



*Permanent Mission
of Barbados to
the United Nations*



STATEMENT BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

ON

BEHALF OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)

ON

OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

AT THE

**SEVENTY-FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

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Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the fourteen Member States of the Caribbean Community, CARICOM, on the agenda item, 'Other Weapons of Mass Destruction.'

CARICOM has a long-standing, and vested, interest in the disarmament and international security agenda of this Committee, and the United Nations, as a whole. The very existence and development of our countries depend on a safe and security world. We are therefore concerned by any threats, real or perceived, posed to it, and to our stability, including by Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Mr. Chairman,

CARICOM countries do not possess such weapons. They also do not produce them. Nonetheless, given their place and stake in the international community, the Member States of CARICOM find it necessary to reiterate that the use of such weapons is unjustifiable; leads to severe harm to, and devastation of, societies and the environment; and diverts valuable resources from important development work. For these reasons, and in today's increasingly globalized world, no country can be indifferent to this threat.

In fact, we must become more alert, as the possibilities for the design, production, sharing and deployment of these weapons increase. The Information and Communication Technologies and networks that are progressively reducing space and time, providing opportunities for many around the world, are also providing criminals and terrorists groups with the wherewithal to perpetrate violence, and instill fear within and across borders, often with little to no detection, and punishment for their crimes. All countries must act to detect and deter these threats, including through a rules-based and transparent system to safeguard cyberspace.

Mr. Chairman,

Other threats exist. Persistent reports of the use of chemical weapons by state and non-state actors is a stark reminder that the international community needs to do more to totally eliminate weapons of mass destruction, in all forms. While we often speak explicitly about nuclear, radiological and biological weapons, and their production and delivery, we must also remain cognisant of the threat of Improvised Explosive Devices. The development and use of IEDs continues to grow and increase. While major dimensions of their use is covered under international law, such laws are often blatantly violated by criminals and armed groups. The challenge is that many of these devices are easy to design, and their components are cheap and readily accessible.

Mr. Chairman,

Recognising the persistence and urgency of these issues, CARICOM Member States remain committed to the pursuit of non-proliferation, including through implementation of their obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons, and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological and Toxin Weapons, as requested in Security Council Resolution 1540, of 2004, and its subsequent mandates.

Notwithstanding other significant security challenges facing our countries – especially, preventing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the trafficking of illegal narcotics – CARICOM States continue to commit considerable resources to implementing legislation, attendant regulations, and administrative controls, to prevent the transshipment, transit, import, export, and brokering of dual-use materials, and other strategic goods, which can be used to produce weapons of mass destruction.

Of note, is our ongoing focus on the development of adequate export control infrastructure, control lists governing strategic items, as well as the training of enforcement and operational personnel to detect, identify, and interdict these prohibited commodities, and prosecute violations, where appropriate. CARICOM's urgency in, and commitment to, these efforts is bolstered by the

recognition that small states, due to their scarce and stretched resources, are often considered easy targets by those organizing to do harm.

It is well known, for example, that the many passages and straits across our Caribbean Sea, while important for maritime navigation and trade, if unmanned, can also serve as nodes for illicit transport and trade. CARICOM, therefore welcomes the continuing work of the International Maritime Organization to protect port facilities and ships, through preventive measures to deter and detect unlawful acts. The work of the International Civil Aviation Organization, to deter and detect similar unlawful acts in airspace should be encouraged and supported as well.

Mr. Chairman,

Meeting our key objectives in the area of non-proliferation has been significantly aided by our ongoing cooperation with the CARICOM-UNSCR 1540 Implementation Programme, which has coordinated meaningful assistance with other key partners, including the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the International Criminal Police Organization, and the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Given the Programme's role in advancing regional non-proliferation efforts, and its designation as the Regional Focal Point for the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee, to aid CARICOM Member States' work in the implementation of UNSCRs 1373, of 2001, and 1624, of 2005, it is critical that the Programme continues to receive adequate support to assist Member States in undertaking these important obligations.

This need for continued and expanded support has been underscored, further, by the adoption of UNSCR 2178, of 2014, which, among other things, calls for the development of legislation, and appropriate enforcement mechanisms to prevent the facilitation and movement of foreign terrorist fighters to conflict zones. Requisite assistance to CARICOM Member States, in meeting these obligations, as well as those pertaining to non-proliferation, and the broader fight against terrorism, will undoubtedly demand sustained engagement from the international community, to support the work of the CARICOM Coordinator. This work will also complement hemispheric commitments under the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean.

CARICOM looks forward to continued engagement with the United Nations system, and other partners, including women worldwide, committed to countering the use of weapons of mass destruction, promoting a safe and secure world, and safeguarding our sustainable development.

I thank you.