.

CARICOM now looks ahead to the 2018 Review Conference to further strengthen the UN-POA process.

Mr. Chairman,

It would be remiss if CARICOM fails to highlight the continued support it receives from the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. This organization has supported and assisted Member States of CARICOM in capacity building measures and technical assistance programmes. We look forward to continued collaboration.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, CARICOM wishes to recall the words of Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, on the commemoration of the first International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on September 26, 2014, "*Nuclear disarmament is (therefore) not an idealistic dream, but an urgent necessity to meet the genuine security interests of all humanity*".

We are proud to be part of the first densely populated region in the world to declare itself a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone, pursuant to the Treaty of Tlateloco, which established the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL).

The Secretary-General of OPANAL, Ambassador Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares, once pointed out that Latin America and the Caribbean brought to world peace and security an inestimable and truly innovative contribution. A space equivalent to 20 million square kilometers, which is home to about 600 million people, has been kept free of nuclear weapons.

Our commitment to a nuclear weapon free world is in keeping with the Special Declarations on the Commitment to advance Multilateral Negotiations on Nuclear Disarmament which was adopted by Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Furthermore, based on the firm conviction that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would be a violation of the Charter of the United Nations, a crime against humanity, and also constitute a violation of International Law, including Humanitarian Law, CARICOM Member States joins the efforts by the international community to advance towards the negotiation of a universal legally binding instrument prohibiting the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons. CARICOM is of the firm belief that a global prohibition on nuclear weapons can contribute to attaining and maintaining a world without nuclear weapons and therefore supports the recommendation to the General Assembly by the Open Ended Working Group to begin a multilateral process for the negotiation of a legally binding instrument for the prohibition of nuclear weapons towards their total elimination.

Mr. Chairman,

CARICOM's long-standing commitment to working in a multilateral environment to address threats posed by Weapons of Mass Destruction has been underscored by our ratification of the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological and Toxin Weapons.

Without question, regional progress in preventing the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction is inextricably linked to our economic viability.

CARICOM benefitted from the support of the International Atomic Energy Agency in strengthening our capacity through the sharing of best practices and transfer of technology; from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in providing specialized training in emergency response to deliberate or accidental use of chemical agents.

We also commend the efforts of the CARICOM Regional Coordinator for the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1540, in his continued efforts to sensitize CARICOM on responses to Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Explosive emergencies.

Mr. Chairman,

Trinidad and Tobago, with the support of CARICOM, will again sponsor its resolution entitled, *Women, Disarmament, Non-proliferation and Arms Control*, during this Session of this Committee.

This year, the resolution has been updated to reflect recent developments in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control and related issues. Once again, we welcome the support of the Committee for this resolution.

Finally, Mr. Chairman,

The First Committee has another opportunity to engage in progressive dialogue and to begin meaningful negotiations on the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda.

The Caribbean Community is acutely aware that its sustainable development is inextricably linked to the safety and security of its people. Against this backdrop, we renew our pledge to work with the international community in realizing to the fullest extent one of the founding principles as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, that of the maintenance of international peace and security.

Let us demonstrate the necessary political will to create a peaceful and secure international environment for future generations.

Mr. Chairman,

I thank you.