STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)

THEMATIC DEBATE: DISARMAMENT MACHINERY

FIRST COMMITTEE
SEVENTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Check against Delivery
Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the fourteen Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) on the thematic debate on Disarmament Machinery. As this is my first address to this Committee, allow me to congratulate you on your successful election as Chair of the First Committee. I also extend congratulations to the other members of the bureau. Please be assured of the continued support of CARICOM and The Bahamas Delegation to your work.

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me to reiterate the significance CARICOM attaches to the United Nations disarmament machinery and the work of related mechanisms which fall under it, including the Conference on Disarmament, the Disarmament Commission and the First Committee. The shifting global context has demonstrated the need for innovative and enhanced dialogue and redoubled commitment toward the goal of disarmament.

CARICOM is pleased with recent progress within the Conference of Disarmament, and welcomes the 2018 decision of the Conference on Disarmament to establish subsidiary bodies on 7 out of the 8 items allocated to it to consider, *inter alia*, "emerging and other issues relevant to the substantive work of the Conference". We encourage the prompt resumption of negotiations within the CD.

It is our fervent hope that within the Conference on Disarmament and the UN Disarmament Commission, Delegations work steadfastly, in a transparent and inclusive manner, to overcome the paralysis that has prevented a conclusion of agreement in key areas of disarmament deliberations. In this regard, CARICOM welcomes recommendations on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons put forward in the 2017 Report of the Disarmament Commission, which paved the way for subsequent consideration of a new agenda item related to outer space. CARICOM looks forward to continued movement in this new 3-year cycle and to engaging in meaningful discussions to build consensus on "practical recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons".

Mr. Chairman,

At this juncture, the Caribbean Community expresses its appreciation to Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, for the invaluable role of the ODA as the coordinator of regional and global disarmament initiatives. CARICOM also notes with appreciation, the UN Programme of fellowships on disarmament which promotes greater understanding of the functioning of the United Nations disarmament machinery and of the other institutions working in the areas of international security, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

Mr. Chairman,

There can be no sustainable development without security, justice, good governance and peace. CARICOM attaches tremendous importance to the implementation of Agenda 2030 and, in the context of Disarmament, Goal 16, which calls for peace, justice and strong institutions. CARICOM strongly views disarmament as the fundamental link between peace and sustainable development. Regional and global disarmament approaches are mutually complementary and must be pursued simultaneously.
Consequently, CARICOM commends the stellar contributions of the regional centres, which provide capacity building and a range of training opportunities to Member States upon their request. We wish to highlight our appreciation for the work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) in Peru, that has over the past year, undertaken more than 115 substantive activities to support States in their implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms, the International Tracing Instrument, the Arms Trade Treaty and Security Council Resolution 1540. Many CARICOM countries have benefitted, and continue to benefit, from support extended by the Centre. CARICOM reiterates the importance of synergies in disarmament and arms control and wishes to underscore its support for the first symposium on women and security held in Peru in December 2017.

CARICOM expresses its appreciation for the voluntary contributions to UNLIREC from the Governments of El Salvador, Germany, Guatemala, Panama, Peru, Sweden and the United States of America over the last financial reporting period.

Similarly, CARICOM applauds the leading role taken by the International Atomic Energy Agency through its robust verification and monitoring mechanisms as well as its contribution to radioactive security. We also wish to commend the work of United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), which is celebrating its 35th anniversary, for its independent research on disarmament affairs, which provides an invaluable forum for the dissemination and promotion of disarmament-related information.

Mr. Chairman,

The Caribbean Community maintains the critical importance of nuclear weapon-free-zones as confidence building instruments which ensure peace and security, strengthen nuclear non-proliferation and advance nuclear disarmament. We therefore commend existing nuclear weapon-free zones in their efforts to attain these goals. In this connection, CARICOM countries are proud States Parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which observed its 50th anniversary last year.

In this regard, CARICOM continues to applaud the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and hopes this Treaty, along with others, foster workable, humanitarian-based approaches to advance disarmament objectives.

Mr. Chairman,

CARICOM also recognises the vital contributions of civil society, in particular non-governmental organisations, in the maintenance of peace and security. We would wish to underscore the engagement that will need to be undertaken with players within the arms industry, especially as we try to respond to new and emerging technologies.

To conclude, while there is still much work to be done to fulfil our mandates on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, CARICOM remains committed to doing its part to support the critical work of the disarmament machinery and calls on all Member States to demonstrate the required collective will to achieve safe and peaceful world.

I thank you.