



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

STATEMENT BY

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DURING THE

**SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE
ON PEACE AND SECURITY CHALLENGES FACING
SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES**

**UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK
30TH JULY 2015**

- **Mr. President**
- **Mr. Secretary-General**
- **Heads of State and Government**
- **Ministers**
- **Excellencies**
- **Ladies and gentlemen**

It is an honour to address the Security Council on the occasion of this landmark Open Debate.

I warmly congratulate New Zealand for its presidency of the Council for the month of July, and commend you, Mr. President, for your visionary move to focus the attention of the Council on the peace and security challenges facing Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Last September, at the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States held in Samoa, the international community addressed many of the development challenges being experienced by this group of countries.

Today, New Zealand's initiative to elevate these discussions to the Security Council takes full account of the natural linkages between the peace and security challenges faced by SIDS and the maintenance of international peace and security.

Jamaica has long advocated for a holistic approach to addressing matters of peace and security.

In doing so, we recognise fully the intrinsic link between peace, security and development.

The classical and relatively narrow concept of peace and security cannot be neatly applied to the multifaceted security threats that confront SIDS.

Our debate here today is therefore timely, as we finalise the design of a sustainable development agenda for our people and planet for the next 15 years.

In thanking you for your kind invitation to participate, I would like to present a Caribbean SIDS perspective on some of the peace and security challenges that confront us.

I will also share some thoughts on the urgent need for tangible development financing support for SIDS.

This is critical for building resilience in the face of climate change and to overcome the constraints imposed by small size, resource scarcity, geography and inappropriate global classification based mainly on per capita income.

Mr. President,

Small Island Developing States such as Jamaica are notable for our small size, porous borders, and for being prone to natural hazards and external shocks.

We are mostly import dependent and constrained by high debt burdens. We are also overly dependent on external markets, technology transfer, international capital flows and foreign expertise.

These factors reduce our ability to mount effective national responses to domestic, regional and global peace and security challenges.

In Jamaica and the wider CARICOM region, transnational organised crime represents the gravest threat to our peace and security.

Extensive, open coastlines facilitate various forms of illicit trafficking in drugs, arms, ammunition and people, particularly women and children.

In our societies, the well-known *Guns for Drugs* trade remains a principal strategy of the international criminal network.

Money laundering activities too, enable transnational criminal activity to thrive in our region.

It is also cause for alarm that in 2013, seventy per cent of all homicides committed in the Caribbean sub-region featured the use of a firearm.

It is well-known that we do not manufacture weapons or drive the demand for drugs, yet they find their way to our shores.

It must be emphasised that these activities account for the high levels of gun-related crime that our countries are experiencing.

They combine to undermine law and order, and impede economic growth and social development.

Our location makes us a prime transit route for international narco-traffickers.

If that was not the case, the overall level of crime in the Caribbean would be similar to what obtains in low crime countries.

This fact is supported by the UNDP's Caribbean Human Development Report.

Mr. President

The question arises: what has been our response in the face of these challenges?

I can assure you that we take these threats to our security very seriously.

We have given primary focus to safety and security within our national development plan.

We have targeted our efforts at degrading the capabilities of organised criminal gangs and directed resources at addressing the shameful crime of human trafficking, including the appointment of a Trafficking in Persons Rapporteur.

We have also invested heavily in technology, equipment and training for our security forces, within the constraints of our limited resources.

However, I must emphasise that our domestic policy responses to these threats to our peace and security, though significant and coordinated across government, are insufficient.

We therefore continue to expand international cooperation to improve our national security infrastructure to deal with transnational organised crime.

We have made important gains in enhancing our security environment, with notable reductions in some categories of crime.

In spite of these efforts the illegal flow of small arms and ammunition into our local communities continues to pose a significant challenge to law and order.

At the regional level, we have worked with other CARICOM governments to establish a *regional security framework*.

At the centre of this is the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS).

At the United Nations, Jamaica has been a consistent voice in the call for multilateral action to address the issue of the illicit trade in guns under the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons.

We welcome the Council's continued consideration of the issue of small arms, including the recent Open Debate and resolution on this matter.

In partnership with our CARICOM sister states, Jamaica played an instrumental role in securing the landmark Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).

We welcome the convening of the First Conference of States Parties to the ATT, to be held in Mexico City next month and look forward to the full and effective implementation of the Treaty.

We look forward to participating in next year's Special Session of the General Assembly on the World Drug Problem.

Small countries like ours must continue to play a role in formulating strategies to more effectively counter the global trade in illicit drugs.

The success of many SIDS in respect of stemming the drug trade has been nothing short of remarkable given our resource constraints.

While we have achieved some promising results in tackling these threats, there is more that needs to be done.

However, a limited financial base, weak technical capacity and inadequate concrete global support continue to hamper our efforts.

Stronger global partnerships and more efficient forms of cooperation are needed to help SIDS in the fight against the scourge of transnational organised crime.

Mr. President:

Let me turn briefly to two areas in which we have sought to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security.

These are counter-terrorism and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Without question, Jamaica and other CARICOM Member States remain committed to meeting our international obligations, particularly in relation to Resolutions 1276, 1373 and 1540.

Since 2009, CARICOM has instituted a region-wide initiative aimed at fully implementing Security Council Resolution 1540.

This Initiative, devised and constituted within the Caribbean Community, has allowed CARICOM Member states to effectively meet our responsibilities under the Resolution.

We are grateful for the support of our international partners, including the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, Norway and Finland.

This support has helped to strengthen our national capacities to address the threats posed by the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

The reality is Mr. President, that where there is both sensitivity to the special requirements of our region, and support to enable us to act effectively, we are better able to contribute to global action in the maintenance of international peace and security.

We are particularly proud of our contribution in the area of peacekeeping.

For over two decades, Jamaica has been making modest but impactful contributions to UN peacekeeping activities through the provision of police officers to missions in **Namibia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste, and Bosnia.**

Currently, we have just under **20** officers from our police force serving in the United Nations Mission in Haiti and the African Union/UN operation in Darfur, Sudan.

Mr. President,

There are also emerging economic and social issues that directly and indirectly impact the peace and security agenda.

Our limited natural and human resource base together with persistent and significant external trade imbalances have also constrained economic growth in the region.

This is compounded by unsustainable public debt levels that for the Caribbean averages **70.5 per cent** and made worse by large current account and fiscal deficits.

In addition, our middle income designation limits our ability to access critical development financing.

This places in jeopardy our ability to finance our sustainable development objectives from domestic public resources.

I draw the attention of the Council to the proposal by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, (ECLAC), for a debt relief strategy for countries like Jamaica and other Middle - Income SIDS.

Comprehensive debt relief for Caribbean Small Island Developing States that would gradually write off 100 per cent of their multilateral debt stock, is timely.

In our view, this proposal is worthy of serious consideration and support from the international community.

Mr President,

For Small Island Developing States climate change is one of the greatest challenges to our developmental aspirations and threatens our very survival.

For these reasons, robust policy action on climate change is vital to our national, regional and global welfare.

The ecosystems of some Caribbean SIDS are already experiencing negative effects of climate change and are approaching the limits of their adaptive capacities.

The development of sensible climate change policy regimes is therefore an urgent priority. It is for this reason and others that Jamaica strongly supports the adoption of a legally-binding text at the UNFCCC in Paris later this year.

We are in favour of a Protocol that should be applicable to all, with measurable mitigation efforts and equal treatment to mitigation and adaptation measures.

For us, the link between climate change and sustainable energy is clear.

That is why we are actively pursuing renewable energy investments in solar and wind, as well as promoting energy conservation.

Our strategy is designed to make us independent of our over-reliance on unsustainable fossil fuel energy sources.

This should reduce our trade imbalance, improve our competitiveness and increase economic growth.

Mr. President,

We must move forward to address both our shared and particular security challenges.

In doing so, I ask that full account be taken of the fact that a 'one size fits all' approach cannot provide workable and sustainable solutions.

Based on the experiences of Jamaica and the Caribbean region, we see the benefits of a regional approach, complemented by support from the global community to assist in mitigating risks to our peace and security situation.

Given the great extent to which peace, security and development concerns are interconnected, it is necessary for the entire UN system to work actively to overcome the special challenges facing Small Island Developing States.

We are prepared to work with our partners to devise practical, multi-faceted solutions to these complex security challenges.

This, we believe, offers the best chance for success in achieving lasting peace and security for our peoples.

I am convinced that ultimately, a more secure, just and prosperous world is the “future we all want” for ourselves and for succeeding generations.