



STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E. MR. HÉCTOR CONSTANT ROSALES, AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE IN GENEVA, DURING THE CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM 3, ENTITLED “GENERAL DISUSSION”, WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE 70th SESSION OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (UNCTAD)

Geneva, 19 June 2023

Mr. President,

1. It is an honor for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to speak on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations, except Cambodia, composed of 20 Members States, which has its headquarters in New York, and which is expanding its presence and scope of action here in Geneva, especially at UNCTAD.
2. The Group of Friends also wishes to acknowledge the annual report presented by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, H.E. Ms. Rebeca Gryspan, as well as her comments on other agenda items.

Mr. President,

3. As this is the first time that the Group of Friends is taking the floor at UNCTAD, allow me to take this opportunity to highlight some of the essential elements of the creation of the Group of Friends, contained in the joint statement dated 6 July 2021, which highlights as its primary purpose to preserve, promote and defend the primacy and validity of the Charter of the United Nations which, at the current international juncture, acquires a renewed and even more important value and relevance.
4. The Group's Objectives are as follows:
 - a. The Group of Friends, in our joint endeavor to make further progress towards the achievement of full respect for international law, will strive to preserve, promote and defend the primacy and validity of the Charter,



which, at the present international juncture, acquires a renewed and even more important value and relevance.

- b. The Group of Friends will strive to ensure complete, permanent and effective - and not selective or convenience-based - compliance with the obligations of the Charter and adherence to its letter and spirit, conscious that it is the most far-reaching and legitimate legal instrument in the world, which has prevented and will continue to prevent humanity from ever again enduring the horrors and unspeakable suffering brought about by the scourge of war.
 - c. The Group of Friends will serve as a platform, *inter alia*, to promote the prevalence of legality over force and to discuss and articulate possible ways and coordinate joint initiatives to promote respect for the principles of sovereignty, equality of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, peaceful settlement of disputes and refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, as enshrined in the Charter, as well as the values of dialogue, tolerance and solidarity, aware that all of these constitute the core of international relations and are necessary for peaceful coexistence among nations.
5. For our Group, the United Nations remains the best option to address, through peace and cooperation, the complex and emerging challenges and threats facing humanity. One of the critical aspects in ensuring the realization of the three pillars of the Organization and the satisfaction of the yearnings of our peoples, as well as the achievement of a peaceful and prosperous world and a just and equitable world order, is precisely to ensure compliance with and strict adherence to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter since it is the consolidation of friendly relations and cooperation among States that will guarantee peace, security, stability and development for the international community as a whole.

Mr. President,

6. The Group believes that UNCTAD must regain its leading role on the international scene, enabling it to address the needs and inequities that exist within countries. However, multilateralism, which is at the heart of the UN Charter, is currently under unprecedented attack, which in turn threatens world peace and security.
7. In this regard, we reiterate that the way to change this panorama is through the application of coordinated political solutions supported by multilateralism, as well as the strengthening of international cooperation, in which UNCTAD has been



called upon to play a stellar role, as stated in the Bridgetown Pact, agreed upon at the XV Conference.

8. We conclude by conveying the Group's support for this Organization and its readiness to work constructively with all Members to achieve common objectives, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to overcome the challenges facing the countries of the world, especially the developing and least developed countries.

I thank you, Mr. President.