



GROUP OF FRIENDS  
IN DEFENSE OF THE  
CHARTER OF THE  
**UNITED NATIONS**

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E. MR. JOAQUIN PEREZ AYESTARAN,  
AMBASSADOR, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA TO THE UNITED NATIONS,  
DURING THE DEBATE ON AGENDA ITEM 110, ENTITLED “REPORT  
OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE WORK OF THE  
ORGANIZATION”, WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE PLENARY OF  
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

*New York, 07 February 2024*

**Mr. President,**

1. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has the honor to take the floor on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations.

**Mr. President,**

2. The global process of emergence of the new equitable system of international relations is ongoing, while the unipolar order continues to decline. At the same time, some States wish to turn back or stop time, with the sole and selfish purpose of preserving their post-colonial dominance.
3. This is leading the world to a deep-reaching systemic crisis, which has an overarching influence both on States and the UN System at large. As a result, the United Nations is being tested for resilience and efficiency in implementing its mandate, the key element of which is, among others, the maintenance of international peace and security.
4. In this context, we witness the growing lack of trust and unifying agenda among States in the General Assembly and Security Council. Some stakeholders undertake attempts to preserve the unipolar world order, and, for that purpose, to engage in dialogue from a position of superiority and replace the universal norms of international law with a so-called “rules-based order” that remains vague, precisely for serving the geopolitical interests of those that insist on promoting such a notion. This, needless to say, undermines the ability of the United Nations to elaborate joint responses to common challenges of today’s era.

**Mr. President,**



5. One of the major challenges we face nowadays is deterioration of the global security architecture, including as a result of the denial of other States' security interests and concerns. Approaches that are based on a zero-sum game, have a negative impact on the multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control regimes. Unilateral steps towards escalation erode this architecture, lead to a loss of trust among States, and instigate the arms race.
6. International efforts are thus required to establish a revitalized, more reliable international security architecture based on respect to all principles enshrined in the UN Charter, including the principle of sovereign equality of States, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and prohibition of the use or threat of use of force, while taking into account the principle of indivisible security, and the interests and concerns of all, in particular developing countries, and to advocate a concept of common security, respecting and safeguarding the security of every country; a holistic approach, maintaining security in both traditional and non-traditional domains and enhancing security governance in a coordinated way; a commitment to cooperation, bringing about security through political dialogue and peaceful negotiation; and pursuit of sustainable security, resolving conflicts through development and eliminating the breeding ground for insecurity.
7. We firmly reject the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions, against developing countries, and reiterate the urgent need to terminate and eliminate them immediately, while emphasizing that such actions not only undermine the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law, but also severely threaten the freedom of trade and investment. We therefore call upon the international community to adopt urgent and effective measures to eliminate the use of unilateral coercive economic measures against developing countries.
8. Against the backdrop of this deficit of trust and a rapidly growing confrontation both at the regional and global levels, we need to reject "bloc" logics, provocative actions that infringe on others stakeholders' security interests, including irresponsible "pumping up" of other States with weapons and attempts to achieve domination by force or economic domination through international financial systems and bodies.

**Mr. President,**

9. There is a pressing need to come up with a fair and reliable "security architecture" for international peace and security, that should be truly based on the tenets



enshrined in the UN Charter and the norms of international law, that should take into account *all* pertinent factors. Thereby we must all remind that the nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war is the highest priority. This remains crucial.

10. Conflict potential and risks of escalation should be eradicated. Any agreements should be based on the principles of the UN Charter, including equality and impartiality with the aim of achieving peace, security, stability and development, while avoiding confrontation.
11. In this context, we believe that the Pact of the Future should take into account the abovementioned trends and offer solutions to international peace and security problems that should commit us to common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, create conditions for a comprehensive dialogue among States, while reaffirming that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions should be the overarching goal of the Summit of the Future and its deliberations.

**Mr. President,**

12. This global crisis can only be resolved through dedication to multilateralism and the establishment of a truly equal and orderly multipolar system that is necessarily rooted in the UN Charter. To achieve this, all States need to wholeheartedly recommit to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, as part of the process to just, democratic and equitable international world order respect cultural diversity and dialogue among civilizations, and ensure the democratization of international relations, on the basis of respect for, among others, the sovereignty of States. The activities of the United Nations must address the root causes, rather than just symptoms of crises that may arise or persist in international affairs.
13. The principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States, for instance, is crucial. It is equally important to make sure that the United Nations preserves its central role in conflict settlement and maintenance of international peace and security and that the Security Council fulfills its mandate without interfering in the affairs of the General Assembly. The respective mandates of these bodies must be fully respected, in accordance with the UN Charter, and we shall avoid the growing trend of the Security Council arrogating itself issues beyond its clearly defined mandate.

**Mr. President,**



14. As far as the prevention of conflicts, we consider it unacceptable to introduce any “universal indicators of conflict”, because they can be used as a pretext for meddling in the internal affairs of sovereign States. Each crisis has a unique set of causes, and attempts to unify those, especially when based on unobvious aspects, such as climate, human rights, or gender, are inefficient and more likely to undermine, rather than promote, UN efforts in conflict prevention and resolution. Besides, risks are high that, in practical terms, such indicators may be used for patronizing and interfering in the internal affairs of States, which, paradoxically, constitute itself a fundamental factor of most of modern-day crises.
15. Peacebuilding support should be provided with due account for the entire “spectrum” of concerns of States and be focused on promoting reconciliation and related tasks in the area of development, to the exclusion of non-core aspects. We stress that the additional assessed component of the UN Peacebuilding Fund must address the transparency of its work and ensure Member States’ control of the spending of such resources through this Fund, while insisting on the voluntary nature of the UN Peacebuilding Fund.

**Mr. President,**

16. Our countries are convinced of the positive role of civil society, from all regions, to the work of the United Nations. That is why we have arrangements in place to enable their contribution to our efforts in this Organization. Nonetheless, we need to preserve the inter-governmental nature of the United Nations. Granting NGOs with the same rights as official representatives of States for resolving problems of peace and security and other matters entrusted to the United Nations, under a so-called multi-stakeholder approach, is not appropriate, misleading and runs contrary to the very intergovernmental nature of the Organization.
17. Planned inclusion of the civil society and “other interested stakeholders” in the work of all inter-governmental bodies, without exception, for politically-motivated agendas and to the detriment of developing countries and convening of annual congresses of selected civil society of developed countries, coupled with introducing offices of civil society focal points in all UN mechanisms that lack the appropriate basis, threatens to further erode the intergovernmental nature of the Organization and infringes upon the very rights of sovereign States. This is particularly concerning because it further replicates the already disadvantageous position and unequal participation that NGOs from developing countries are facing when interacting with the United Nations.



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18. There should be a clear understanding that the establishment of an inclusive multilateralism, as well as of a multicentric world order, coupled with necessary changes in the United Nations to the benefit of developing countries are all interconnected processes. We therefore conclude by stressing that a path to an ideal world can hardly be found when there is disunity between States, when we are facing a crisis of confidence, and when there is a growing accumulation of potential confrontations in international relations. Multilateralism, international cooperation and solidarity should be promoted instead of confrontation.

I thank you, Mr. President.