



**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**MS. CHERRYL GORDON  
ALTERNATE TO THE RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF JAMAICA TO THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

**ON**

**THE OCCASION OF THE 61<sup>ST</sup> REGULAR SESSION OF  
THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE IAEA**

**VIENNA, AUSTRIA - 18<sup>TH</sup> TO 22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017**

Madam President,

On behalf of the Government of Jamaica, I congratulate you on your election to the Presidency of this 61<sup>st</sup> Regular General Conference and also convey our appreciation to you and the members of the Bureau for your effective steering of the work of the Conference.

We join other delegations in welcoming Grenada, our sister CARICOM Member State, as the newest member of the IAEA family. We are indeed pleased at the growing membership of this important organisation. Small developing countries, in particular, stand to benefit from the technical assistance, capacity-building and transfer of knowledge offered by the IAEA.

We, therefore, encourage all fellow Member States, in a position to do so, to continue to contribute to the IAEA's technical co-operation fund in order to ensure that there are sufficient resources to meet the growing demand for the Agency's assistance.

Madam President,

As the first English-speaking country in the Caribbean to join the IAEA, three years after we achieved our independence, Jamaica has continued to work closely with the Agency in its efforts to peacefully harness nuclear energy for sustainable development.

Jamaica is mindful that, as a highly-indebted middle income country, collaboration with multilateral and bilateral partners is crucial to achieving sustainable development for our nation.

As a beneficiary of the Agency's technical co-operation activities, Jamaica maintains a strong interest in IAEA programmes and welcomes the thrust by the Agency to synergise national development priorities and IAEA assistance within the broader UN Development Assistance Framework.

In the 50 years of relations with the IAEA, Jamaica has continued to benefit from technical assistance in education, health and research. These include courses and training, and the programme of action for cancer therapy (PACT).

We are also grateful to the IAEA for the support provided to countries in using nuclear and isotopic techniques, which is a viable path towards energy sustainability.

At the regional level, the crucial role of ARCAL - the Regional Co-operation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean - cannot be over-emphasised. ARCAL is an important mechanism for technical co-operation in our Region, and Jamaica has taken the necessary steps to benefit from the extension of the Agreement, by depositing its instrument of acceptance earlier this year.

As a Small Island Developing State, with limited capacity and vulnerability to external shocks including natural disasters; and as one the world's most indebted countries; Jamaica greatly values any opportunity to contribute to the building of capacity within other countries, our Region and the wider international community. We are, therefore, pleased that we have been able to maintain our voluntary contributions to the Technical Co-operation Fund over several years. Jamaica is also honoured that our increased collaboration with the IAEA has resulted in the decision for Jamaica to host three (3) IAEA

Workshops on Security of Radioactive Material in Transport in the final quarter of 2017 and first quarter of 2018.

Our collaboration with the Agency on the doubling of the capacity of the Caribbean's only research reactor, located in Jamaica, provides an opportunity for Jamaica to assist other countries in the Caribbean with their scientific research activities. This is particularly important considering the increase in IAEA membership from the Caribbean sub-region.

Madam President,

The Jamaican Government, through the Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology and the International Centre for Environmental and Nuclear Sciences, is also working closely with the IAEA to strengthen the regulatory infrastructure in the Region to provide for effective "cradle to the grave" control of radioactive sources.

In keeping with our commitment to use nuclear energy for scientific and peaceful purposes, the Jamaican Parliament passed a bill entitled, the *Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection Act*, and established the Hazardous Substances

Regulatory Authority in July 2015. Jamaica continues to regulate activities, practices and facilities involving ionising radiation and nuclear technology, for the protection of people, property and the environment from the harmful effects of radiation, utilising these and other frameworks.

Madam President,

Jamaica, like other Caribbean Member States, presents a negligible threat to the international order, as we are not producers of weapons. However, because of related dual-use technologies, strategic geo-political location, porous borders and socio-economic realities, we are regarded as being a so-called 'soft target' for nuclear terrorism and aggression.

This is the sobering reality which has driven Jamaica's longstanding commitment to total disarmament in line with the three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty: **nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear technology**. We continue to encourage States, which have not yet done so, to accede to legally-binding international conventions and to commit in earnest to the negotiations geared towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Furthermore, the Government of Jamaica welcomes the adoption, by the UN General Assembly on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017, of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The adoption of the Treaty is a necessary step in de-legitimising nuclear weapons and reinforcing the norms against their use. We encourage all States to ratify the Treaty, to ensure its early entry into force.

This year, Latin America and Caribbean countries commemorated the 50th Anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, within the framework of the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of OPANAL - the General Conference of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean. Jamaica reiterates her commitment to the provisions of the Treaty, which established the Region as a nuclear weapon-free zone; as reaffirmed by Heads of State and Government of CELAC - the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States - at their Summits held in 2017 and 2014.

In closing, Madam President, please allow me to commend our Director-General, Mr. Yukiya Amano, for his dynamic stewardship of the Agency over the past eight years, and particularly for its increased focus on the safe use of nuclear technology for development. We wholeheartedly congratulate Mr. Amano on his re-appointment as head of the IAEA, and are confident that

the Agency and its Member States will continue to benefit from his vision.

Please be assured of our full co-operation and support for the work of the Agency in collaboration with other members and partners, towards the fulfilment of its mandate.

I thank you.