



PERMANENT MISSION OF
JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT BY

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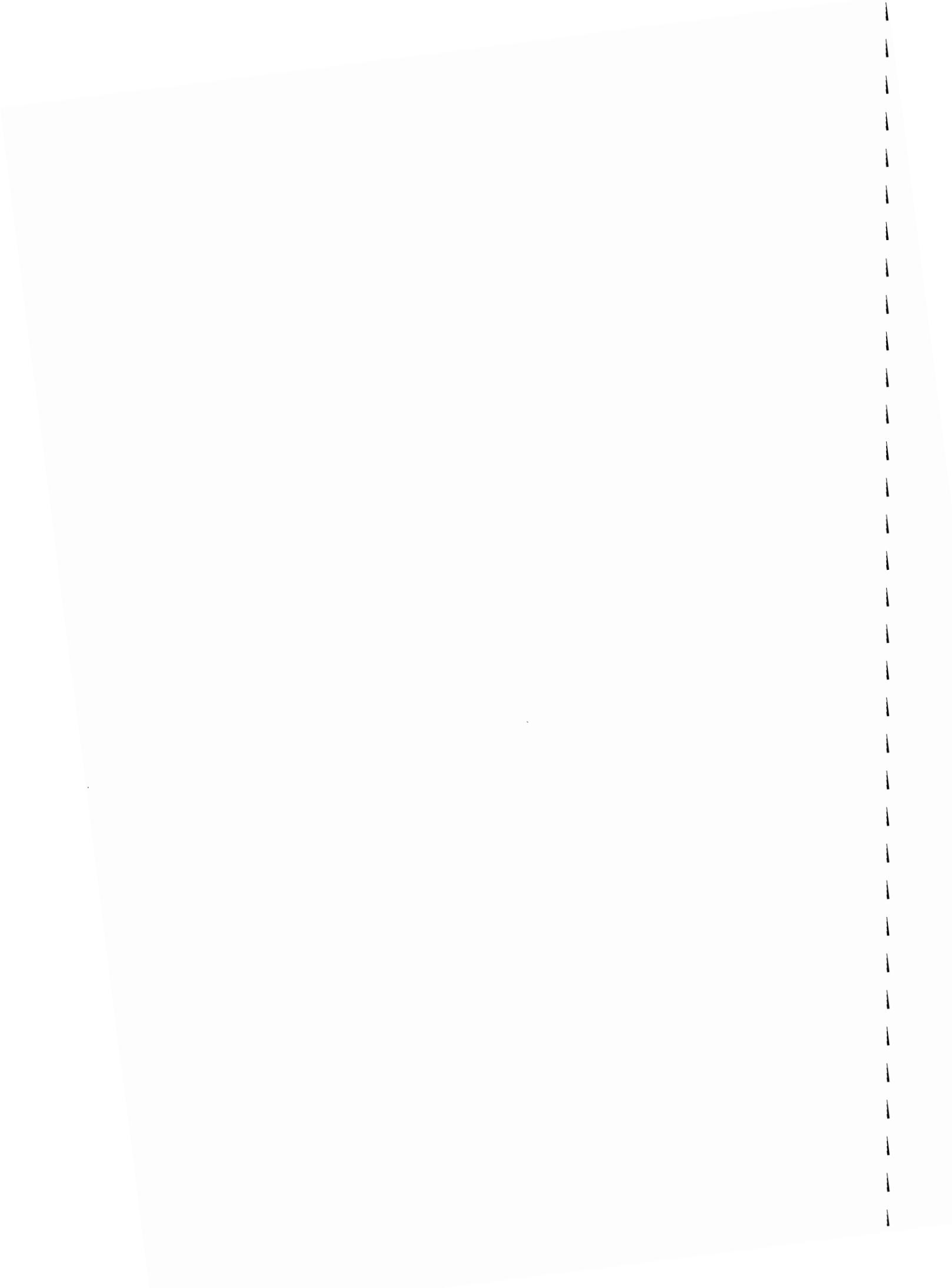
TO THE 66TH SESSION OF THE

UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Mr President,

I congratulate you on your assumption as President of the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. We are confident that your extensive diplomatic experience will guide your leadership of this Session. I assure you of my delegation's full support. During the 65th session of the General Assembly, we benefited from the skilled leadership of H.E. Joseph Deiss and I wish to recognise his sterling contribution to the work of that General Assembly.

Mr President,

We join others in welcoming the newest member of the United Nations family – the Republic of South Sudan. The emergence of South Sudan as a sovereign state underlies the fundamental value and relevance of the theme of this year's General Assembly - the role of mediation in the settlement of disputes by peaceful means. We salute the tenacity of the people of South Sudan in their struggle to gain statehood after five decades of conflict. We urge all sides and factions not to allow old rivalries and revenge to impede growth and development. The international community must assist South Sudan as it embarks on the daunting journey of stabilization and nation building.

Global Political Landscape

Mr. President,

We review a global political landscape that is marked by turbulence and uncertainty. This underscores the timeliness and value of the theme of this year's General Assembly. The developments over the last several months in the Middle East and North Africa, in particular, are stark reminders that the legitimate aspirations of citizens for freedom, inclusive government and respect for human rights cannot be indefinitely suppressed.

Longstanding disputes and pockets of political instability and conflict continue to fester in several parts of the world, resulting in social and economic dislocation and humanitarian crises. If the United Nations is to effectively respond to these situations of conflict, its preventive diplomacy capacity, including its mediation capacity, must be strengthened.

Many of these conflicts have their roots in racial and religious intolerance and bigotry resulting in social exclusion and alienation. The High Level Meeting to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the 2001 Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA) against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, obliged a reflection on the global community's inadequate compliance with the objectives of the Programme of Action. Recognizing the danger in such situations of potential conflict and full support to the DDPA, are congruent with the principles implied in this General Assembly's theme.

Related to this is the continued support of the international community for the project to erect a Permanent Memorial to the Victims of Slavery and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade as a visible message of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. Jamaica thanks all those countries which have contributed to the erection of the Memorial and looks forward to its completion within a reasonable timeframe.

Mr. President,

We have long recognized that peace and development are mutually reinforcing and intrinsically linked to growth and prosperity. It is therefore important that we consciously seek to strengthen and support the role of the Peace Building Commission, recognizing the linkage between peacekeeping and peace building and the transition from stabilization to consolidation.

The resolution of the Israel-Palestine conflict is long-overdue; it is time to end the occupation of Palestinian territory; it is time for the people of Palestine and Israel to live in peace and mutual security. Jamaica remains unwavering in its support for a just, lasting and comprehensive agreement that recognizes the Palestinian State within the pre-1967 borders and guarantees the security of Israel. The focus now must be on ending the stalemate and reviving direct negotiations between Israel and Palestine and in this regard, Jamaica welcomes the declarations by both Palestine and Israel to this General Assembly of their readiness.

Both sides must now re-engage in good faith, taking no action which could undermine the possibility of a durable solution. Central to this must be Israel's cessation of settlement building and expansion in the Occupied Territories and, on the part of the Palestinian leadership and people, the renunciation of violence against Israel and acceptance of its right to exist. The door to peaceful negotiations will not be forever open; nor can there be a continuing delay to Palestine's assumption of its rightful place in the global community of states.

Global Economic Landscape

Mr. President,

The spread of globalization is well advanced and our economies and growth prospects are interlinked in a vast network of economic opportunities. In these difficult financial times, developing countries are forced to take painful policy decisions aimed at recalibrating our economic plans to address immediate challenges while laying the groundwork for the fulfilment of our long-term development goals. The balancing act which this involves can have dire consequences for our most vulnerable nationals.

We all have to take ownership of our own development process and the necessary steps to provide an economic environment that is conducive to growth and prosperity. To this end, we are compelled to adopt approaches which are innovative, pro-active and

collaborative. It is through adopting such approaches that many countries and regions have made significant inroads in the attainment of the MDGS.

And here, I wish to refer to the struggles of two neighbouring Caribbean countries to achieve development. Haiti needs the continued support of the international community to foster its development, if its democratic gains are to be consolidated. Cuba must have the space to foment its own development, free from the decades-old embargo which has slowed its growth, but not its will to improve the welfare of its people and of other developing countries. A stronger Cuban economy, integrated into the Caribbean marketplace, is essential to the region's development.

We are faced with the reality that, although we all operate in one global economy with the same aspirations for growth and sustainable development, we do not all have the same resources or capabilities. In addition to being acutely vulnerable to the vagaries of the global economic environment, the development prospects of many developing countries are frequently undermined by environmental degradation and climate change. Classifications which are ostensibly positive, such as our own designation as an upper-Middle-Income-Country, serve to obscure several of the development challenges which we continue to face, particularly in accessing development financing and assistance which are critical to our development process and the attainment of the MDGs. The range of socio-economic characteristics and levels of development of countries which fall in the middle-income category, are indicative of the need for us to move towards harmonisation of the criteria used in classification and resources allocation.

Developing countries like ours have undertaken painful adjustments to achieve fiscal discipline and macro-economic stability within an open economy. We continue to pursue free trade agreements at regional, hemispheric and global levels. However, the missing link to progress is the urgent need to build capacities in developing countries through infrastructure development, institution building, as well as expanding and enhancing productive capacity for competitiveness and to meet international quality standards. Moving from an economy primarily driven by commodities to one that is knowledge-based, innovative and technology driven, is a transformation which though challenging for developing countries, must be achieved. Without effective partnerships between the large and small economies for mutual benefit, this is unlikely to occur. Here I speak positively of the increasing south-south cooperation which offers hope to many developing countries.

We have long recognized that we can maximize our growth prospects through increased economic partnerships and investment opportunities, which will ultimately lead to improvements in trade relations. Indeed, the reality is that development aid is an essential resource which is used by developing countries to offset the financial burden involved in the execution of major development projects. Unfortunately, development aid and assistance to developing countries continue to fall short of the agreed goal of 0,7% of GNI, as some of our developed partners fail to meet their commitments. Closing the gap between commitment to the development agenda and the provision of resources which will facilitate the implementation of its various components, require

political courage and we commend those partners who have maintained or exceeded their ODA targets despite their own economic challenges.

We continue to count on the support of our partners and the international community to help drive our social and development goals and to keep our safety nets in place. International financial and development assistance help to strengthen our development process and to address setbacks from external shocks on our economic planning and social investments. Development funding is critical in the recovery of our agricultural, mining and tourism industries that are often adversely affected by climate change and the impact of natural disasters. So too are the transfer of technology and capacity building.

We urge our partners to recommit to the development agenda both here at the UN and within the context of the Bretton Woods Institutions. We reiterate our call for the reform of the international financial institutions towards increased transparency and accountability, and an increased role for the developing countries in decision-making.

We welcome the increased attention that the G20 has paid to development issues and are encouraged by the consultative approach in its relations with the UN. It is imperative that the G20's activities in respect of development, accord with the central role of the UN in economic development.

The Doha Development Round of trade negotiations which we began in good faith nearly a decade ago has the potential to significantly improve the development prospects of most developing countries. We therefore urge the full re-engagement of all parties in the process, so that we might move beyond the current impasse and usher in a new era of multilateral trade relations. This must take into account the preservation of policy space for developing countries in areas which are integral to our ability to build competitiveness and trade capacity. We remain hopeful that at the 8th Ministerial Conference in December of this year we will consider a package of measures as the basis for a more balanced trade regime which will serve as a catalyst for increased economic growth and prosperity worldwide. We must commit to ensuring that development remains a central objective of the negotiations.

We support coordinated and collaborative efforts within the context of the review and implementation of the Aid-for-Trade initiative in support of developing countries and will continue to work with our international partners and aid and development entities in expanding the initiative to build on the supply-side capacity and infrastructure of developing countries, so that we can take advantage of trade opportunities and connections within the global economy.

Jamaica has embarked on an export-led trade policy with the full involvement of the business sector within the context of the WTO Trade Review-Institutional Framework. The strategic formulation of our trade policy process includes collaboration with the private sector, particularly given its central role and expertise in manufacturing and exporting. Our productive success in trade development is strongly dependent on

partnerships with the private sector, as we agree to policy directives and pursue an export-led trade initiative, being mindful of our resources and capacity to export, as well as business opportunities and market intelligence globally.

Other critical challenges such as food security, energy security, climate change, poverty and diseases, continue to demand the attention of the international community. Precisely because of their trans-national character, many of these problems require multilateral cooperation and action in an inclusive framework that involves both developed and developing countries.

A year ago, world leaders gathered in this General Assembly to take stock of progress toward the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. We renewed our commitments to achieving these targets by 2015. We acknowledge the support and partnership in the midst of the global economic challenges. Nonetheless, with four years left until the 2015 deadline, we are deeply concerned at the slow pace of delivery on commitments made in several key areas, namely, ODA, trade, debt relief, and access to new technologies and to affordable essential medicines.

Jamaica renews the appeal made by our Prime Minister at the summit last year for an emergency programme to re-energize the MDG agenda. Without such a programme, those targets will remain elusive in 2015 and beyond. The fiscal policy requirements attached to the resources made available for developing countries through institutions like the IMF cannot assist in meeting our Millennium targets in the short run. It is therefore critical that we reinvigorate the Global Partnership for Development aligned to MDG-8. Critical also must be the channelling of resources and the fiscal space to support programmes for economic empowerment and capacity building. More concessionary loans and grants and debt-for-equity swaps should be among the instruments used.

Jamaica is on track to meet most of the MDGs despite the economic and financial challenges. Through assistance from the Global Fund, we have significantly increased access to anti-retroviral drugs and reduced the rate of HIV/AIDS infection. At the UN High-Level Meeting on AIDS in June, Member States committed to bold new targets for the AIDS response, including scaling up investments for AIDS. As a result of its reclassification as an upper middle income country, Jamaica will not be eligible to access these funds. This puts us at risk of reversing the gains in halting the spread of HIV. We again urge that the factors used by the relevant multilateral agencies in the measurement of a country's wealth be reviewed, as their classifications often bear no resemblance to the on- the-ground realities. They must more carefully take into account a country's indebtedness and capacity to pay, as well as its fiscal capacity to finance programmes that are taken for granted in respect of "middle-income" countries.

Non-communicable diseases

We are pleased that the international community embraced the proposal made by the Caribbean Community for a United Nations emphasis on non-communicable diseases

(NCDs), the silent killer of millions of around the world. The High Level Meeting on NCDs last week allowed us for the first time to agree to measures to significantly reduce NCDs. The political declaration we adopted, though not as ambitious as Jamaica would have preferred, provides a good basis to address the prevention and control of NCDs. We urge the United Nations system and member states to expeditiously implement measures to achieve the agreed targets and indicators on NCDs.

Food Security

Mr. President,

The famine in the Horn of Africa, precipitated by the worst drought in half a century, is of grave concern to us all. It has heightened our awareness of the devastating impact of natural disasters on poor developing countries. We have an urgent need to adopt more concrete measures for food security, building on the progress made from the World Summit on Food Security and working closely with the World Food Programme and UN OCHA to strengthen international humanitarian response and assistance, particularly in areas that are prone to disasters and conflicts. The plight of starving populations, including mothers and infants in the region, must push us towards the commitments of the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

To sustain the global food market and feed our populations, we have to engage in greater investments in science and research to boost agricultural production, to offset drought and famine. We equally have to increase investment in transport and agricultural infrastructure to facilitate the storage of food and its transportation to markets.

Speculative action in the global market, with attendant volatility in commodity prices, has generated socio-economic tensions in various countries across the globe. The constant increases in food prices not only create further strain on the economy and on social welfare, but also threaten food security and deepen the economic challenges of countries which are already striving to recover from the global financial crisis. Jamaica therefore welcomes the initiative launched by President Sarkozy of France for the G20 to consider this question of financial speculation in the prices of petroleum and foods at its Summit to be held in November, 2011. This is a burgeoning crisis which the UN must also consider.

Environmental Sustainability

Mr President, climate change presents a clear and present danger to human development, particularly in small island developing states and least developed states. Progress was made at the Climate Change Conference in Cancun last December when common ground was reached between developed and developing countries on several key issues. We must now implement and operationalize these decisions. We remain disappointed at the slow pace of climate change financing.

The conference in Durban in December (COP17) provides yet another opportunity to forge consensus on effective adaptation and mitigation strategies within the context of an ambitious post-2012 climate change framework. A second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol is essential and we remain optimistic that at Durban we shall all demonstrate the necessary political will and seriousness of purpose to achieve this.

Rio+20

Mr. President, we urge a renewed commitment to the pursuit of development that is sustainable, through increased attention to all three pillars of sustainable development – the environmental, social and economic - and a redoubling of efforts to integrate sustainable development principles at the international, regional and, most importantly national levels.

As a small island developing state we have a vested interest in the successful outcome of the 2012 review of the implementation of the commitments made twenty (20) years ago at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro. States and regions are already assessing the progress which we have made and the gaps which persist in our efforts to chart a more sustainable course to development, in the period since that Conference in 1992. Significant gaps which cause concern relate to the transfer of technology, capacity building and the provision of additional financial resources for development.

In our efforts to strengthen the international sustainable development architecture, the emphasis should be on effectiveness; on the efficacy of institutions which not only facilitate extensive policy discussions, but which also move us towards fulfilment of the ambitious vision which we all embraced in Rio in 1992. We should also aim for institutional flexibility which will allow us to address longstanding and emerging challenges through increased cooperation and coordination.

Rio + 20 will provide us with an excellent opportunity to renew our commitment to Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Action and, in respect of SIDS, the Barbados Programme and Plan of Action and the Mauritius Strategy on Implementation.

Mr. President, as host to the International Seabed Authority, Jamaica attaches great importance to ocean affairs and the law of the sea. Next year, marks the 30th Anniversary of the opening for signature of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the Montego Bay Convention. We encourage member states to appropriately highlight this landmark event at the international level.

Disarmament

The total elimination of nuclear weapons remains an important goal for the international community. While we have taken significant steps toward achieving this goal, significant challenges remain: a number of key players remain outside the NPT; and the CTBT has still not yet entered into force. As we look towards the start of the

Preparatory process for the 2015 Review Conference, there must be the unquestionable political will to address these lingering deficiencies towards achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

Transnational Organised Crime

Mr. President, we must continue to build on the momentum gained from last year's Special High Level Meeting on Transnational Organised Crime, which addressed measures to counter the growing problem, including narco-trafficking and the illicit trade in small arms and ammunition.

Jamaica, like its CARICOM partners, continues to face severe threats to our long-term socio-economic development from the illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, small arms and light weapons and ammunition. We will remain resolute in our fight against this menace both locally and abroad. We have achieved marked reductions in crime and criminal activities over the past year, with our multi-faceted strategy to stem the problems, as well as through the implementation of social intervention and social transformation initiatives to stem the problem of crime and violence. We continue to strengthen the capacity of our security forces and improve our justice system to ensure that criminals are caught and prosecuted in a court of law.

We firmly believe, however, that we will not see the full impact of these efforts without an international regime that regulates the sale and transfer of conventional weapons, in particular, small arms and light weapons and their ammunition. To this end, Jamaica is committed to ensuring that the 2012 Diplomatic Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty results in a legally binding, comprehensive, objective and transparent Treaty.

United Nations Reform

In order for the UN to deliver on all our expectations, its organisational structure must reflect the geopolitical realities of the 21st century. An effective response to global challenges requires a reformed and dynamic UN. Reform initiatives spanning a number of years, have led to the establishment of UN Women; the reform and strengthening of ECOSOC; a more coordinated and efficient response to humanitarian crises; and a change in the way we conduct our peacekeeping missions. We must continue our efforts aimed at revitalizing the General Assembly so that it can effectively carry out its role and responsibility as the chief deliberative and policy-making organ of the United Nations.

A glaring failure has been our inability to agree on reform of the Security Council to ensure that it is more democratic, responsive, and reflective of today's political environment. For more than fifteen years, the debates for comprehensive and lasting reform of the Council have achieved very little. The African countries and our Latin American and Caribbean region still have no permanent seat at the table. This injustice cannot continue. Comprehensive reform can only be achieved within the inter-

governmental negotiating process. Anything less will be nothing more than a continuation of the status quo.

Conclusion

Mr. President,

As we continue to work together to achieve sustainable development for all, it is imperative that we exercise the requisite political will and make good on our commitments to the global development agenda. The far-reaching effects of the multiple and inter-connected crises of recent years have reinforced our interdependence and the important role of economic cooperation and partnerships in securing global peace and prosperity.

We must redouble our efforts to address the growing challenges of poverty, food insecurity, the rising costs of food and energy, and climate change. It is not good enough to engage in extensive deliberations, to make commitments and issuing Declarations without providing the means for their implementation, including financing, capacity building and technology transfer. We must now go beyond grand statements if we are to fully realize sustainable development and rekindle the faith of the people we serve in this United Nations.

I thank you.

