EXPLANATION OF VOTE BY JAMAICA ON THE DRAFT RESOLUTION
“TOWARDS AN ARMS TRADE TREATY: ESTABLISHING COMMON INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS FOR THE IMPORT, EXPORT AND TRANSFER OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS”

Madame Chair

Jamaica fully supports the objective of an Arms Trade Treaty, recognizing its purposeful intent and the reality that as many regions around the world grapple with the harrowing effects of the illicit use of small arms and its manifestation as a contributory factor to much of the world’s ills including: crime, terrorism, internal and external conflicts and the displacement of persons, thereby continuing to undermine efforts aimed at peace, reconciliation, safety, security stability and ultimately, sustainable development.

Madame Chair

Jamaica does not manufacture arms or ammunition. Nevertheless, the access to illegal weapons and ammunitions and the subsequent high levels of gun violence place an unmanageable burden on the country’s social and economic structure. This resolution therefore holds significant interest to us given its possible far reaching impact, certainly not as a panacea, but as the title suggests, leading towards a legally binding instrument establishing a comprehensive regime to regulate conventional arms.

Madame Chair

Jamaica does not have a fundamental difficulty with the draft resolution. In fact, recent history will reveal that Jamaica along with other Heads of State/Government at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference in Malta last year, supported calls for work on such a treaty to begin within the United Nations. It will also be recalled that earlier in the General debate of this Committee, Jamaica had expressed support for the Arms Trade Treaty.

However, Jamaica feels that the resolution would have greater balance and wider scope had it incorporated the following:
• Preambular paragraph 2 should include reference to the 2001 Plan of Action GA resolution 60/81 of 8th December 2005 and to decision 60/519 which adopted the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace in a Timely Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons.

• Preambular paragraph 5 should include an element of control over the production, export, import, transit or retransfer of conventional weapons in order to prevent their illicit trafficking or diversion to unauthorized recipients.

• Jamaica has no problem with the establishment of a group of experts. However, the question arises as to whether procedurally the group can be created before member States submit their views and the Secretary-General presents his report to the General Assembly. In this context, we feel that Operative paragraph 2 seems to be premature.

Madame Chair

Jamaica will vote in favour of the resolution but thought it necessary to explain our position in advance.

I thank you.