



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

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E. MR. JOAQUÍN PÉREZ AYESTARÁN,  
AMBASSADOR, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA TO THE UNITED NATIONS,  
DURING THE DEBATE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON AGENDA  
ITEM 121, ENTITLED “THE UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COUNTER-  
TERRORISM STRATEGY”**

*New York, 22 June 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. We seize this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for the presentation of his report on the activities of the United Nations System in implementing the UN-GCTS, as contained in document A/77/718, of which we have taken due note

**Mr. President,**

3. Terrorist acts not only endanger the territorial integrity and stability of States, but also national, regional and international peace and security. Not only do they generate terror and violate human rights, but they also seek to destabilize legitimately constituted governments or the prevailing constitutional order and political unity of States, thus, affecting the stability of nations and the very basis of societies. In addition, terrorist acts create adverse consequences, among others, on the economic and social development of entire nations, while resulting in both an incommensurable human toll and important economic losses, including as a result of the destruction of States' public and private infrastructure.
4. We therefore express our categorical rejection to all acts of terrorism, regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed. All acts, methods and practices of terrorism are criminal, unjustifiable and represent clear violations of both the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law. Similarly, the provision of any sort of support, active or passive, to terrorist organizations or persons for the purpose of inciting, planning, financing, perpetrating or participating in the carrying out of terrorist acts,



is also contrary to the values, tenets and spirit of the founding Charter of our Organization.

5. That being said, we ought to stress, on one hand, that terrorism shall in no way be equated with the legitimate struggle of peoples under colonial or alien domination and foreign occupation to self-determination and national liberation, and, on the other one, that terrorism shall not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group.
6. Similarly, we reject the political manipulation of the fight against terrorism, including through the issuance of arbitrary and unilateral lists accusing States of allegedly supporting terrorism; a practice that is totally inconsistent with international law. We also stress that the promotion or facilitation of terrorism, as well as the use of digital platforms to incite and finance terrorist acts, for the purpose of advancing regime-change policies or agendas seeking neocolonial domination is inadmissible.
7. Efforts to prevent and combat international terrorism, we cannot overemphasize, shall not be used, under any circumstance, as a pretext to interfere in the internal affairs of States or to resort to the use or threat of use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, as this clearly goes in contradiction with both the spirit and letter of the very Charter of the United Nations.

**Mr. President,**

8. The adoption by consensus of draft resolution A/77/L.XX, through which this General Assembly has unanimously renewed yet again the UN-GCTS, is a clear demonstration of the unwavering commitment of the international community with the efforts to both prevent and combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We reaffirm, in this context, the leading role and primary responsibility of States and their respective national institutions, with the assistance of the United Nations, under the GCTS, and upon request, in efforts at the national, regional and international levels to both prevent and counter this despicable scourge.
9. We recognize that, indeed, much has been achieved since the adoption of the UN-GCTS back in 2006. Nevertheless, there still a long road ahead for achieving our common goal of a world free of terrorism, which requires, among others, a balanced implementation of the UN-GCTS and the fulfillment of relevant international obligations. This is a fight that admits no double standards: there cannot be good and bad terrorists.



10. In this context, and mindful of the fact that terrorism will not be defeated by military force, law enforcement measures and intelligence operations alone, we cannot overemphasize the importance of comprehensively addressing its root causes, in line with the provisions of Pillar I of the Strategy, in order to effectively overcome those conditions that may provide breeding grounds for the promotion of criminal agendas based on hatred, defamation, intolerance, sectarianism, racism, extremism, including supremacism and neo-Nazism, and which seek to exploit divisions and the challenges each nation may have for the sole purpose of inflaming tensions and fostering the commission of terrorist acts.
11. We refer, among others, to poverty, social and economic inequalities, political and ethnic intolerance and/or conflicts, as well as colonial or alien domination and foreign occupation, systematic violations to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of peoples and nations, all of which are part of the so-called push drivers of terrorism. These must be therefore be addressed accordingly if we truly want to eliminate the scourge of terrorism not only in the short, but also in the long term.

**Mr. President,**

12. The Group of Friends expresses its resolve to take speedy and effective measures, rooted in international legality and the very tenets of the founding Charter of our Organization, to eliminate once and for all international terrorism. In this connection, we consider of utmost importance to further strengthening and broadening international cooperation and the provision of technical assistance, upon request, and based on the needs and priorities identified by requesting States, so that we can effectively advance towards that end. Consequently, we also seize this opportunity to reiterate our call for the removal of unilateral coercive measures, which hinders such cooperation and therefore deliberately keep us from achieving that world free of terrorism.
13. Moreover, we also insist on the need to resume, as soon as possible, negotiations on a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, covering all aspects of this phenomenon, confident that such a treaty would complement the set of existing legal instruments in this field.
14. To conclude, while expressing our full solidarity with those countries that have most recently suffered from acts of terrorism, we renew our determination to preserve, promote and defend the prevalence and validity of the Charter of the United Nations, while calling on all responsible members of the international community to put aside differences and, instead, to engage with each other and work together, in a decisive, inclusive and coordinated manner, in order to



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eliminate this reprehensible scourge, including through the full, effective and balanced implementation of the UN-GCTS.

I thank you, Mr. President.