



**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E. MS. SOPHIA TESFAMARIAM,
AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE STATE OF
ERITREA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, DURING THE DEBATE ON
AGENDA ITEM 38, ENTITLED “NECESSITY OF ENDING THE
ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL EMBARGO IMPOSED BY
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AGAINST CUBA”, WITHIN THE
FRAMEWORK OF THE PLENARY OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

New York, 01 November 2023

Mr. President,

1. The State of Eritrea has the honor to take the floor on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

2. For our Group, the consideration of this issue is of crucial importance in terms of the endeavor that unites us: to achieve strict respect for the purposes and principles of this Organization, as enshrined in the Charter.
3. The unjust and abusive blockade against Cuba constitutes, without a doubt, one of the most serious, prolonged and systematic violations of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.
4. The General Assembly of the United Nations has demanded consistently and overwhelmingly, during the past three decades, the end of the blockade against Cuba. However, the effects of this policy on the Cuban people have just been strengthened in recent years to decimate the Cuban Revolution.
5. Thirty resolutions approved by this General Assembly have not been enough for the removal of the blockade. Thirty years in which the message has been clear: the Cuban people has the right to build their own future free from any kind of interferences or pressures. Every day the blockade continues to exist represents a shame on the moral authority of this Organization, a shame on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and a shame for multilateralism itself.
6. The blockade against Cuba, in addition to being morally and politically unacceptable, by attempting to subjugate a small peaceful and supportive country

by means of extreme pressures, transgresses the very foundations of this Organization.

Mr. President,

7. Article I of the UN Charter states, as one of its purposes, "to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples".
8. However, the blockade not only violates the right of Cubans to conduct their affairs in a sovereign manner, without interference, but also restricts the other States of the world from freely developing their commercial ties with Cuba.
9. Any nation in the world, rich or poor, is exposed to reprisals by the U.S. authorities if it maintains economic relations with Cuba. This punitive and extraterritorial nature of the blockade has been reinforced as never before after the full application of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act in May 2019, which has opened up the possibility of filing lawsuits in U.S. courts against international companies operating with properties nationalized by the Cuban State.
10. Being a fundamental piece in the declared purpose of successive governments of the United States to undermine the social project of the Cuban Revolution, the blockade threatens the political independence of Cuba, which is contrary to what is advocated in Article 2 of the Charter on relations among the Members of the Organization.

Mr. President,

11. The categorization of Cuba by the United States as country that sponsors terrorism is one of the biggest calumnies that have ever been set on any nation to curtail its stability. Cuba exports solidarity, not violence. Since 1963, this small country has been showing to the world the true meaning of cooperation by sending countless medical brigades to communities in need. Cuba has also hosted in its own territory hundreds of youngsters that go there to become professionals so needed in their homelands.
12. The inclusion of Cuba in the infamous list of sponsors of terrorism is not simply an absurd rhetoric. This is one of the most harmful measures in force to multiply the effects of the blockade. Because of this labeling, Cuba has encountered even harder challenges to carry out international banking transactions, receive investments or apply for credits. This has even provoked the closure of bank

accounts to many Cuban diplomatic missions across the world, in violation of the Vienna Convention for Diplomatic Relations. Therefore, we call for the immediate removal of Cuba from this list, where it should never had to be included.

Mr. President,

13. Year after year, the reports of the Secretary-General presented under this item illustrate the numerous and sensitive affectations caused by the blockade to the Cuban population. There are children and young people who suffer these impacts, mothers and the elderly who live in deprivation and are victims of a harmful and inhumane blockade, driven by political motivations.
14. Article 13 of the UN Charter confers on this Assembly, among its functions and powers, the promotion of international cooperation in the economic, social, cultural, educational and health fields.
15. Given that the blockade against Cuba is a major impediment to the achievement of this objective, as well as an obstacle to increasing the valuable contribution that Cuba can make to international cooperation, the General Assembly will be failing in its functions until this harmful policy is eliminated.
16. We express our solidarity with the people and the Government of Cuba, we demand the immediate and unconditional end of the blockade and we call upon all Member States of the Organization to support once again the draft resolution to be submitted by the Cuban delegation.

I thank you, Mr. President.