



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF BELIZE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

STATEMENT BY

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BELIZE TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

ON BEHALF OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)



CLUSTER TWO: OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

**FIRST COMMITTEE
77TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to deliver these remarks on behalf of the fourteen Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) on this thematic cluster – *Other Weapons of Mass Destruction*.

CARICOM aligns itself to the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Threats to international peace and security are rife and of concern to us all. As has been stated in our statement delivered under the previous thematic cluster “Nuclear Weapons”, CARICOM is very much concerned that despite our declared intentions as Member States, we are no closer to the goal of elimination of nuclear weapons. We are equally concerned about the state of play of other weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Chairman,

The use of chemical weapons by anyone, under any circumstances, is unjustifiable and is contrary to international law. In this regard, CARICOM reiterates its strong support for the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons on Their Destruction (CWC) and for the work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in its full implementation. As the first disarmament Agreement that provides for the elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, the Chemical Weapons Convention has made a significant contribution to the objective of general and complete disarmament and to codifying a universal norm against chemical weapon use. We applaud the progress made in eliminating chemical weapons stockpiles since the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention 25 years ago.

The use of chemical weapons poses dire environmental and health consequences. The humanitarian consequences of such uses are insurmountable. In this regard, we affirm the

need to ensure that any use of chemical weapons is fully and impartially investigated and that those responsible be held accountable. Accountability may contribute to strengthening the norm against the use of chemical weapons as well as a mechanism to offer redress to the victims of such atrocious acts. We must also be cognizant of the need for support and assistance for victims who have been exposed to chemical weapons.

Although we have been living in unprecedented times, we commend the OPCW that despite the restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, progress continued to be made in destroying the remaining declared stockpiles of chemical weapons.

CARICOM also takes this opportunity to express appreciation for the ongoing initiatives by the OPCW geared towards capacity building in our region in keeping with the goals of the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

CARICOM also reaffirms our support for the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. 47 years after its entry into force, we consider that the constructive and consistent engagement on issues relating to the Biological Weapons Convention is very important at this juncture, given that the developments in science and technology are increasing the possibilities for the acquisition, access to and use of biological weapons, including by non-state actors.

In this connection, we welcome the convening of the Ninth Review Conference of the Convention which will commence next month and hope for a successful outcome that would assist in the furtherance of fulfilling the objectives of the Convention.

We also thank the Implementation Support Unit of the BWC and other partners for the assistance provided to our region in building capacity towards implementation of the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges for our region. It has been compounded by the socioeconomic and health impacts of COVID-19 which we have been confronting for the past 2 years. We are also mindful that our porous maritime and land borders can create added challenges to our peace and security. In that regard, we are concerned about the increasing challenges posed to international peace and security by terrorists and other non-state actors, particularly their possession of any type of weapon of mass destruction. To this end, CARICOM has worked towards the elaboration of a CARICOM Counter Terrorism Strategy, which was undertaken in collaboration with the United Nations. We welcome such joint endeavors that will assist in maintaining peace and security. Despite the challenges which we encounter, we are committed to fulfilling our obligations in accordance with Security Council Resolution 1540.

Preventing the emergence of new weapons of mass destruction is of concern to us all. In this connection, we welcome the adoption of the General Assembly Resolution 75/31 “Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of Weapons of Mass Destruction and new systems of such weapons: report of the Conference on Disarmament”.

Mr. Chairman,

In closing, I take this opportunity to reiterate CARICOM’s unwavering commitment to the total elimination of all weapons of mass destruction and urge all Member States to heighten their efforts both individually and collectively to ensure full alignment with the legal regime governing such weapons.

I thank you.