



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 INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE
WITH THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN
RIGHTS, UNDER AGENDA ITEM 71, ENTITLED “PROMOTION AND
PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS”, WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF
THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

New York, 10 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.
2. We express our appreciation to H.E. Mr. Volker Türk for his presentation and updates. We reiterate our willingness to continue engaging in an active and constructive manner with your Office.

Mr. President,

3. From the very outset, we would like to pose a question to the High Commissioner, in reference to the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on national efforts aimed at ensuring Universal Health Coverage, as well as on national efforts to fight against the COVID-19 and other pandemics, including with regards to timely and effective access to vaccines, medical equipment and supplies, and on national efforts to fight against tuberculosis and other endemic diseases.
 - a. As you may be aware, throughout this year, there have been lengthy discussions on this subject, including on the basis of information that is of public domain and the very reports that have been issued by UN independent experts on this subject. Yet, the Political Declarations resulting from the recently held High-Level Meetings of the General Assembly on health-related issues blatantly disregarded this issue that is a day-to-day reality for over one third of humanity. Could you share with us your assessment of this situation, as well as any additional data compiled by your Office on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights?

Mr. President,



4. The Member States of our Group of Friends attach a supreme value to the promotion and protection of all human rights, both individuals and collectives, without distinction of levels or categories, and consider also that their promotion and protection is enhanced on the basis of dialogue and cooperation, in accordance with the principles of impartiality, objectivity, transparency, non-selectivity, non-politicization and non-confrontation, and within a framework of equality and mutual respect between States.
5. In this context, we note that the mandate of the OHCHR contains one of the highest responsibilities within the UN System for the realization of one of the three main pillars of our Organization, which is why it is of utmost importance that its endeavors are carried out not only in a responsible manner, but in one that does not attempt against the core values and principles previously referred to, in order to avoid that it be instrumentalized for attempting against the sovereignty of States or for interfering in the internal affairs of States, while ensuring that its credibility is in no way put at stake.
6. Consequently, we seize this opportunity to reiterate our categorical rejection of double standards in the field of human rights, as such an approach prevents a harmonious environment and progress in this field. Similarly, we also express our serious concern at the continued and growing proliferation of mechanisms and procedures that pretend to conduct “impartial” assessments of the human rights situation in specific States and which, in most cases, lack the due consent and participation of the concerned State, rely on sources of a secondary, tertiary or other nature that may be either biased or lack credibility, and respond to political agendas of dubious nature. In this context, it shall be noted that, in certain instances, some assessments of the OHCHR have even gone far beyond its mandate.
7. Additionally, we stress the importance of, on one hand, ensuring due respect and tolerance for the political, economic, social and cultural diversity that comprise our world, while, on other one, refraining from focusing on differences, with the sole intent of creating divisions, exacerbating the growing trends towards unilateral approaches and, ultimately, weakening the United Nations and all it represents.
8. To conclude, our Group of Friends insists that there shall be no other option but dialogue, cooperation, engagement and national ownership in each and every process that is truly aimed at strengthening human rights, at both the national and international levels, and that unilateral trends must be unequivocally rejected in all UN fora. At last, we also reaffirm our determination to continue working in an active



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and constructive manner towards the enhancement of the efficacy and reach of the UN Human Rights System.

I thank you, Mr. President.