



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

STATEMENT BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

IN

**THE FIRST COMMITTEE
GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT &
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AGENDA ITEMS**

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

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Mr. Chair,

Permit me from the outset to align my statement with the statements delivered by the NAM and CARICOM.

I join other delegations in congratulating you and your Bureau on your election to preside over the work of the First Committee for the 72nd session and assure you of Jamaica's full support.

Mr. Chair,

It would be understandable were I to situate these remarks against the backdrop of a world beset by grave and destabilizing insecurity. Indeed, since we last convened we have witnessed a worrisome increase in the number and severity of threats to international peace and security. There is no question that these undermine the efforts we make within this forum towards disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

But this is no ordinary year. For on the 7th July 122 Member States of this Organisation cast votes in support of the historic nuclear weapons ban treaty. As the instruments of the Treaty's passage we acted on behalf of a grand coalition of committed activists, survivors, civil society, scholars and politicians. They were the ones who steadfastly set aside the entreaties of the naysayers - that band of sceptics who at every turn told us we were embarked on a fool's errand.

It would be a misreading of this accomplishment to interpret the outpouring of emotion that greeted the adoption of the Treaty as reflective of a naïve understanding of the realities of the international security environment. Quite to the contrary, we harbor no illusion that the treaty will immediately eliminate nuclear weapons. Rather, we firmly believe that it will, over time, delegitimize these weapons and strengthen the legal and political norms against their use.

Jamaica reiterates its full support for the Treaty and we are undertaking the necessary domestic measures to join, at the earliest opportunity, those Member States who have signed this landmark instrument.

Mr. Chair,

Despite the challenging security environment, my delegation is pleased that we were able to make positive strides in several other areas. We recall, for example, the successful conclusion of the programme of work of the Disarmament Commission. We have long been concerned that

the Commission has, for almost 2 decades, not been able to agree on substantive recommendations pertinent to its agenda. We welcome, therefore, the Commission's successful adoption of recommendations on "practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons." We congratulate the Chair of the Commission, Ms. Gabriela Martinic from Argentina and her bureau, and Ms. Lachezara Stoeva from Bulgaria, who chaired the working group on confidence-building measures.

Another positive development that augurs well for the peace and security agenda is the successful adoption by consensus of the objectives and agenda for the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We are pleased that following years of disagreement, the Open-Ended Working Group was able to make significant strides in this regard and publicly acknowledge the efforts of the Chair from Ecuador who presided over the process.

Mr. Chair,

The security challenges that confront us as an international community are compounded by the vast numbers of organised criminal networks that use the substantial resources and tools at their disposal to wreak havoc on our societies. In addition, we grapple with increasing cyber-security threats and the multiple vulnerabilities they pose to cloud-based management platforms, critical infrastructure and the secure preservation of sensitive information. It, therefore, behoves us as an international community to collectively tackle the issue of trans-national organised crime and strengthen global engagement on cyber-security issues.

Mr. Chair,

My delegation continues to be gravely concerned about the worsening security situation on the Korean Peninsula. We encourage all parties to exercise restraint and to demonstrate measured responses in the face of heightened tensions.

We are also mindful of the ongoing conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Yemen, and the destabilizing impact they continue to have on meaningful efforts to secure development based on sustained peace. Caught in an indefinite process of protracted war, we urge all parties, to work towards lasting and meaningful solutions to these conflicts.

We must not only give priority attention to reducing the prospects for terrestrial conflict, but also to preventing the weaponization of outer space. We note with concern that of the more than 1,400 active satellites in orbit, approximately one-quarter of them have military applications. Against this background, we encourage continued efforts aimed at improving

transparency and confidence building measures as a means to prevent an arms race in outer space.

As a concerned member of the international community, Jamaica has long maintained that more needs to be done to address the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. We share this preoccupation noting, as the Secretary General has done in his report on the work of the Organisation contained in document A/72/1, that “while we rightly fear the use of weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons are the predominant means of killing and destruction.” Jamaica, therefore, looks forward to the convening next year of the Third Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. It is our expectation that this will squarely address the diversion and proliferation of these weapons.

We also remain strongly supportive of the Arms Trade Treaty, which we continue to regard as a centerpiece for combating the illicit spread of conventional weapons. Jamaica is committed to playing its part to support the implementation and universalization of the Treaty, and is appreciative of the assistance it continues to receive from bilateral and multilateral partners in this endeavor.

The UN plays an indispensable role in advancing the goal of general and complete disarmament. Through the work of the Regional Centres for Disarmament, for example, Member States continue to benefit from the invaluable support that they provide. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development remains a crucial partner. Our region has benefitted from legislative, policy and capacity-building assistance in a range of areas related to the implementation of international instruments on conventional arms and weapons of mass destruction. We, therefore, join the Secretary-General in his call for financial and in-kind contributions to support the Regional Centre’s operations and programmes, so that increased requests for assistance can be accommodated.

Mr. Chair,

I conclude by reiterating Jamaica’s support for the deliberations in which we are engaged and underscore the hope that we will continue to make real progress towards our common goal of complete and general disarmament.