



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 DEBATE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON AGENDA
ITEM 14, ENTITLED “CULTURE OF PEACE”**

New York, 02 May 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.

Mr. President,

2. The challenges on the global agenda for 2024 and beyond are immense and complex, perhaps even more so than in previous years. We are confronted with global multifaceted crisis, the enduring struggle against poverty, the pursuit of genuine equality, and multiple instabilities in economic and financial sectors, coupled, among others, with the struggle for food security. Additionally, the pressing issue of climate change, as well as natural disasters, demand our urgent action. Furthermore, achieving peace and security, in line with the purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, becomes even more critical as multilateralism faces continued threats from governments of those States that believe in their own exclusivity and seek to weaken and undermine mutually respectful multilateral cooperation by blatantly imposing their values on the whole world. These challenges require a unified and decisive response from the international community, in order to uphold and strengthen our collective commitment to an inclusive multilateralism.
3. The first and most urgent responsibility of the United Nations at this present time, in order to properly embrace a Culture of Peace, dialogue among civilizations, and intercultural and interreligious dialogue, lies in unequivocally condemning the indiscriminate attacks against the Palestinian people in Gaza, which have resulted in a carnage that continues to have a tragic human toll. It is imperative to achieve a lasting, sustainable, permanent and fully respected ceasefire in Gaza, along with the swift provision of humanitarian assistance and the promotion of economic and social development, which is key for fostering a lasting peace. Additionally, it is also crucial that those responsible for the crimes that have been committed against

the Palestinian people over more than 75 years be held accountable, in order to once and for all put an end to the prevailing cycle of impunity.

Mr. President,

4. Our Group of Friends considers that the Culture of Peace is synonymous to and encompasses, among others, the development of friendly relations among nations, based on respect for the principle of equal rights, the self-determination and sovereignty of our peoples, their egalitarian economic and social development, equal respect for human rights without distinction of classes or categories, as well as without politicization, weaponization or double standards of any kind, universal social justice, health and education for all, non-interference in internal affairs, cultural diversity, and believing in a world based on the values and ideals that inspired the establishment of the United Nations over 78 years ago, and which today are at risk of being diluted by extremist tendencies.
5. In this context, we seize this opportunity to reject the hegemonist and unilateral policies that affect international peace, security and stability, in a clear attempt to threaten the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as to undermine ongoing efforts towards the democratization of international relations and the strengthening of multilateralism and of a multipolar system, based, among others, on mutual respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, as well as on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, for the rule of law, diplomacy, political dialogue, tolerance, peaceful coexistence, respect for diversity of cultural, civilizational and religious backgrounds, inclusiveness, a culture of peace and non-violence, and due consideration for existing differences, all of which are essential for constructively and effectively working together on issues of common interest and concern.
6. As previously stated, the Culture of Peace is based, among others, on the sovereign equality of States, who are the international actors *par excellence* in the promotion of dialogue and cooperation among nations. For that reason, we ought to reiterate that the repeal of any unilateral coercive economic or political measure is an urgent demand that cannot be further postponed, mindful of the fact that such illegal measures have a negative impact on the individual and collective rights of over a third of humanity, while deliberately undermining the realization of the right to development, increasing poverty and inequality, and restricting access to essential goods, in clear contravention of the very tenets enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

7. The Member States of our Group of Friends commend the recent adoption of General Assembly resolution on “Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace”. The continued adoption of this resolution marks a historic milestone at the United Nations in promoting a culture of peace and combating Islamophobia, fascism, neo-Nazism, racism, racial discrimination, and xenophobia in all its forms and manifestations, including hate speech. These abhorrent expressions of disdain for human dignity, we must recall, have been intensified by an irresponsible approach to mass communication, which mistakenly claims on exercising the right for freedom of expression as a justification for this scourge, while neglecting special duties and responsibilities in this regard, inter alia, to respect the rights or reputations of others and to protect national security or public order, or of public health or morals.
8. In light of this reality, we also seize this opportunity to unequivocally condemn the desecration of the holy Quran by extremist groups, the defamation of religions, the glorification of Nazism, and the persecution and stigmatization of migrants, among other expressions of hate and intolerance. We firmly believe that fostering understanding and respect among different cultures and religions is of paramount importance in our shared pursuit of global peace and harmony at all levels.
9. To conclude, our Group of Friends reaffirms its commitment to continue working towards developing effective ways to combat intolerance, and to also continue working with the United Nations, in order to promote the values of and the effective implementation of the Declaration and Program of Action on a Culture of Peace. We remain committed to resolutely condemning hate speech and promoting intercultural and interreligious dialogue, practice of non-violence through education, dialogue and cooperation, and dialogue and diplomacy for peace, as a concrete means to achieve the ideal of a world where the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations are unconditionally respected; an ideal on which we shall never give up, despite the adversities of today’s polarized world.

I thank you, Mr. President.