



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

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E. MR. YVAN GIL PINTO, MINISTER
OF THE PEOPLE'S POWER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA, DURING THE HIGH-LEVEL
MEETING TO COMMEMORATE THE 35th ANNIVERSARY OF THE
"DECLARATION ON THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT"**

Geneva, 28 February 2023

Mr. President,

1. It is an honor for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to take the floor on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations; a Group of Friends comprised of 20 Member States, that is based in New York, and that looks very much forward to expanding its presence and scope of action, including here in Geneva.
2. At the outset, allow us to welcome the convening of this not only important, but also very much timely High-Level Commemorative Meeting, especially at a time when we are at a halfway point for the attainment of the Goals set in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, while also conveying our appreciation to all panelists for their much valuable presentations.

Mr. President,

3. The Group of Friends attaches great importance to promoting and protecting all human rights, both individual and collective, for all, without distinction of levels or categories. In this context, the right to development represents one of the peoples' rights whose realization and enjoyment is most urgent, especially as the sustained and historical economic and social inequalities between the countries of the Global South and the North continue to expand. Such inequalities require reaffirming more than ever the transcendence of the right to development, which is enshrined in the very spirit of the UN Charter, as an inalienable human right that must be both guaranteed by all States and recognized as such by the International Human Rights System.
4. We consider that part of the gaps that exist to date, between developed and developing countries, are the result, among others, of the unequal and unjust exploitation of the vast natural resources of the countries of the South, obtained fundamentally in an advantageous manner; a situation that has consolidated over time a system of international relations in which the concentration of wealth in a



few hands predominates, resulting in an inequitable economic order that is at the core of the persistence, among others, of poverty, hunger and social, economic and technological inequalities, as well as turmoil and instability in the world.

5. In addition, the fact that certain developed countries insist on claiming non-existent exceptionalisms for the purpose of exerting cultural, economic, social and political domination over those who have sovereignly and freely decided to control their own destiny and define their own systems. Such practices and approaches have also contributed to widening even more the gap between the North and the South, which has ultimately driven over 80% of the global population to live in poverty, while clearly disowning their right to development.
6. Perhaps one of the most illustrative examples of such a supremacist mindset, is the illegal imposition of unilateral coercive measures, which not only violate the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, as well as the norms of international law, but also pose an obstacle to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, while representing a deliberate attack on the right to development of over one-third of humanity, as their ulterior objective is to cause pain and suffering as a means for advancing agendas of dubious nature. We cannot overemphasize, in this regard, the importance and urgency of lifting all unilateral coercive measures, in order to ensure, among others, both the realization of the right to development and the timely attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially mindful of the fact that development is a prerequisite for global peace.

Mr. President,

7. Since the promulgation of the Declaration on the Right to Development in December 1986, indeed, significant progress has been made in this area. Nevertheless, a long way is still ahead of us, especially for adopting once and for all a legally binding international instrument on the Right to Development. In this context, we reaffirm that the realization of the right to development requires full respect for the principles of international law concerning friendly relations and cooperation among States, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and we call on the responsible members of the international community to accelerate efforts towards the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including through a peoples-centered and gender-sensitive approach, that is respectful of human rights and has a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind.



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8. At last, and while firmly committed to our common mission of ensuring that development be fully recognized as a universal, indivisible and inalienable human right for all, our Group of Friends concludes by stressing its determination to support, with a sense of priority and urgency, each and every endeavor towards that end.

I thank you, Mr. President.