



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

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR JOAQUÍN PÉREZ
AYESTARÁN, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA TO THE UNITED NATIONS,
DURING THE JOINT GENERAL DEBATE ON AGENDA ITEMS 22 AND
24, 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, 12 October 2022

Madam 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.

Madam 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 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. Today, more than 700 million people – that is, 10% of the global population – is living in extreme poverty, while more than 820 million people are affected by hunger worldwide. The situation is expected to worsen, according to reports from experts, with predictions of between 75 and 95 million additional people to be joining the list of those living in extreme poverty by 2022, as well as of serious risks that multiple famines may be declared in the very near future.

Madam President,



4. The COVID-19 pandemic has, indeed, exacerbated this reality, while simultaneously reversing many of the hard-won achievements in the field of development, particularly in the Global South. As a matter of fact, since the outbreak of the pandemic, back in March 2020, some 100 million people have been pushed into extreme poverty and over 160 million people have been added to those facing hunger, according to UN figures.
5. Similarly, we cannot ignore the impact of other pre-existing challenges, such as climate change, but also 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 prices, especially energy, fertilizers and food prices, precisely.

Madam President,

7. That being said, we shall recognize that there is a second and different pandemic that is also 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



stabilization and overcoming of current challenges. 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 unnecessary sufferings amounting to 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 or spare parts for the agricultural development of nations subjected to such *de facto* blockades.

Madam 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. In this vein, while saluting the initiative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to establish a Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, we also seize this opportunity to make an appeal to it to urgently assess and address in its future briefs the negative impact of unilateral sanctions on the current global crisis, including on its food, energy and finance dimensions, as well as on national efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and effectively advance towards the eradication of poverty and hunger.
12. 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



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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 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, Madam President.