



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

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E. MR. JOAQUÍN PÉREZ AYESTARÁN,
AMBASSADOR, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA TO THE UNITED NATIONS,
DURING THE JOINT GENERAL DEBATE ON DECOLONIZATION
ITEMS, WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE OF
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

New York, 14 October 2024

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.
2. This being the first time we take the floor at this current session, allow us at the very outset to convey our best wishes to you, as you assume the Chairmanship of the Fourth Committee, as well as to the other members of the Bureau, while looking forward to working closely throughout this 79th Session of the General Assembly. Rest assured of the constructive and active engagement of our delegations.

Madam President,

3. Decolonization is one of those files in which the United Nations has indeed made great progress. There are multiple success stories, as demonstrated by the expansion of the membership of our Organization. Today we are a total of 193 Member States, in comparison to 51, when the United Nations was established back in 1945. Nevertheless, the task remains uncompleted: 17 non-self-governing territories, and others which have not yet attained independence, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), still await on us for ensuring that their inalienable right to self-determination is fully realized. Next year we will commemorate sixty-fifth (65) anniversary of the adoption of that very landmark General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). Nevertheless, much still remains to be done, in order to truly and effectively achieve the eradication of colonialism in all its forms and manifestations.
4. In this context, we seize this opportunity, from the very outset, to reiterate our historic and principled positions on decolonization items, to express our firm adherence to the provisions of the “Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples”, and, most importantly, to reaffirm our



unwavering moral and political commitment with the full realization of the inalienable rights of each and every Non-Self-Governing Territory, while calling on the Occupying and Administering Powers to ensure full compliance with relevant UN resolutions, in order to finally reach a lasting and comprehensive solution to each of these pending questions.

5. The Member States of our Group of Friends are conscious, though, that the only way to move forward in this important field is if all concerned parties, both Administering and Occupying Powers and Non-Self-Governing Territories, renew their commitment and political will towards that end. We ought to recognize that the yearns for freedom and justice of millions of people have already been protracted for way too long.
6. Similarly, we also seize this opportunity to renew our call to the Administering and Occupying Powers to respect the inalienable right of all territories under their administration and occupation to their natural resources, as well as their right to establish and maintain control over their current and future exploitation. Likewise, we urge the Administering and Occupying Powers to avoid the pursuance of economic or other activities, including of a military nature, that have the potential to negatively affect the interests and well-being of the peoples of said territories.
7. Moreover, we call upon colonialist countries to assume their responsibilities for and pay full compensation for the economic, social and cultural consequences of their occupation, bearing in mind the right of all people who were or are still subjected to colonial rule or occupation to receive fair compensation for the human and material losses they suffered.

Madam President,

8. Just a couple of months ago we celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the independence of Timor-Leste, which is the last success story of the United Nations in the field of decolonization. Today, when we find ourselves immersed in the Fourth International Decade for the Elimination of Colonialism, we have to ask ourselves: how much more time has to pass before the yearns and legitimate aspirations for peace, justice, self-determination and freedom of the peoples of the 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories and others which have not yet attained independence, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), and that still remain in our agenda can be carried out? How many more decades do we have to declare before we, once and for all, eliminate colonialism in all its forms and manifestations?



9. We underline, in this context, that the very existence of colonialism in any form or manifestation, as well as its modern neocolonial practices, including economic exploitation, unilateral coercive measures, limitation of access to new technologies and medical needs and other attempts to hinder the full and effective realization of their right to development, as well as attempts to eradicate variety of cultures and civilizations, and other forms of hegemonism and restraint of the freedom of national development, are incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law. We therefore express our categorical rejection of the blatant and detrimental use of colonial and modern neocolonial practices in international relations.
10. Moreover, it is worth recalling that the current International Decade for the Elimination of Colonialism is scheduled to end in the year 2030, when the international community should have achieved the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At that time, we will have to account, among others, on the progress made towards, as stated in General Assembly resolution 70/1, the removal of “the obstacles to the full realization of the right to self-determination of peoples living under colonial or foreign occupation”. Bearing in mind that the promise is, and continues to be, to leave no one behind, and that colonialism adversely affects the economic and social development of peoples, as well as the full enjoyment of their human rights, we hope that this synchrony can be seized for effectively advancing in the decolonization agenda during the seven (07) years ahead of us.

Madam President,

11. We reaffirm our responsibility, insofar as responsible members of the international community, towards the people of the Western Sahara, Puerto Rico and Palestine, among others, in their struggle for the exercise of their inalienable rights, as foreseen in the Charter of the United Nations and, as applicable, in the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).
12. We are also determined to promoting efforts, within the framework of the United Nations, to advance the cause of decolonization and to putting an end to colonialism in all its forms and manifestations, including as part of our commitment to raising awareness of the impact of colonialism, transatlantic slave trade and its lasting consequences, which nowadays are amplified by an escalation and proliferation of modern neocolonial practices that seek to exert domination, particularly over independent and sovereign nations.
13. It is precisely in that context that we have presented a resolution entitled “Elimination of Colonialism in All its Forms and Manifestations”, within the



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framework of the C-24, which will be up for action in this main Committee within the coming days, under agenda item 58. This text, among others, seeks to advance consultations towards the establishment of 14 December as the “International Day against Colonialism in all its forms and manifestations” , which shall provide an annual day for both reflection on the consequences and remembrance of all victims of colonialism. It would also request the Secretary-General, in close consultations with relevant international, regional and sub-regional organizations, to develop an outreach programme to mobilize educational institutions and civil society to expand their activities in the field of remembrance of colonialism, and would also set a new agenda item for the upcoming session. We trust the adoption of that resolution will be a step in the right direction, and thank in advance all your delegations for their much valuable support to this principled text.

14. To conclude, while reaffirming our principled position under international law and in accordance with relevant UN resolutions on the legitimacy of the struggle of people under colonial or alien domination and foreign occupation for self-determination, we reiterate our full support and solidarity with all the peoples that still today, in the midst of the 21st Century, remain under colonial or alien domination and foreign occupation, and join them in their struggle for the realization of their inalienable right to self-determination. We renew our pledge to settling once and for all our pending debt with humanity regarding the definitive conclusion of the decolonization process around the world, mindful of our moral duty to ensure that decolonization continues to be one of the top priorities of the United Nations.

I thank you, Madam President.