

**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 OPEN DEBATE OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON
“EFFECTIVE MULTILATERALISM THROUGH THE DEFENSE OF THE
PRINCIPLES OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS”**

New York, 24 April 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 convey our appreciation to the Delegation of the Russian Federation – a fellow member of our Group of Friends –, for convening this Open Debate on such an important and critical theme, particularly in the midst of the current international juncture, while expressing also our appreciation to the Russian Delegation for having prepared the Concept Note previously circulated for guiding our discussions today.
3. Similarly, we seize this opportunity to transmit our appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the briefing provided earlier today.

Mr. President,

4. Over the past 77 years, the United Nations has made great achievements in various fields. Nevertheless, the fulfillment of the promise contained in the Charter of the United Nations remains elusive to humanity. The three pillars of our Organization – international peace and security, sustainable development, and human rights – are yet to be fully realized. And, while the UN has indeed many success stories to show, for instance, in averting a conflagration at the global scale, today's world is not precisely a safer one, neither from the security, economic, financial, environmental, energetic or food standpoint.
5. This reality is certainly the result of multiple factors. Nevertheless, there are a few of them worthy of mentioning today, in light of the tremendous impact they have had as a whole over years in the international relations' system: i) the attempts to ignore and even replace the purposes and principles enshrined in the UN



Charter with a new set of so-called “rules” that, to date, remain unknown; ii) the attempts to disregard the obligations and commitments arising from relevant international agreements and treaties to which members of the international community are parties, including on the basis of claims to non-existent exceptionalism; iii) the attempts to divide our world into blocs; iv) the attempts to have selective approaches or accommodative interpretations of the norms of international law; and v) the continued attacks against multilateralism, which has, precisely, the United Nations as its banner.

6. In parallel, there is also a growing resort to unilateralism, which can be largely seen, among others, in the illegal application of unilateral coercive measures against more than 30 countries worldwide, in flagrant violation of international law, which are negatively affecting the daily lives of over one third of humanity. These so-called sanctions, which have increased exponentially over the years and which can be defined as a new form of pretended domination and neocolonialism, have, as a matter of fact, become the preferred tool of certain governments for exerting pressure, particularly on developing countries, and for forcing the sovereign will of another State, in order to obtain from it advantages of any kind, while generating, at the same time, untold suffering on entire peoples. Not only have they created a systemic crisis into the entire system of international relations that continues to date eroding multilateralism, but they are also, at this very moment, deliberately exacerbating the global multifaceted crisis, while also increasing uncertainty, instability, mistrust and tensions around the world, reason why we continue to insist on the pressing need for their complete, immediate and unconditional lifting.

Mr. President,

7. It is in light of this reality, 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, that, almost two years ago, a cross-regional group of countries came together and decided to establish this Group of Friends, which is firmly committed to preserving, promoting and defending the prevalence and validity of the universal code of conduct that provides us the UN Charter.
8. In this context, we cannot overemphasize, the importance we attach to ensuring compliance with and strict adherence to both the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and to the timeless principles included therein: from the sovereign equality of States, to self- determination; from the non-interference in



the internal affairs of States, to the refrainment from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

9. Proceeding in any other manner would only keep us farther apart from our common aspiration of establishing a more peaceful and prosperous world and a truly just, democratic and equitable world order, while hindering our ability to provide for a dignified life and a future in peace and with development for all our peoples, in line with our pledge of leaving no one behind.

Mr. President,

10. Multilateralism is collective action and finding solutions together to common problems, which is why we concur with the affirmation contained in the Concept Note for today's Open Debate: that multilateralism, indeed, makes it possible to facilitate, among others, long-term stability, indivisible security and good neighborliness. We also believe, in this regard, that the solution to the new and complex challenges that we face today requires the strengthening and revitalization of an inclusive multilateralism in which all countries, big or small, are effectively engaged alike, as each national contribution is essential for achieving the goals that motivated the establishment of our Organization back in 1945. Consequently, this also requires, on one hand, the democratization of international relations, as well as the consolidation of a multipolar system that is necessarily rooted in the Charter of the United Nations, and, on the other one, the total elimination of unilateralism.
11. In light of the foregoing, the United Nations is called to play a key role in addressing, among others, attempts to undermine multilateralism, mindful of the fact that it is the platform with the greatest legitimacy, convening power and normative capacity for, in an ever increasingly interdependent world, addressing in a joint, coordinated and decisive manner, on the basis of dialogue, understanding and tolerance, as well as mutual respect, solidarity and consensus-building approaches, all issues related to international cooperation for economic development and social progress, peace and security, peaceful settlement of disputes, human rights and the rule of law at the international level, as well as the pressing challenges and emerging threats ahead of us, many of which are common to all of us, without distinctions of any sort.
12. Therefore, we seize this opportunity not only for reaffirming our commitment to the revitalization and strengthening of both the role and the intergovernmental nature of the United Nations in today's world, but also for calling on all members of the international community to put an end to zero-sum games, cold-War era or



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

supremacist mentalities, punitive, divisive or confrontational approaches, provocative actions or double standards, the deepening of divisions or the imposition of visions and agendas of dubious nature, and to, instead, bet once and for all on win-win cooperation, on engagement in good faith, and on mutual accommodation with a view to bridging positions and forging broad consensus. This, we believe, is the best path for ensuring the effective implementation of commitments and decisions we adopt, for achieving the goals and purposes foreseen in the UN Charter, and for unleashing the great power of multilateralism.

Mr. President,

13. To conclude, today, as we commemorate the “International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace”, we reaffirm our confidence that multilateralism and diplomacy can reinforce the advancement of the three pillars of the United Nations, while reiterating that we will spare no effort in upholding the UN Charter and its tenets, which are all indispensable not only for fostering international peace and security, the rule of law, economic development and social progress, but also for overcoming both the ongoing global multifaceted crisis and the common challenges humanity as a whole is currently facing.

I thank you, Mr. President.