



*Statement delivered by H.E. Mr. Samuel Moncada,  
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the  
Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations*

*on behalf of the*

*“Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations”*

*during the Debate of the Security Council on*

*“General Issues relating to Sanctions: Preventing their  
Humanitarian and Unintended Consequences”*

*New York, 07 February 2022*

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**Mr. President,**

1. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is honored to take the floor on behalf of the delegations of Algeria, Angola, Belarus, Bolivia, Cambodia, China, Cuba, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Iran, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Nicaragua, the State of Palestine, Russia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Syria, Zimbabwe, and its very own, all of which are members of the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations.
2. At the outset, and since this is the very first time we take the floor this month, allow us to convey our best wishes to the Delegation of the Russian Federation – a fellow member of our Group of Friends –, as it assumes the Presidency of the Security Council for February 2022, while expressing our appreciation for both the convening of this timely Debate and for the Concept Note previously shared for guiding our discussions today on such an important issue.

**Mr. President,**

3. Our Group of Friends was established in response to the increasing threats against the Charter of the United Nations and, thus, the urgent need to reaffirm and defend its very purposes and principles, which today remain as relevant as in 1945.
4. We refer, among others, to the growing resort to unilateralism; to the attacks against multilateralism; to the claiming of non-existent exceptionalisms; to the attempts to ignore and even substitute the purposes and principles contained in the UN Charter with a new set of so-called "rules" that have never been discussed in an inclusive or transparent manner; and to selective approaches or accommodative interpretations of the provisions of the Charter.
5. We consider that such practices contribute in no way to addressing, through peaceful means and cooperation, the complex, emerging and common challenges faced in these days by humanity. Instead, they contribute to an increase in uncertainty, distrust, instability and tensions around the world.

**Mr. President,**

6. The Group of Friends acknowledges the authority, functions and powers of the Security Council of the United Nations for maintaining international peace and security. In this regard, nevertheless, we consider that measures envisaged under Chapter VII should only be taken as a last resort and in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.
7. Moreover, we further stress the need for thorough consideration to be given to the short and long-term effects of measures that are or may be adopted by the Security Council, in order to ensure, precisely, that unintended consequences, in particular negative impact on civilians and the provision of humanitarian assistance, are both avoided and prevented at all times. We cannot overemphasize, in this regard, the need for ensuring that the population of the targeted States is not victimized, whether directly or indirectly, or deprived of their own means of subsistence and development, as a result of the implementation of such measures.
8. Similarly, greater efforts shall be made in order to address concerns of due process and transparency in listing, delisting and exemption procedures, including those of a humanitarian nature and regarding the enablement of the population of targeted countries to have access to appropriate resources for financing humanitarian imports, especially as a concrete means to prevent any possible

negative humanitarian and socio-economic impact of measures adopted by the Security Council on the basic living conditions of the civilian population in the targeted States.

9. In addition, we reject the manipulation of humanitarian assistance for political purposes. Humanitarian assistance constitutes a fundamental component of the protection of civilians in armed conflicts and must be provided in accordance with the guiding principles established in General Assembly resolution 46/182.

**Mr. President,**

10. We are bound to seize this opportunity for raising awareness about a rather concerning and increasing trend: that is, when it comes to sanctions, the authority and powers of this Security Council have been encroached by a few States that consider unilateral coercive measures, whether of a political or economic nature, to be their preferred tool for exerting pressure, particularly on developing countries, and forcing the sovereign will of another State, in order to obtain from it advantages of any kind. Such practice is not only a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations, but also a sign of contempt to the authority and powers of this body, which, in turn, undermines its integrity and effectiveness.
11. Today, we are seeing not only an unprecedented resort to unilateral sanctions, but also a new generation of such illegal measures, which are now crueler and much more destructive than ever before. Not only are those illegal measures weaponized in the pursuit of geopolitical and economic goals, but their application is now being amplified and coordinated amongst a wider range of governments in what will eventually be known as a new kind of "group unilateralism". The objective, though, remains the same: to force the political will of sovereign and independent nations and suppress their industrial development and technological progress, while exerting the greatest possible pain and suffering on the populations of targeted States, as part of what can be described as a policy of maximum calculated cruelty.
12. The application of unilateral coercive measures, which are aimed at targeting civilian populations as part of a widespread and systematic policy that ultimately results in unnecessary sufferings amounting to crimes against humanity, impedes the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries, and have a negative impact on the full enjoyment and realization of human rights. In other words, not only do they create and aggravate the conditions for poverty and inequality, but they represent also a deliberate

attack against the right to development. Similarly, interference in the internal and sovereign affairs of States, coupled with the imposition of unilateral coercive measures of an economic, financial or trade nature, apart from representing a massive violation of human rights and producing great suffering and pain on entire populations, foster the deliberate exacerbation of conflicts and crises, including through the creation of what is later referred to as “man-made humanitarian crises” that were deliberately created, precisely, by the very promoters of such illegal measures, which have now become structural factors and fundamental drivers of contemporary crises.

13. We therefore call on this Security Council to once and for all condemn the imposition, as well as the intensification of unilateral coercive measures, particularly in the midst of the worst pandemic humanity has faced in the past 100 years, while disregarding the multiple calls for their elimination, especially at the current international juncture. Their negative, and even dramatic, impact, as recorded by UN independent experts, coupled with the effect of secondary sanctions and the phenomenon known as over-compliance, continues to result in hindrances for States subjected to unilateral sanctions concerning the effective and timely procurement of food, medicines, supplies and equipment, vaccines, and other essential goods for civilian population, clearly demonstrating of the ineffectiveness and rather non-existence of the supposed “humanitarian exemptions” in place, in line with the assessment of the UN Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights.

14. To conclude, the Group of Friends vows to spare no effort in preserving, promoting and defending the prevalence and validity of the Charter of the United Nations, for which it is necessary, on the one hand, to ensure that unilateral sanctions are lifted in a complete and immediate manner, and, on the other, to conduct a comprehensive and global review of measures imposed by the Security Council, in order to ensure their adherence to both the letter and spirit of the tenets enshrined in our founding Charter.

I thank you, Mr. President.