



PERMANENT MISSION OF  
JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

**STATEMENT BY**

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

**IN THE**

**MEETING OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE  
2006 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**

***JANUARY 11, 2006, New York***

**[Final Text]**

Mr. Chairman

My delegation joins with others in congratulating you and the other members of the Bureau on your election. You can be assured of the cooperation of the delegation of Jamaica as you undertake your challenging tasks in preparation for the Review conference later this year.

Mr. Chairman,

The Government of Jamaica is strongly committed to implementing the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects and has taken steps to actively implement its provisions at the national, regional and international levels. This has included the adoption of the relevant national legislation governing the import and export of arms and ammunition as well as being a signatory to relevant international and regional conventions including those covering transnational organized crime and the control of the illicit trade in firearms and ammunition in the region of the Americas. Within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Jamaica is a member of the CARICOM Task Force on Crime and Security which is actively considering matters relevant to the movement and acquisition of illegal small arms and light weapons in the Caribbean region.

Our efforts in implementing the Programme of Action have been strengthened through assistance received at the bilateral level including for equipment, the provision of intelligence information and assistance in providing faster and more accurate traces on illegal weapons used to commit crimes in Jamaica. We are grateful to our bilateral partners which have provided such assistance.

Yet, in 2005 alone, Jamaican law enforcement officials recovered some 683 illegal weapons. This is an increase over the figure of 620 weapons which were recovered in 2004. As a country which does not manufacture nor import small arms and light weapons on a large scale, these figures are significant. When this is compared to the high rates of criminal activity and violent crime caused by these weapons and their ammunition, we are gravely concerned as to the devastating effect that these are having on our economy and society. The increased proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons and ammunition in the country is linked to transnational organized crime and the illicit trade in arms and drugs. These activities have become intrusive and dangerous and are detrimental to national security. These are issues which have been raised by our delegation at the Biennial Meetings of States held in 2003 and in 2005.

Mr. Chairman

In spite of persistent efforts by Jamaica's law enforcement officials, large numbers of illicit arms continue to be smuggled into the country often by ingenious methods. We are therefore dealing with a phenomenon which in many respects is beyond our capacity to control thereby making the implementation of the Programme of Action more difficult. The presence of illicit small arms and light weapons, many of which are high-powered and of a sophisticated calibre, have posed severe challenges to law enforcement, security and economic development. Additionally, the health sector has been severely taxed in treating victims of gun violence and there have been many attendant social ill-effects including the dislocation of families and psychological effects on women, children and the elderly who have suffered from gun violence.

It is within this reality that Jamaica is in full support of international action to prevent, combat and end the illicit trade in small arms. In order to attain this objective however, action has to be taken collectively. This Preparatory Committee has, in keeping with the Programme of Action, been mandated to review the implementation of the Programme of Action. Such an assessment, while useful in identifying best practices, lessons learned and possible shortcomings also, as a necessity, needs to include an evaluation as to what more can be done in the future to prevent and combat the illicit trade in small arms, particularly for those countries which have been most affected. In our view, tangible results would be better achieved through continued attention to supply issues including the curtailment of the sources of illicit small arms and light weapons and on matters of transfer control, civilian possession and illicit brokering.

Jamaica continues to be disappointed that efforts by the international community to adopt a legally binding instrument on the marking and tracing of illicit small arms and light weapons were blocked. We continue to call for the elaboration in the future of a legally binding instrument to assist States in identifying and tracing the weapons which enter their territories. Such an instrument would be in keeping with other regional arrangements adhered to by Jamaica especially those under the Organization of American States.

In the area of illicit brokering and illicit arms it is our hope that the international community will possess the necessary resolve and political will to take binding action on these matters.

Issues pertinent to capacity building, international cooperation and assistance continue to be highly relevant. In some instances, the exercise of political will is linked to the capacity and capability to be able to do so. The mobilization of resources and expertise at the regional and international levels can help in

curbing the inflow of weapons into territories, in providing assistance and training to law enforcement officials and in supporting implementation of the Programme of Action. Such assistance would also be of benefit to states within the CARICOM region which suffer vulnerabilities caused by the trade in small arms.

In conclusion Mr. Chairman, allow me to state that we should take the opportunity afforded us by the Review Conference to recommit ourselves to dealing with the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons with increased focus and commitment similar to what is given to weapons of mass destruction. In an era of heightened terrorism concerns, instability and international uncertainty, there needs to be more robust and concrete action in treating with small arms and light weapons while at all times respecting the relevant provisions of the Charter and international law.

Thank you.