



Message from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Communications of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to commemorate United Nations Day, 24 October 2011

October 24 marks the 66th anniversary of the entry into force of the United Nations (UN) Charter, in which founding Members expressed their determination to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind; to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small...”. This objective still remains applicable today.

As we celebrate UN Day, we should reflect on the impact this organisation has had on world affairs; the progress made towards the achievement of a better world for all of us; the many challenges that continue to be encountered along the way; and the sense of hope which is inherent in a system firmly rooted in the ideals of peace, security and justice for all.

Crime reduction is a priority of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and of the UN, which has adopted several resolutions and implemented programmes to address this challenge.

These include the UN Programme of Action to Combat, Prevent and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, familiarly known as the UN PoA. This Programme is implemented by the UN Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-LiREC) which works specifically on firearms control problems in the Latin America and Caribbean region. Earlier this month, the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, recognized the value of this organization by participating in the ceremonial destruction event as part of the Firearms Destruction and Stockpile Management Assistance Package for Caribbean States.

In the wider context, Trinidad and Tobago, through its Permanent Missions to the United Nations, located in New York and Geneva, and in accordance with decisions taken by CARICOM Heads of Government in 2007 and 2009, partnered with the UN to promote various initiatives. These include the first ever UN resolution on non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and an agreement on a high-level meeting of the General Assembly, which was held from 19 to 20 September 2011 in New York.

The Honourable Prime Minister has pioneered, through the UN and the Commonwealth, a resolution on “Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control”, which was adopted by consensus in the General Assembly. This resolution calls on States to “promote the equitable representation of women in all decision-making processes with regard to matters related to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control”.

Following the success of this resolution, Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar, together with United Nations Development Programme and UN-Women, successfully co-hosted a UN side event on Women’s Political Participation in the margins of this year’s General Assembly in New York. Other co-hosts included Her Excellency Dilma Rousseff, President of Brazil; Rt. Hon. Baroness Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission; and Her Excellency Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State of the United States of America. This event resulted in a Joint Statement on Advancing Women’s Political Participation which was signed by the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago.

As we look ahead to 2012, Trinidad and Tobago will continue to work with Australia, the United Kingdom, Costa Rica and Kenya, and members of civil society to lobby UN Member States for the establishment of a legally binding Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). This resolve further demonstrates Trinidad and Tobago’s continued active role in the multilateral fora to restrict the illicit arms trade.

The Government and People of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago extend congratulations and appreciation to the Organizations of the United Nations system and the nine (9) Offices operating in Trinidad and Tobago for the important role they play in the nation’s development.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago looks forward to enhanced coordination and cooperation in the ensuing years, in the interest of a continued effective and productive relationship.