Permanent Mission of Barbados to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY

H.E. MR. JOSEPH GODDARD
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BARBADOS TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON

BEHALF OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)

ON

AGENDA ITEM 40
"NECESSITY OF ENDING THE ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL EMBARGO IMPOSED BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AGAINST CUBA"

AT THE

69TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OCTOBER 28, 2014

United Nations Headquarters
New York
Mr. President,

I have the honour to address the General Assembly on behalf of the 14 Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

CARICOM aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of the Group of 77 and China, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

CARICOM Member States have, for the past twenty-two consecutive years, gathered in this similar setting to sound our voices with many others of opposition to the United States imposition of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against the Republic of Cuba. We reiterate our longstanding position on this issue today. For fifty-four (54) years, the people of Cuba have endured severe economic loss and stagnation, preventing the expansion of Cuba’s commercial ties with the rest of the world.

As a bloc of States, the Caribbean Community attaches great value to the strength that lies in collective capacity, will and a firm stance on common principles that promote our shared objectives. Those principles include adherence to the Charter of the United Nations, multilateralism, sovereignty and free trade. Accordingly, CARICOM has remained unstinting in its solidarity with Cuba and in the calling for an end to the unilateral and unwarranted extra-territorial application of the United States Helms Burton Law which runs counter to both the letter and spirit of the Charter and serves no justifiable legal, political or moral purpose within contemporary international relations.
Mr. President,

Last year 188 of the 193 Member States of the United Nations voted in favour of this resolution. This represented an overwhelming majority of the international community demanding the end to the blockade that has stifled the people of Cuba for more than fifty years.

In spite of such significant challenges, Cuba continues to show itself to be a key regional and international partner and actor. CARICOM Member States, in keeping with our policy of mutual respect, good-neighbourliness and adherence to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations have maintained warm and fraternal relations with Cuba which have remained resilient even through a continually evolving hemispheric and international geopolitical landscape.

In the Caribbean sub-region Cuba has built hospitals and clinics, provided medicines and furnished doctors, nurses and other health-care professionals. Additionally, students from the Caribbean Community have benefitted from free tertiary education in Cuba, and Cuba has unselfishly extended much generosity to the CARICOM Member State of Haiti, following the earthquake there. CARICOM looks forward to the upcoming fifth CARICOM-Cuba Summit to be held on December 8th of this year in Havana, Cuba.

CARICOM Member States note with appreciation that Cuba is in the process of mobilising 461 doctors and nurses- the largest medical contingent of any single country- to West Africa to offer assistance in the fight against Ebola in that region.
The CARICOM Member States also continue to maintain excellent relations with all countries in the region. In that spirit, we join the international community in calling for an immediate end to the embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba and its people. We further urge the Government of the United States of America to engage in a constructive dialogue with the Government of Cuba aimed at normalizing relations with Cuba. Such a step would remove a source of tension and conflict and improve the prospects for peace, development and cooperation within our region.

In support of the principles of international law and the United Nations Charter, CARICOM, as in previous years, fully supports the contents of the draft resolution before the General Assembly entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba" and will vote in favour of the adoption of the draft resolution before the General Assembly.

I thank you, Mr. President.