



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

**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 GENERAL DEBATE OF THE “SEVENTH SESSION OF
THE EXPERT MECHANISM ON THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT”**

New York, 03 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 express our gratitude to the Independent Experts on the Right to Development, including you, Mr. President, as well as for your continued dedication and perseverance in researching, disseminating thematic studies and raising awareness on the Human Right to Development, pursuant to the mandate entrusted by the Human Rights Council. The role of the Expert Mechanism becomes even more complex and relevant amid the intricate path to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a world that remains plagued with deep inequalities between the Global South and the North, which gives it an even higher value and sense of urgency to the realization of its mandate.
3. Last February, within the framework of the 52nd session of the Human Rights Council, a high-level meeting was held to Commemorate the 35th Anniversary of the “Declaration on the Right to Development”, at which States, the United Nations System, leading academics, and other relevant actors had the opportunity to reaffirm their unequivocal commitment to the effective realization of the right to development, including through the adoption of concrete measures for that purpose. Occasions such as that one, as well as the one that brings us together today, demonstrate the desideratum of the responsible members of the international community for an action-oriented reflection, allowing us all to overcome the remaining barriers and obstacles for both realizing and implementing the right to development and fully understanding it as an inalienable human right.

Mr. President,



4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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.



8. Other unfounded unilateral actions, which are inconsistent with both the Charter of the United Nations and international law, such as the unilateral preparation of lists arbitrarily accusing States of allegedly sponsoring terrorism, hinder the full enjoyment of the right to development and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in accused States, by imposing obstacles to their international trade and financial operations, while causing harmful impacts on their income sources and disruptions in their economic and social performance.

Mr. President,

9. 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.
10. 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. We therefore renew not only our support for the institutional work carried out by the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development, since its establishment in 2019, but also our determination to continue engaging in an active and constructive manner until this inalienable human right is realized and enjoyed by all peoples, in every corner of the world, honoring our pledge of leaving no one behind.

I thank you, Mr. President.