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**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND  
TOBAGO TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**STATEMENT**

**ON BEHALF OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)**

**by**

**H.E. AMBASSADOR PENNELOPE BECKLES,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK**

**ON**

**THEMATIC CLUSTER:  
OTHER DISARMAMENT MEASURES AND INTERNATIONAL  
SECURITY**

**FIRST COMMITTEE  
71ST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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**UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK  
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*Please check against delivery*

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the fourteen Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

We will focus our remarks on an area that is of particular importance to our region - Women and Disarmament. We are indeed pleased that the First Committee will once again address this issue.

Mr. Chairman,

We unequivocally agree that disarmament does not exist in a vacuum, nor can its objectives be achieved in isolation. We affirm that disarmament is fundamentally about people. Within that context, CARICOM is of the firm view that the continued consideration of gender perspectives can advance the achievement of disarmament goals, away from the traditional male-centric discourse to one that embraces an inter-disciplinary, a multi-dimensional and a humanitarian approach.

Indeed, Mr. Chairman, through the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the international community pledged to "leave no one behind". CARICOM asserts that it is high time for us to operationalize this mantra in the context of gender and disarmament in this Committee.

This issue is of particular concern to CARICOM Member States as statistics have revealed that small arms and light weapons are the dominant weapons of warfare within our region - 70% of homicides are caused by the use of firearms.

While men are most often the victims of gun crimes, it is the women who are left to become the sole bread-winner for families and risk falling into poverty. Women also have to deal with the resulting emotional and mental trauma that follows in the wake of such crimes. For this reason, we believe that women are indispensable agents in the disarmament process.

We applaud progress made in advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda. CARICOM welcomed the two significant events which took place in 2015 to mark the 15th anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325:

- i) Firstly, the Global Study detailing the achievements and challenges of the past 15 years of efforts to implement resolution 1325, and recommendations for the future of this agenda;

- ii) Secondly, the Open Debate in the Security Council, accompanied by the adoption of Security Council resolution 2242, the eighth resolution on women, peace and security.

CARICOM Member States took part in this Open Debate and will again actively participate in the next Open Debate of the Council on this topic, which takes place tomorrow (October 25, 2016).

Mr. Chairman,

We cannot create agreements for the entire international community and not consider one half of the world's population. As such, CARICOM considered it essential that we gave the issue of gender-based violence or violence against women, a prominent place in the Arms Trade Treaty, having it reflected both in the preamble and in the operative article 7.4. Accordingly, each exporting State Party, when assessing risks related to an export authorization, shall take into account the risk of the conventional arms being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women and children.

In this respect, Mr. Chairman, CARICOM welcomes draft resolution L.37 on *Women, Disarmament, Non-proliferation and Arms Control*, piloted by my own delegation, Trinidad and Tobago.

This resolution was born in 2010, in specific recognition of the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 and in keeping with Trinidad and Tobago's lead role for Crime and Security in the quasi-Cabinet of the CARICOM Heads of State and Government. *Women, Disarmament, Non-proliferation and Arms Control* remain the only General Assembly resolution that addresses the vital links between women and disarmament.

CARICOM welcomes this year's substantive additions to the draft text as it relates to language on the 2015 review of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development. We are pleased with the retention of language on the Arms Trade Treaty and its provision on gender-based violence which obliges States parties to take into account the risk of conventional weapons being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence and of violence against children.

These inclusions in the draft text are timely as we assess the current backdrop of intensified conflict and armed violence worldwide.

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to note that while there have been some advances; we need to make greater progress on entrenching the gender perspective in disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation policies and programmes. The draft resolution on Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control provides an opportunity to solidify our consideration of this issue as a core and cross cutting agenda item. We are encouraged by the number of Member States that have already co-sponsored this year's resolution, and we invite others to join.

We also welcome the Secretary General's report on Member States' implementation of resolution 69/61 on the same topic and take special note of the actions being undertaken at the local, national and regional levels as well as within the UN system to promote, support and strengthen the effective participation of women in all decision-making processes related to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, particularly as it relates to the prevention and reduction of armed violence and armed conflict.

Mr. Chairman, CARICOM welcomes the valuable work being undertaken by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-LIREC - **pronounced UN -LEER- ECK**) in integrating women in a practical way in preventing and reducing armed violence and in promoting disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

We are especially pleased with the project entitled: Enhancing Implementation of UNGA Resolution 65/69 on Women, Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Arms Control Assistance Programme.

As an indispensable partner in our region, UN-LIREC continues to contribute to focused dialogue on creating gender-based programmes and policies through pioneering and exploratory research. The organization has published two innovative publications showcasing women in the region as 'Forces of Change' in advancing the disarmament and non-proliferation global agenda and has improved access to professional training by female law enforcement personnel and legal officials in combating illicit small arms trafficking. UN-LIREC is also undertaking ATT Gender Risk Assessment Training for officials in the region which assists CARICOM States to fulfill its internationally binding obligations under this Treaty.

In closing, Mr. Chairman,

CARICOM wishes to emphasize the important role played by civil society, including women's organizations, in raising awareness and capturing the public conscience to advance women's political, social and economic empowerment in the prevention and reduction of armed violence and armed conflict, and in promoting disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

I thank you.