

**STATEMENT OF THE GROUP OF FRIENDS IN DEFENSE OF THE
CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS DURING THE GENERAL
DEBATE OF THE 2023 SESSION OF THE “SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON
THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND ON THE
STRENGTHENING OF THE ROLE OF THE ORGANIZATION”**

New York, 21 February 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.

Mr. President,

2. The Group of Friends considers the Charter of the United Nations to be a milestone and a true act of faith in the best of humanity. It is the code of conduct that has ruled international relations between States for the past seventy-eight years, based on timeless principles that, in addition to being the basis of international law, remain today as relevant as they were in 1945.
3. We therefore call upon countries to uphold the international system with the United Nations at its core, the international order underpinned by international law, and the basic norms of international relations based on the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. In this context, we also believe that ensuring compliance with and strict adherence to both the letter and the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations is fundamental to ensuring the realization of the three pillars of our Organization, as well as to advancing towards the establishment of a more peaceful and prosperous world and a truly just and equitable world order.
4. Against this background, we express our serious concern at the current and growing threats to the Charter of the United Nations. We refer, among others, to the growing resort to unilateralism; to attacks against multilateralism; to claims of non-existent exceptionalism; to attempts to ignore and even replace the purposes and principles enshrined in the UN Charter with a new set of so-called “rules” that have never been discussed in an inclusive or transparent manner; and to selective approaches or accommodative interpretations of the provisions of the UN Charter.



5. These practices in no way contribute to addressing the complex, emerging and common challenges facing humanity today through peaceful means and cooperation. On the contrary, such practices contribute to increasing uncertainty, instability, mistrust and tensions around the world, especially as they attempt to ignore the legitimate concerns that others may have. Hence, we renew our call for redoubling efforts towards the achievement of balanced, effective and sustainable solutions, rooted in international law, for redressing situations in which differences or conflicts may arise.

Mr. President,

6. The Group of Friends attaches great importance to the work of the Special Committee, aware that it can play an active and constructive role in strengthening the capacities of the United Nations to achieve its purposes, including by enhancing the role of the Organization, to increase its effectiveness and develop its full potential; a process that should undoubtedly be advanced based on the principles and procedures provided for in the Charter of the United Nations itself.
7. We believe that the annual thematic debates on peaceful means of dispute settlement can contribute to more efficient and effective use of such peaceful means, while promoting the culture of peace among the Member States. In this context, we look forward to the deliberations that will take place during this session of the Special Committee, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 77/109.
8. In this regard, while reaffirming our commitment to efforts to ensure the maintenance of international peace and security and the peaceful settlement of disputes, we take this opportunity to convey our concern about the lack of willingness of some Member States to engage in a meaningful discussion to consider the valuable proposals that have for long been before this Special Committee and that have been put forward to a large extent precisely by some of the members of our Group of Friends, as responsible members of the international community. We call upon those States to give concrete signs of their political will for the effective implementation of the mandate of the Special Committee so that we can achieve an outcome as successful as that of 1982 when the historic Manila Declaration was adopted.
9. Moreover, we seize this opportunity to briefly refer to the ongoing challenges with regards to the implementation of the Agreement regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, which has resulted in obstacles that continue to deliberately



limit the ability of certain Member States to effectively discharge their responsibilities and, thus, fulfill the purposes of the Organization. In this context, we consider that this Special Committee could play a positive role in reviewing such concerning situation, in light of its implications to the Charter of the United Nations and the role of the Organization, particularly to the principle of sovereign equality of States, as well as the very provisions included in said Agreement for pursuing a judicial settlement when any dispute of its interpretation or application arises and has not been resolved by negotiation in a reasonable and finite period of time, which is certainly the case at this time.

10. The Group of Friends commits itself to spare no effort to preserve, promote and defend the prevalence and validity of the Charter of the United Nations. We reiterate our firm and principled position of support and adherence to its tenets, which are not only the legally binding rules agreed upon by all members of the international community to govern our system of international relations, but are also indispensable for the promotion of international peace and security, the rule of law, economic development and social progress for all. We must not lose sight of this, as we redouble our collective efforts to advance our shared objectives and ensure that no one is left behind, while fulfilling the promise of the UN Charter.
11. We conclude at last by both renewing our commitment and urging all responsible members of the international community for faithfully practicing a true multilateralism, in the best spirit of San Francisco, and in which all countries, big or small, are engaged alike, as each national contribution is essential for achieving the goals that motivated the establishment of our Organization in 1945 and for overcoming the current global multifaceted crisis and the common challenges humanity as a whole is currently facing.

I thank you, Mr. President.