STATEMENT BY

MS. SHORNA-KAY RICHARDS
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON BEHALF OF
THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)

ON

REGIONAL DISARMAMENT

TO THE

FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

NEW YORK
WEDNESDAY, 30TH OCTOBER 2013

Please check against delivery
Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving me the floor to address the Committee within the Regional Disarmament and Security Cluster.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the fourteen CARICOM Member States.

The Member States of CARICOM have adopted a cooperative, coordinated and practical approach at the regional and sub-regional levels in order to tackle the various security threats posed to the region. CARICOM also remains committed to play its part in the global efforts to maintain our collective security by implementing our international obligations.

At the sub-regional level, CARICOM continued to build on its framework to support regional action on security matters with the adoption in February 2013 of the CARICOM Crime and Security Strategy, which is aimed at significantly improving citizen security with the Community, while simultaneously improving the economic viability of CARICOM States.

The trafficking of illegal guns and their associated ammunition has been identified in the Strategy as one of the greatest threats to regional security. Much has been previously outlined with respect to the region’s efforts to address this threat, including through the adoption by CARICOM Heads of State of a Declaration on Small Arms and Light Weapons in 2011 and the region’s strong support for inclusion of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition in the Arms Trade Treaty.

In terms of practical measures, we are pleased that the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) has made progress with operationalizing the newly-created Regional Integrated Ballistic Information Network (RIBIN), with four Member States adopting the Network; with critical support provided by our bilateral partners. RIBIN will allow CARICOM Member States to identify and trace guns and ammunition used to commit crimes.

Other practical measures to combat the illicit trafficking of SALW are being pursued through the region’s continued participation in the Organisation of American States project “Promoting Firearms Marking in Latin America and the Caribbean”. The project, which is supported by the United States Government, has seen the delivery of electronic marking equipment and computers to store marking data as well as the relevant training to 11 CARICOM Member States over the past two years.
Mr. Chairman,

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) continues to be an important partner for CARICOM. The Centre has assisted CARICOM Member States in enhancing the capacity of our law enforcement and judicial personnel; improving our stockpile management capabilities; and aligning our national legislation with global and regional instruments. Currently, UNLIREC is implementing Phase II of its Firearms Destruction and Stockpile Assistance Package for Caribbean States.

Under this programme, UNLIREC has delivered training for Government officials on best practices in firearms stockpile management and supported the development of national plans of actions for firearms stockpile management and small arms destruction equipment. To date, UNLIREC and CARICOM Member States have also destroyed more than 40,000 weapons and 57 tonnes of ammunition as part of this package. We are pleased that UNLIREC has sought to focus more on small arms in a maritime border context.

CARICOM wishes to commend UNLIREC for their efforts in the areas of armed violence prevention and mainstreaming gender perspectives in the various disarmament projects being carried out throughout the region. We commend UNLIREC in particular for the conduct of a specialized female-only Inter-Institutional Course on Combatting Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and for its publication, *Forces of Change: Profiles of Latin and American Women in Combatting Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms*, which was launched in September 2012.

Mr. Chairman,

CARICOM has also taken a regional approach to the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1540, though the CARICOM-UNSCR 1540 Implementation Programme, which we consider to be a platform for broader efforts to prevent terrorists from acquiring, trafficking and using weapons of mass destruction as well as for meeting our international obligations and commitments in respect of preventing and suppressing acts of nuclear, chemical, biological, or radiological terrorism.

Two critical areas of continued focus under the CARICOM-UNSCR 1540 Implementation Programme are augmenting the legal framework for effective regional system of export controls and enhancing capacity of security sector and customs and border officials. To that end, CARICOM is working with the 1540 Committee to develop a Reference Legal Framework (RLF) that will assist states in the region to institute controls that will target potential illicit transfers and enable the eventual interdiction, investigation and prosecution of these activities.
A second area of focus is capacity building. The CARICOM-UNSCR 1540 Implementation Programme will continue to provide training and resources necessary to detect, identify, and prevent transfers that violate export control laws and regulations and the implementation of measures to account for, as well as to secure and maintain, the appropriate physical protection of strategic goods.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, CARICOM welcomes the strengthening of the Caribbean programme of the UNODC, and we hope that this regional programme will serve as the basis for the re-establishment of a UNODC Office permanently to our region. UNODC’s particular expertise will serve to strengthen our legal and institutional frameworks and capacity in areas such as counter terrorism, anti-money laundering, legal assistance and customs and border controls.

Mr. Chairman,

Though our region has limited resources with which to confront the various complex security challenges attendant to porous borders, expansive maritime and land boundaries in a geographic location which is in a transit zone, we have developed a number of partnerships to give realization to regional disarmament through a number of practical measures.

I thank you.