



PERMANENT MISSION OF  
JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS

AT THE

FOURTH BIENNIAL MEETING OF STATES ON THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION  
TO PREVENT, COMBAT AND ERADICATE THE ILLICIT TRADE IN SMALL ARMS  
AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS

ON

Agenda Item 6(b) International cooperation and assistance

New York, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2010

*Please check against delivery*

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation associates itself with the statement made earlier by the delegation of St Vincent and the Grenadines on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). I would like to use this opportunity to make supplementary comments from a national perspective.

Mr. Chairman,

The Programme of Action (POA) provides a viable foundation from which the international community can build a solid platform to collectively confront the scourge of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. International cooperation and assistance is crucial and in many instances complements national efforts to tackle this problem.

It is in this context that we welcome the ongoing initiatives at the international, regional and sub-regional levels to bolster cooperation and assistance to address the trafficking in illegal weapons. Jamaica has benefitted since 2001 from cooperation with our developed country partners as well as United Nations and hemispheric institutions which have assisted us in the implementation of the POA. Only recently Jamaica hosted a two day awareness regional workshop on international standards on firearms destruction and stockpile management organized in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme. The Workshop was an invaluable source of information sharing, information exchange and methodology, for policy makers and practitioners alike.

Significant assistance has also come from the UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Latin America and the Caribbean - UNLiREC. Mr. Chairman, these regional Centers have a important role to play in helping to identify and respond to specific assistance needs of the countries and to foster regional cooperation.

We take this opportunity to call for the further strengthening of these regional offices, especially UNLiREC. Jamaica also joins its CARICOM partners in reiterating our calls for the reopening of the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNDOC) in Barbados. It is ironic and unfortunate that the UNDOC is not present in an area recognized as having the highest incidence of gun-related violence in the world.

Mr. Chairman,

The drugs and guns nexus must be tackled from all fronts and we see the reopening of this Office as playing a crucial role in that regard. Such a move will also send a positive signal to the international community, reflecting our firm resolve to confront and eliminate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and, breaking the nefarious link between drugs and illicit guns. At this very critical juncture, particularly for my country, we hope our appeals do not continue to fall on deaf ears.

As St. Vincent and the Grenadines pointed out earlier, the region has also benefitted from cooperation from the Organization of American States under the Inter-American Convention against the illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials (CIFTA) and the 1997 Model Regulations for the Control of the International Movement of Firearms, their parts and Components and Ammunition (Model Regulations) of the OAS.

Mr. Chairman,

As part of our national POA implementation plan, the Government is committed to addressing in a sustained manner the root causes that lead to the demand for, and indiscriminate use of illegal arms. Social intervention programmes are being developed and implemented in various communities in the island. One such programme that is being developed by the Ministry of National Security is the development of an inter-departmental Crime Prevention and Community Safety Strategy. This new strategy will have a specific focus on youth, particularly males, the main perpetrators and victims of violence, including gun-related violence. It will include a range of interventions to address specific risk factors. The aim is to reduce the pool of available youth, who are vulnerable and susceptible to the perceived lure of the gun. International cooperation and assistance will be required in this and other areas of prevention and intervention.

Mr. Chairman,

While international cooperation and assistance is critical and can even be considered as a core ingredient in the efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, in our view the problem will not be effectively confronted without more concerted actions by supplier countries to stem the outflow of illicit weapons from their shores. Jamaica is not a manufacturer of weapons and yet we are awash with small arms because of our porous borders. While we fully respect the domestic laws of each country, we call on manufacturing States and supplier states to develop and implement more stringent measures and mechanisms to stop the illicit flow of these weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

As I have alluded to earlier, international cooperation has increased since 2001. It has not, however, been at the levels required to adequately address, contain or eliminate the illicit trade in these weapons. Much more needs to be done and as quickly as possible. To be effective, efforts must be multifaceted and sustained over a protracted period.

Jamaica believes that several of the areas of urgent needs and priorities emanating from BMS3 are just as relevant at this BMS4 meeting. We therefore think it necessary that these areas be reflected in the outcome document of BMS4, for the sake of consistency and more importantly, so that greater attention can be paid to these areas. This will help to ensure maximum returns for States wishing to take advantage of the available expertise emanating from the international call to implement the POA. One area that merits special attention, in our estimation, is that of the importance of improving the identification and communication of needs and available resources and strengthening the matching of needs and resources.

Mr. Chairman,

A nuclear catastrophe is nowhere more eminent than the over 200,000 lives that are lost or the estimated 1.5 million casualties occurring annually globally, as a result of the global trade in small arms and light weapons. Mr. Chairman, these figures do not include deaths or casualties occurring in areas of conflicts. Let us resolve therefore, at this meeting - BMS4, to spare no efforts to create an effective platform to halt the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons.

I thank you.