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



STATEMENT

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
72ND SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ON ALL DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY
(Items 52 (b) and 90 to 106)**

**UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK
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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, my delegation associates with the statement delivered on behalf of NAM and the statement delivered on behalf of CARICOM.

Trinidad and Tobago shares the majority view that the only world that is safe from the use of nuclear weapons is a world that is completely free of them. This conviction has long underscored the policies of Trinidad and Tobago as we are a signatory to the 1967 Treaty of Tlateloco which established the world's first Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition, my country stands firm in our commitments to uphold the important and necessary obligations conferred upon us under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Nuclear weapons pose a grave and unique threat to every member state of this organization. We need only look to the current escalation of nuclear tensions on the Korean peninsula to see this threat played out in alarming detail.

However, there is a growing non-nuclear majority at the United Nations, together with civil society, that are steadfastly working to rid the earth of the scourge of these weapons. In fact, so much so has this movement been recognized that today, the International Coalition to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their advocacy in bringing an end to the most destructive weapon ever created. Trinidad and Tobago is therefore proud to lend our voice and our support to this group of champions and we look forward to putting our signature to the recently adopted Treaty to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons in short order.

Mr. Chairman,

Though ostensibly less harmful than their nuclear counterparts, small arms and light weapons present an outsized threat to Trinidad and Tobago. Gun violence continues to be a relentless malignancy in our society. Indeed, small arms and light weapons have been referred to as the Caribbean's "weapons of mass destruction". The control, prevention, and eradication of the illicit trade in these armaments is a top priority for my country and for our regional partners. As such, we remain steadfast in our commitments to UN-POA and the Arms Trade Treaty.

Trinidad and Tobago believes that ammunition should be a natural inclusion in any discussion on the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons and we regret that the United Nations has not yet been able to reach consensus on how to include ammunitions in our disarmament agreements. My country is committed to rectifying this omission and we look forward to the upcoming Third Review Conference of the UN-POA as an opportunity to further progress our efforts in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

Human security—our ability to protect, feed, house and support our citizens—depends upon effective disarmament. Disarmament therefore cannot exist in a vacuum; it must be part of a broader conversation about vulnerability, insecurity, and weaponization.

In this regard, my delegation is proud to be among those at the forefront of integrating women, peace, and security into disarmament discourses. When Trinidad and Tobago first introduced the resolution on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control in 2010, it was suggested that the issue would find no traction in the First Committee, a sentiment that was subsequently disproven. Gender is an undeniable factor in peace and security. Women play a crucial leadership role in the ability of communities to counter violence and insecurity. Women must play a similarly crucial role in disarmament. The resolution piloted by Trinidad and Tobago will again be addressed in this Committee during the 73rd Session.

Mr. Chairman,

Right now, in the Caribbean, communities are struggling to recover their homes and livelihoods after the devastation of hurricanes Irma, Maria and Jose. The vulnerability of these post-hurricane environments may become a breeding ground for weapons and further insecurity. Consequently, Trinidad and Tobago is committed to ensuring a holistic approach to disarmament that carefully considers the triggers of conflict, and the positive impact that disarmament can play in abating these climate conflicts. Meeting our commitments to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an important part of this holistic approach.

Mr. Chairman,

The advent of the modern information state, where everything from power plants to banking institutions are networked, has created a new battleground on which states and non-state actors may wage war. If the United Nations is serious about disarmament we must also be serious about addressing cyber security. Increased cyber security has the potential to stymie the illicit manufacture, transfer, and circulation of illegal weapons, their parts, components and ammunitions that may otherwise find passage across the Caribbean Sea and onto CARICOM members' shores. My country therefore supports strategies by the international community to tackle cybercrime as well as the 2016 CARICOM IMPAC's Cyber Security and Cybercrime Action Plan.

Mr. Chairman,

Permit me to thank UN-LIREC for the valuable practical work that organization continues to undertake in CARICOM Member States including my own country, in many spheres of disarmament.

Finally Mr. Chairman,

Our disarmament discussions this year must address equally both large-scale nuclear threats and local vulnerabilities and violence. Trinidad and Tobago therefore lends our support to confronting both, and we remain committed to the process of disarmament in all its forms and function.

I thank you.