



# TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
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**STATEMENT BY**

**SENATOR THE HONOURABLE DR. AMERY BROWNE,**

**MINISTER OF FOREIGN AND CARICOM AFFAIRS**

**OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

**DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE**

**OF THE**

**SEVENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE**

**UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

General Assembly Hall  
United Nations Headquarters

24 September 2022

**Mr. President,**

Trinidad and Tobago congratulates you on your Presidency of the 77<sup>th</sup> Session, and we commit to you our full support.

I also express gratitude to your predecessor, whose leadership and dedication demonstrated that to be a great leader you don't have to come from a large country.

**Mr. President,**

In our maiden statement to the General Assembly, as a newly independent nation in 1962, our first Permanent Representative, the late Sir Ellis Clarke declared that Trinidad and Tobago embraces the solemn responsibility that comes with membership of this Organisation.

**I stand before you today, in our 60<sup>th</sup> year of Independence, on the exact anniversary of the day on which we became a Republic, to reaffirm Trinidad and Tobago's unequivocal acceptance of our obligation to honour the responsibility of membership.**

Over the decades, Trinidad and Tobago has anchored its multilateral engagement on the founding purposes and principles of the United Nations. We have nurtured these principles by maintaining a strong tradition of democratic governance which respects constitutionally enshrined fundamental human rights and freedoms, and promotes strict adherence to the rule of law.

**Trinidad and Tobago accordingly is bound by duty to uphold these principles unconditionally and to defend them, whenever there is evidence of breach.**

This is why Trinidad and Tobago cannot accept or ignore any unilateral attempt to violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of any State. The violation of Ukraine's internationally agreed borders constitutes a flagrant violation of the UN Charter and of international law. It is a clear threat to international peace and security, and **the only credible solution is to end this aggression immediately.**

Therefore, we call on the Russian Federation to immediately abandon its action and to resume negotiations with the Ukrainians in good faith, to find a peaceful and durable resolution.

**Mr. President,**

Our collective experience over the last seven months has laid bare the urgent necessity for the Security Council to be reformed to reflect current geopolitical realities.

And as the international community celebrates the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the entry into force of the Rome Statute, which established the International Criminal Court, events around the world confirm that if in fact the Court did not exist, it would have to be created in order to ensure accountability for growing acts of impunity.

Trinidad and Tobago is proud of our longstanding involvement with this Court, through the pioneering work of our distinguished former Prime Minister and President, from the little island of Tobago, the late Arthur N.R. Robinson. The mission of the International Criminal Court and its record as an independent tribunal, engenders the fullest support of Trinidad and Tobago.

**Mr. President,**

As the war in Ukraine rages, fuels such as coal are having quite a resurgence and the commitments made in Glasgow are at risk of being severely derailed. At the same time, climate finance commitments made by developed countries are definitely not on track.

Droughts, wildfires, floods, and cataclysmic hurricanes and typhoons are realities that small island states know all too well. At the same time, slow-onset events such as the deterioration of coral reefs and the influx of sargassum seaweed, threaten our fragile ecosystems and the livelihoods of our people, especially our fisherfolk and those dependent on tourism.

Accordingly, Trinidad and Tobago calls for the full and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement. A dedicated facility to address loss and damage under the UNFCCC Financial Mechanism is an absolute necessity. These actions must be prioritized because what is at stake is the very existence and viability of small island States.

**Mr. President,**

The added burden of rampant global inflation and the crises of food, fuel, feed and fertilisers have placed extraordinary strain on our economies and our people, further imperilling our ability to achieve sustainable development across the globe.

On the critical issue of achieving food security for all people, the international community must work together to accelerate global food production. On this issue, CARICOM Leaders have not just been calling for action but have been acting in solidarity and with decisiveness. In August, Trinidad and Tobago was pleased to host the Second CARICOM Agri-Investment Forum and Expo, as part of our region's commitment to reduce its food import bill by 25 percent by 2025.

**Mr President,**

Trinidad and Tobago is firmly committed to working with CARICOM and other partners towards the restoration of peace and stable democratic governance in Haiti. Our objective must be to work with the Haitians, to secure their long-term progress and future.

We therefore urge the United Nations system and the international donor community to urgently strengthen their role and engagement with Haiti. We encourage them to provide the necessary assistance to quell the ongoing and devastating gang violence and to urgently improve the humanitarian situation in that country.

**Mr. President,**

In the Caribbean, our efforts to build safe and peaceful societies are being completely undermined by transnational organised crime, human trafficking, the illicit trade of drugs, and a steady flow of illegal firearms from source countries beyond our region; all contributing to unacceptably high levels of gang violence within our communities. We are committed to further strengthening our cooperation with regional and international partners to address these challenges, which threaten the very stability of our societies.

Violent extremism, international terrorism, and the use of technology for criminal purposes, remain clear and present dangers. In combatting these phenomena, Trinidad and Tobago attaches the highest value to collaborating with the United Nations and other international partners. We must bear in mind, that in addressing extremism, there must be no compromise to the constitutionally protected rights and freedoms of our citizens.

**Mr. President,**

In all of these complexities, we must recognise the critically important role of women as agents of positive change, and to that end, Trinidad and Tobago will once again table the

biennial resolution on “Women, Disarmament, Non-proliferation and Arms Control”. We encourage all Member States to co-sponsor and support this forward-looking resolution.

But Mr. President, while we assiduously work to encourage and ensure the inclusion of women in places and spaces of decision-making, we must continue to insist that the rights of women and girls are fully respected and protected, at all levels of society. Violence against women and girls continues to be a menace, destroying lives, and impeding overall progress toward balanced and inclusive sustainable development. Addressing this must be a priority, and in Trinidad and Tobago, a growing number of stakeholders, including the private sector, have now joined the national effort to make our society safe for women and girls.

**Mr. President,**

The last two years, in particular, have demonstrated, that the structure of the international economic and financial system is not fit for purpose. The system, as designed, actually undermines developing countries in their pursuit of sustainable development.

It cannot be business as usual. A transformative global agenda, such as the 2030 Agenda, necessitates a transformative economic and financial framework that is compatible with the achievement of the SDGs. Without such a shift in the global architecture, even the best efforts at the national level will not produce the results that we need in the Global South.

Trinidad and Tobago calls on the international community, to adopt tailored measures and solutions to address the fundamental financing challenges that developing countries face, with particular attention to LDCs and SIDS.

**One such measure is the adoption of a multidimensional vulnerability index, which we consider to be an utmost priority.**

**Mr. President,**

Our history cannot be erased or rewritten. We therefore continue to call for reparatory justice for the unpaid debt for centuries of enslavement of African people, for the historical crimes of native genocide visited upon the indigenous peoples of this world, and for the exploitative legacy of colonialism that has directly resulted in the persistent under-development of Caribbean nations and so many others.

We continue to call for the abandonment and destruction of all nuclear weapons as the only means of guaranteeing the avoidance of total annihilation of humankind.

We continue to call for the unconditional lifting of the unjust economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on the people of Cuba, and for the full integration of Cuba into the international economic and political system.

We also continue to call for a long-lasting and mutually agreed, two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict, which would guarantee the Palestinians a permanent homeland and recognise Israel's right to exist in peace and security.

**Mr. President,**

To get the 2030 Agenda back on track, all stakeholders, whether big or small, powerful or otherwise, must embrace the value of multilateralism. Clearly, we are not quite there yet. In this regard, I echo the words of one of Trinidad and Tobago's greatest calypsonians, David Rudder, who in his iconic song "Rally Round the West Indies" said **"soon we must take a side or be lost in the rubble, in a divided world that don't need islands no more, are we doomed forever to be at somebody's mercy? Little keys can open up mighty doors."**

Mr. President,

**This world needs the little islands.**

We bring a unique perspective that is valuable and beneficial and necessary. Trinidad and Tobago continues to offer the point of view of a small, sovereign, democratic nation, harbouring a big ambition; namely to unleash the creativity and resourcefulness of our diverse people, especially our youth, to make the most positive contribution to community, to society, and to the world.

**Mr. President,**

As a relatively young nation, Trinidad and Tobago's people are our greatest source of power and energy. You can feel it in the rhythm of our tassa drums and in the melodies of our national instrument, the steel-pan.

Our achievements stand in testimony of what can be achieved when a small nation punches

above its weight class. Our citizens have served as Judges on the ICC, and with respect to the Law of the Sea, we have given the world, experts of the calibre of Lennox Ballah and Anthony Lucky.

We have contributed extensively to the work of the United Nations, serving on the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, and a range of subsidiary bodies and organs.

**Mr. President,**

Trinidad and Tobago looks forward, with enthusiasm and optimism, to our next sixty years of membership of the United Nations. We continue to deepen engagement and partnership with our neighbours in the Caribbean and with all members of the international community to achieve our common objectives and thus, to strengthen international peace and security.

As we write the next chapter in our nation's history, I can share with you that Trinidad and Tobago offers itself to serve as President of the General Assembly during the 78<sup>th</sup> Session. Being tasked with such a defining role by the Assembly would truly be an honour and a responsibility that the Government and people of Trinidad and Tobago shall embrace with commitment and impartiality.

In the best traditions of multilateralism, let us therefore join our strengths for the benefit and upliftment of all of humankind. Let us build a truly global community, where no one is left behind.

In closing, **Mr. President**, I offer this General Assembly the inspiration found in the words of the national motto of Trinidad and Tobago, which declares, ***“Together we aspire, Together we achieve.”***

**Mr. President,**

I thank you.