

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY THE DELEGATION OF THE BOLIVARIAN
REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA TO THE UNITED NATIONS DURING THE
INFORMAL MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO OBSERVE
“NELSON MANDELA INTERNATIONAL DAY”**

New York, 20 July 2023

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.
2. At the outset, allow us to thank and recognize you for convening this commemorative meeting, under the theme *"The Legacy lives on through you"*, in connection with the observance of July 18th, two days ago, of "Nelson Mandela International Day", as per the provisions of General Assembly resolution 64/13 of 10 November 2009.
3. Throughout this year, 2023, we will commemorate at least two big events in connection with the most honorable late Nelson Mandela and his historic legacy. These include the 10th anniversary of his passing away and, on the other hand, the 5th anniversary of the adoption of the Political Declaration of the 2018 Nelson Mandela Peace Summit, which gathered Heads of State and Government from around the world in a heartfelt and well-deserved tribute to the legacy, imprint and essence of the work and social, historical and political thought of "Madiba" in favor of the Culture of Peace, Reconciliation, Multilateralism, Social Justice and all those very values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, which currently continue to inspire us all and that we seek to uphold and further strengthen as we move forward.

Mr. President,

4. Nelson Mandela's life and work were distinguished by profound resilience, courage and determination. His leadership and personal sacrifice have bequeathed to humanity a living example of the value of perseverance to achieve justice and reconciliation, even in the midst of the most adverse circumstances. This is an example of how, through will and dialogue, peace and justice can be achieved, despite bitter differences, overcoming division and finding formulas for coexistence and progress capable of redeeming centuries of injustice and exclusion and

demonstrating with deeds that it is possible to achieve that other possible world we all dream of.

5. The life of “Madiba” invites us to reflect both on the admirable personal qualities he had and on the capacity of a people and its leader to mobilize the most profound forces of societies to overcome oppression in favor of real freedom, inclusion and the vindication of the historically oppressed. Mandela's legacy is a cornerstone of the Culture of Peace and a vivid political manifestation demonstrating that peace is not achieved and maintained through violence or revenge, but through constructive dialogue, negotiation and consummate humanity, taking into account the concerns of everyone. His leadership in South Africa’s peaceful transition to a New Era is one of the most commendable testimonies of peace and reconciliation of the 20th Century and of human history as a whole.
6. In the international arena, Mandela's political legacy is also an active tribute to the spirit of a truly democratic and equitable international society, as foreseen in the founding Charter of our Organization, and, as our Heads of State and Government pledged at the "Nelson Mandela Peace Summit", it is also an inspiration to continue promoting the sovereign equality of all States, the right of peoples under colonial domination or foreign occupation to self-determination, the settlement of disputes by peaceful means in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, the respect for equal rights of all persons, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion, to international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character, and to a continuing process of positive, dynamic, inclusive and participatory international dialogue and collaboration to resolve all outstanding issues in a spirit of mutual respect, understanding, cooperation, accommodation and long-term vision.

Mr. President,

7. Nelson Mandela, in his first address to this General Assembly, as President of Apartheid-free South Africa, on 03 October 1994, said: “Our common humanity and the urgency of the knock on the door of this great edifice demand that we must attempt even the impossible”.
8. In this current Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace 2019-2028, the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations, which just a few days ago commemorated its second anniversary, will continue to promote and consolidate initiatives in favor of the strengthening and revitalization of an inclusive multilateralism, as well as in favor of the Culture of Peace and political dialogue, as ideals and effective tools for the social transformation that the Peoples of “We,



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the United Nations” are clamoring for, even amid division and forces that seek to taint the universality, purposes and principles of this Organization, as set forth in its founding Charter. In our efforts, we will continue to be guided by the most wise example and legacy of Madiba.

I thank you, Mr. President.