



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

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY THE DELEGATION OF THE BOLIVARIAN  
REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA, DURING THE JOINT GENERAL DEBATE  
ON AGENDA ITEMS 21 AND 23, ENTITLED “ERADICATION OF  
POVERTY AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT ISSUES” AND  
“AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD SECURITY AND  
NUTRITION”, RESPECTIVELY, WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE  
SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

*New York, 11 October 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.

**Mr. President,**

2. The eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions and putting an end to hunger worldwide have for long been a top priority for the international community. They are both at the core of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which continues to be our internationally agreed roadmap not only for achieving more peaceful, just and inclusive societies, but also for overcoming, through collective and concerted actions, and on the basis of a greater sense of unity, cooperation and solidarity, the common challenges we currently face towards the realization of the inalienable right to development of our peoples.
3. Nevertheless, we must be humble enough to recognize that, for one reason or another, we are currently off track and even moving further away from achieving these noble and much longed for goals. Facts and data prove so. According to the most recent estimates, 670 million people, or about 8.4 per cent of the global population, could still be living in extreme poverty at the end of 2022, while an estimated 691 to 783 million people, or 9.2 percent of the world's population, currently experience hunger. This should give us a rather gloom picture of the current state of affairs worldwide. This should be a wake-up call and a confirmation that we ought to change the path, and we ought to do it now.

**Mr. President,**



4. We are still facing the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, which include, among others, the reversal of many of the hard-won achievements in the field of development, particularly in the Global South.
5. Moreover, we cannot ignore the impact of other pre-existing challenges, such as climate change, or the fact that the world is currently facing a multifaceted crisis that has various dimensions and an impact, among others, on the global economy, on supply chains and global transportation costs, and which is happening at a time when we are all still grappling with protracted conflicts and injustices, as well as with a slow recovery from the pandemic.
6. In this regard, we also seize this opportunity to express our deep concern at the potential impact of geopolitical tensions around the world on the challenges humanity is facing nowadays, particularly in the fields of poverty and hunger eradication; a reality that is not only exacerbating already difficult socioeconomic conditions, but that is also fueling greater uncertainty and largely affecting commodity markets, especially food, fertilizers, energy and other goods and services necessary for ensuring, among others, the right to adequate food and the attainment of SDG 2.

**Mr. President,**

7. That being said, we shall recognize that there is, however, a different pandemic that is exacerbating all these challenges and undermining national efforts in favor of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the attainment of the goals referred to the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, as well as to ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture. We refer to the pandemic of unilateralism, which is marked by the continued promulgation and implementation of unilateral coercive measures, in flagrant violation of the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law.
8. The Member States of our Group of Friend will be clear in this context: unilateral coercive measures, given their wide scope, extraterritorial implications and systemic nature, are deliberately exacerbating the multifaceted crisis humanity is facing today and will continue not only to negatively impact global economy as a whole, but also to cause and prolong human suffering around the world, unless a complete and immediate end is put to all these illegal measures, that would then allow all nations to fully pursue their productive potentials and contribute to the overcoming of current challenges, including through the stabilization of certain



basic commodities, including food and fertilizers. We shall all be engaged alike to be part of the solution, for we are more than able and willing to do our part.

9. The illegal application of unilateral coercive measures, which are aimed at targeting civilian populations as part of a widespread and systematic policy that ultimately results in untold sufferings and crimes against humanity, impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly, but not exclusively, in developing countries, while also having a negative impact on the full enjoyment and realization of human rights. In other words, not only do they represent a deliberate attack against the right to development, but they also create and aggravate the conditions for poverty and inequality in targeted countries, while making it nearly impossible, for example, to purchase, among others, equipment, software, hardware or spare parts for the agricultural and food industry development of nations subjected to such *de facto* blockades.

**Mr. President,**

10. Allow us, in this context, to recall that the World Health Organization (WHO) has acknowledged that the application of unilateral coercive measures put at risk global food security. Similarly, in a joint statement issued back in July 2022 by the Heads of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank Group, the World Food Programme (WFP), and the World Trade Organization (WTO) affirmed that these kinds of restrictive measures only contribute to the rise of food prices; in other words, their elimination would only contribute towards ongoing international efforts to address the current food security crisis.
11. Moreover, we also seize this opportunity to highlight the need to improve the global food and agriculture governance system, focusing on increasing the representation, voice and decision-making power of developing countries, removing the restrictions of unilateral coercive measures on food and fertilizers' production and exports, and working together to build a safe, stable, unimpeded, efficient, open, inclusive, and mutually beneficial food supply chain system, as well as a fairer and more reasonable international food trade order. This would be essential, among others, for keeping trade channels and markets open for the movement of food, fertilizers and other agricultural inputs and outputs.
12. Furthermore, we take note of the Secretary-General's report entitled "Making Food Systems Work for People and Planet: UN Food Systems Summit +2". In that regard, we regret that such a report fails to address the impact of illegal unilateral coercive measures in the promotion of sustainable and resilient agriculture and



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food systems, which are, indeed, key drivers of sustainable development, and, thus, should compel us to ensure that all facilities are provided for fostering proper and sufficient long-term investment in this fields.

13. We conclude by alerting that the path for successfully addressing and overcoming the current challenges that humanity is facing as a whole, including with regards to the attainment of the SDGs, particularly 1 and 2, is not the continued application of unilateral coercive measures or their expansion, nor the imposition of unjustified and arbitrary trade restrictions, including tariff and non-tariff barriers, but the adoption of joint, effective, inclusive and innovative measures that, in strict adherence to the very tenets of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law, allow us together to surpass, through greater solidarity and cooperation, this current global multifaceted crisis that, be it for scarcity or inflation, threatens us all today, particularly hundreds of millions of people in the developing world. It is our moral responsibility with current and future generations to correct the path, and to it now.

I thank you, Mr. President.