



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

STATEMENT BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY BRIAN WALLACE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAMAICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

AT THE

**FOURTH UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE TO REVIEW PROGRESS MADE IN
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION TO PREVENT,
COMBAT AND ERADICATE THE ILLICIT TRADE IN SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT
WEAPONS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS**

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK

ON

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Please check against delivery

Thank you, *Madam President*.

Jamaica congratulates you on your appointment and express our confidence that you will lead us to success at this Conference. Please be assured of Jamaica's full support in this endeavour.

Jamaica aligns itself with the statements delivered by Dominica on behalf of CARICOM, by Uganda on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

Madam President,

Jamaica continues to be negatively affected by the global increase in the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons, with criminals gaining access to illegal firearms that are trafficked into our borders. Illicit firearms smuggled into Jamaica are used in the vast majority of serious and violent crimes, especially murder.

Although Jamaica does not manufacture arms, from 2018 to 2022, some 3,495 firearms and 61,000 rounds of ammunition were seized by the authorities. The annual average rate of seizure for illegal firearms suggests that there are active demand and supply networks. It is within this context that we support reflection of supply and demand, as well as the need to assign greater responsibility to exporting states and the industry, in the draft outcome document.

National Initiatives (to Combat Illicit Trafficking & Proliferation of Firearms)

Madam President

Jamaica continues to take steps to curb the illicit trafficking and proliferation of firearms and improve overall citizen security. We would welcome continued and streamlined international cooperation and support in this regard. We are implementing a multi-pronged strategy, which primarily focuses on putting in place adequate laws, regulations, administrative and operational procedures, to exercise effective control over firearms and ammunition within our jurisdiction.

Since, the last Review Conference, we have developed a new Firearms Act, 2022, which imposes harsher penalties for offences connected to the illicit trade, manufacture, stockpiling, possession and use of illegal guns. The Act introduces new provisions that allow for the prosecution of new offences such as illicit trafficking, diversion and stockpiling of prohibited weapons, in an effort to align the legislation with international commitments, such as those under the Firearms Protocol and the PoA. The new Firearms Act has also introduced a requirement for the mandatory marking of all firearms that are imported into Jamaica. The Act is one of the most critical advancements made by Jamaica to date in strengthening our anti-crime capability.

Jamaica has also strengthened its national capacity in Physical Security and Stockpile Management (PSSM) practices to align these activities with internationally recognized norms and best practices. This includes ongoing audits and inspections of state and civilian stockpiles of firearms and ammunition, and the destruction of obsolete and seized firearms, such as those illicitly trafficked into the country.

We have also improved border controls through, *inter alia*, the strengthening of maritime domain awareness and coastal security. The Government has made significant investments in maritime surveillance equipment and we are enhancing the capabilities of the Jamaica Defence Force Coast Guard and marine police.

In 2015, Jamaica launched the 'Get the Guns Campaign', which is geared at enhancing the interception of illicit shipments of arms and ammunition through Jamaica's international airports and seaports. In February 2022, the Government also rolled out the "Operation Get Every Illegal Gun" campaign, which encouraged greater inter-agency collaboration and information sharing between the local security forces and border security agencies. Additionally, in November 2022, the Government declared a Firearms Amnesty, to allow persons in possession of illegal firearms the opportunity to surrender these weapons to the State, without fear of prosecution under the then new Firearms Legislation.

Jamaica has also taken steps to enhance its firearms marking and tracing capabilities and we have established Specialized Law Enforcement Units to target illicit firearm trafficking and other Transnational Organised Criminal activities.

We fully support gender equality and the inclusion of women in efforts to combat the illicit trade in SALW. In this regard, women are at the helm of several departments and agencies, including the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the National Forensic Laboratory, the Jamaica Defence Force and the Ministry of National Security.

International Cooperation

Madam President,

We join other delegations in stressing the importance of international cooperation, technical assistance and capacity building in addressing the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons. This is particularly important in light of the challenges posed by new and emerging technologies, such as 3D printing, used by unauthorised individuals to circumvent controls used by states to stem the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons.

In this regard, Jamaica adopted the Roadmap for Implementing the Caribbean Priority Actions on the Illicit Proliferation of Firearms and Ammunition across the Caribbean in a Sustainable Manner by 2030 (the “Caribbean Firearms Roadmap”). Consequently, Jamaica, has been working closely with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC), and the Caribbean Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (CARICOM IMPACS), in implementing certain key priority actions under the Caribbean Firearms Roadmap.

Jamaica has collaborated with the United Nations through the SALIENT project, which effectively complements our national development goals for the security sector, and has assisted national initiatives to stem the proliferation of illicit firearms and reduce violence, especially among the youth. We also welcome the adoption of the Global Framework on Through-life Ammunition Management, which we believe can harness the potential of international collaboration in this domain.

We are pleased with the draft outcome document and commend you on the transparency and inclusivity applied throughout the process. We will contribute constructively to its further strengthening. We support its recognition of the Members Rights under Article 51 of the UN Charter, the importance of including women in SALW decision-making, the primacy attached to international cooperation and capacity building and attaching responsibility to the industry.

In conclusion, Madam President, Jamaica views this Conference as an excellent opportunity to make significant strides in combatting the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We look forward to a successful Conference and the adoption of a robust final document.

I thank you.