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**STATEMENT**

by

**H.E. Ambassador Philip Sealy  
Permanent Representative of the  
Republic of Trinidad and Tobago  
to the United Nations**

**on behalf of CARICOM  
Member States**

in the

**General Debate on all Disarmament  
and International Security Agenda Items**

in the  
**First Committee**

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United Nations Headquarters  
New York

Madam Chair

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) that are members of the United Nations.

Like those delegations that have preceded us, we would wish to congratulate you most warmly on your election to chair the First Committee. Our congratulations go out as well to the other Members of the Bureau on their election. We are confident that your vast experience, your deep knowledge of the subject matter, as well as Norway's internationally acknowledged leadership role in the area of disarmament and international security, will serve us in good stead in arriving at a successful outcome to our deliberations in this vital sphere of contemporary international relations.

CARICOM Member States would also wish to thank Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs for his introductory remarks which provided this Committee with an overview of the stage at which the disarmament and international security agenda stands at the present juncture, and to express appreciation for his views on the direction that States should follow in addressing the many pending issues.

Madam Chair, CARICOM Member States fully align themselves with the Statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. We would wish, however, to add our own perspective on some relevant aspects engaging the attention of this Committee at present.

Madam Chair, the current difficult and complex situation faced by the international community in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is of grave concern to CARICOM Member States. On two occasions in the recent past, namely, at the NPT Review Conference in May 2005 and at the World Summit in September 2005, the international community found it impossible to arrive at a common vision on the steps necessary to advance the cause of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

CARICOM Member States are accordingly of the view, that greater political will is needed on the part of the nuclear weapon States in particular, to bridge the widening gap and to promote stricter respect for the legal obligations that flow from adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Madam Chair, the NPT, resting as it does on the three fundamental and equally important pillars of non-proliferation, disarmament and the right to the peaceful use of nuclear technology, is the principal international legal instrument in this sphere, and the linchpin of all multilateral efforts thus far.

In the area of non-proliferation, the five (5) States possessing nuclear weapons at the time of the signing of that Treaty undertook not to transfer nuclear weapons or technology relating to nuclear explosive devices to other States. Non-nuclear weapon States for their part agreed not to seek or develop nuclear weapons. In spite of these undertakings, non-nuclear weapon States continue to face threats by nuclear weapon States.

It is imperative therefore, that the international community strengthen the security of non-nuclear weapon States, and in this regard, CARICOM Member States support the call by the Non-Aligned Movement for the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to non nuclear weapon States as a matter of priority. The conclusion of such a legally binding instrument would represent an important confidence-building measure and promote a more stable and peaceful order globally, particularly in those parts of the world where tensions persist with a potential for escalation.

The international community is also concerned by the proliferation threat posed by the prospect of non-state actors acquiring weapons of mass destruction. The Security Council in this regard, in its resolution 1540 (2004) requires all States to enact and enforce effective domestic legal and regulatory controls to, *inter alia*, prevent the proliferation of such weapons and means of delivery including by establishing appropriate controls over related materials.

CARICOM Member States have not yet all fully implemented Security Council Resolution 1540, and accordingly call upon the international community to provide the necessary assistance that would enable them to comply fully with their Security Council obligations and be in a position to report adequately to the 1540 Committee.

In this regard, CARICOM Member States delegations are hopeful that the Regional Seminar on implementing Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) in Latin America and the Caribbean which is scheduled to take place in Lima, Peru in late November 2006, organized by UN-LIREC, the UN Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, with financial support from the European Union, will be a useful first step in assisting CARICOM Member States in their efforts to comply with these obligations, the central purpose of which is to prevent weapons of mass destruction from falling into the hands of terrorists.

There has, however, been one positive development in the field of nuclear non-proliferation. The recent signing by five Central Asian States of the Treaty establishing a nuclear weapon free zone in Central Asia is a development which all CARICOM Member States, as States Parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco on the denuclearization of Latin America and the Caribbean, welcome most wholeheartedly. We view this as a significant development in the sphere of non-proliferation in the Central Asian Region and would urge States in other regions of the globe, and particularly in the Middle East, to continue their efforts towards the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones in their respective regions.

With respect to nuclear disarmament, Article VI and the preamble of the NPT call upon the nuclear weapon States to pursue plans to reduce and liquidate their stockpiles of nuclear weapons and also to conclude a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. CARICOM Countries share the concern at the slow pace of progress towards complete nuclear disarmament and the total lack of progress on the part of nuclear weapon States in arriving at the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, this notwithstanding the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice to the effect that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

Deep and irreversible cuts in nuclear weapon stock piles on the part of the nuclear weapon States leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons would, in the opinion of CARICOM Member States, strengthen international peace and security and reduce substantially the threats to the very existence of humanity posed by the possession of such weapons of mass destruction.

As far as the right to the peaceful use of nuclear technology is concerned, the NPT gives every State the inalienable right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. CARICOM members would, accordingly, urge all NPT States Parties in exercising this right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, to conclude the broadest possible safeguards agreement with the IAEA, the sole competent authority for verification of compliance with obligations under safeguards agreements.

Madam Chair, I wish here to speak to an aspect of disarmament and international security which is never afforded the attention it deserves, and one which is extremely critical to CARICOM – that of the trans-shipment of hazardous materials through the Caribbean Sea. The risk of an accident, or worse yet, a terrorist attack on one of these shipments poses a grave threat, not only to our environment and economic and social development, but indeed to our very existence in the Caribbean. CARICOM Heads of State and Government have consistently called for a total cessation of these shipments in our waters, and we reiterate this call. We also wish to draw attention to the lack of attention paid to the issue of liability and compensatory mechanisms in the event of an accident, and call for this gap in the IAEA regime to be addressed.

Madam Chair, it is not only in the sphere of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation that there has been an absence of meaningful progress. This is also the case in the area of conventional weapons. While there has been some perceptible forward movement made recently in addressing the problem of small arms and light weapons, through the adoption by the General Assembly of a politically binding international instrument on the marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons in a timely and reliable manner, the international community was unable, at the Small Arms Review Conference held earlier this year, to adopt additional measures to implement further the 2001 Programme of Action.

CARICOM Member States are thus deeply disappointed at the inability of the Review Conference to agree on further measures to move this process forward, conscious as they are of the negative impact which the illicit trafficking of small arms is having on internal security within the CARICOM sub-region, and which is also the cause of much suffering, death and destruction in other regions of the globe, and particularly in Africa.

In this latter respect CARICOM Member States are equally concerned at the unrestrained sale and transfer of conventional weapons. Given the widespread death, destruction and political destabilization caused by small arms and light weapons, CARICOM Member States are of the firm opinion that there is an urgent need for strict transfer controls which would contribute to political stability and to peace and security in countries throughout the world.

Madam Chair, substantial progress in achieving nuclear disarmament, in halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons, in putting an end to the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons and in controlling those arms which are the contemporary causes of massive destruction, is essential, if all the world's peoples are to pursue their development in peace and security. The time is now to bring nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and conventional arms control more forcefully back to centre stage on the international security agenda, and there is no better place to begin generating the political will necessary for so doing than here, and now, in the First Committee of the General Assembly.

It is also our hope that in forthcoming meetings of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC), both important multilateral fora for negotiating and deliberating respectively on issues of disarmament, we can achieve concrete results in the not too distant future, having noticed the beginnings of a consensual approach to disarmament issues in those two bodies.

I thank you, Madam Chair.