



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

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E. MR. SAMUEL MONCADA,
AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA TO THE UNITED NATIONS,
DURING THE INFORMAL MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN
CONNECTION WITH RESOLUTION A/RES/78/222, ENTITLED
“SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC”**

New York, 25 April 2024

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, which, from the very outset, stresses that its participation in today's meeting should in no way be construed as an endorsement of this informal meeting, especially bearing in mind that General Assembly resolution 78/222 was neither adopted by consensus, nor does it adhere to the very purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.
2. In this context, we seize this opportunity to reiterate both our serious concerns on the increasing threats against the Charter of the United Nations and the urgent need to reaffirm and defend its purposes and principles, as a guarantee of peace and balance in the international order, on the basis of a spirit of inclusivity, respect for diversity, national sovereignty, for the legal equality of States, for the peaceful settlement of disputes, for social progress, and for the attainment of human rights.

Mr. President,

3. The Member States of our Group of Friends attach utmost importance to the promotion and protection of **all** human rights, both individual and collective, without distinction of levels or categories, and also consider that their promotion and protection are strengthened on the basis of dialogue and cooperation, in accordance with the principles of impartiality, objectivity, transparency, non-selectivity, non-politicization and non-confrontation. They reiterate their concern over the growing politicization of human rights and their weaponization against States, including some from our grouping, with the purpose of meddling into their internal affairs and advancing agendas of dubious nature, a practice that does not respond to the true spirit of human rights. Similarly, we express our concern at attempts to even redefine human rights, in an effort to categorize countries,



divide the international community and ignore global political, economic, social and cultural diversity.

4. In this context, we stress our serious concern at the proliferation of unilateral, politicized and country-specific mechanisms that purport to conduct an impartial assessment of the human rights situation in specific States, when their real intention is to weaponize human rights against sovereign States and national governments, with the purpose of, among others, meddling into their internal affairs. Such mechanisms neither respond to the true spirit of human rights, nor do they enjoy the consent of the concerned State. These country-specific reports and resolutions are selective, politically motivated, divisive, and weaken human rights institutions, and, for this reason, we call for an end to such approaches.
5. Even after the non-consensual establishment of the so-called “Independent Institution”, the Member States of the Group of Friends are still concerned about the state of ambiguity surrounding the various aspects of the dubious “institution”, whether in terms of the parameters of its mandate and terms of references, its working methods, or the agendas of its partners, which poses serious concerns about the real intentions of those seeking to establish it, and contradicts with their claims of supporting and assisting Syria and promoting human rights.
6. In light of this reality, we cannot overemphasize the importance of dialogue, cooperation, engagement, and national ownership in every process whose real objective is the strengthening of human rights, both at the national and international levels. We also consider the issue of the Missing Persons to be of a purely humanitarian nature, and any relevant cases or concerns must be dealt with through the competent national legal and judicial frameworks.

Mr. President,

7. In the context of the Syrian Arab Republic and for the past 40 years, the entire Syrian people have been subjected to the illegal application of a set of unilateral coercive measures which have and continue to massively violate all their human rights, while causing great suffering and untold pains, as has been largely recorded, among others, by UN independent experts. The immediate, complete, and unconditional lifting of such cruel and illegal measures would be a first step in the right direction towards redressing the human rights in Syria, improving the humanitarian situation, and alleviating the prolonged suffering of the Syrian people.



8. Despite all those challenges and obstacles, however, we note the efforts of the government of the Syrian Arab Republic in this important field and many others, with the purpose of ensuring the wellbeing of its people. We call on the continuation of such efforts, as well as on the need to ensure that they are nationally owned, while stressing the primary role of the Syrian government and its institutions in this regard.

Mr. President,

9. The Member States of our Group of Friends are deeply concerned over the accelerating liquidity crisis for regular budget operations of the United Nations and the risk this poses to our Organization's ability to uphold its responsibilities towards those in desperate need of its aid and assistance. However, some Member States have decided to neglect the imminent dangers facing our peoples and those in more vulnerable situations around the world and, instead, seek to impose an additional financial burden on all Member States, through the United Nation's Regular Budget, amounting to three million dollars this year and approximately \$13 million in 2025, in order to finance the so-called "Institution".
10. We attach great importance to the role of the United Nations and are committed to ensuring adequate and sustainable financial resources to deliver on its core mandates. At the same time, we stress that the Organization's budget resources must be managed wisely and in the most effective and efficient possible manner, especially in light of the lack of funding and the ongoing liquidity crisis, particularly by directing the limited resources available to support humanitarian efforts, achieve development goals, and address the challenges facing developing countries, including the Syrian Arab Republic. Instead of wasting it on financing non-consensual and politicized mechanisms that only target specific countries.
11. Therefore, we emphasize our principled position in rejection of the establishment and cooperation with any mechanism or institution that does not serve the higher interests of the Syrian people; that does not count with the consent of the Syrian government; and that undermines the sacred principle of national ownership. This will only result in more politicization, to which this issue has been already exposed and still is, through reports of bodies and mechanisms that wanted to distance themselves from the humanitarian dimension, in order to render it a means of pressure on the Syrian government.
12. To conclude, the Group of Friends calls for an end to both the politicization and weaponization of human rights for the purpose of advancing narrow and self-serving agendas, as well as to any practice of double standards that undermine



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human rights and prevent a harmonious environment and progress in this field, while stressing that the continuation of such approaches and practices constitutes a flagrant violation of the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, which has committed us all to both promote respect for and assistance for the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.

I thank you, Mr. President.