

**DRAFT POLITICAL DECLARATION FOR THE SECOND MEETING OF
NATIONAL COORDINATORS OF THE “GROUP OF FRIENDS IN
DEFENSE OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS”**

1. We, the National Coordinators of the members of the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations, met in Caracas, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, in order to discuss, among others, ways and means to advance our common endeavors, aimed at preserving, promoting and defending the prevalence and validity of the Charter of the United Nations, both in its letter and spirit, and to further improve our coordination on issues of common interest and concern.
2. We also undertook an assessment of recent developments in the international arena, including of the persistent and ever increasing challenges and threats to the Charter of the United Nations, as well as to exchange views on existing, new and emerging threats and challenges, including those derived from the latest developments in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and to continue our permanent discussion on action-oriented measures that could serve the purpose of realizing our grouping’s objectives, while simultaneously both advancing our common interests and positions and fully galvanizing its powerful potential at all relevant international fora.
3. We recall the political declarations previously adopted by our grouping, as well as the positions contained in the various joint statements and communiqués issued on various specific items – of which we undertook an assessment with regards to the progress made towards the implementation of their relevant provisions –, and reiterate our firm and full commitment to the Charter of the United Nations, mindful of the fact that the principles and purposes contained therein remain timeless, universal and that they are all indispensable not only for preserving and promoting international peace and security, the rule of law, economic development and social progress, as well as human rights for all, but also for achieving a more peaceful, prosperous, just and equitable world, and a system based, precisely, on the rules it contains.
4. We continue to follow closely and with great concern the tragic developments in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, where a carnage continues to be indiscriminately perpetrated against the Palestinian people, while, at the same time, mass grave sites have now started to be found in Gaza, and as the Palestinian people continues to be

forcibly displaced from their homeland. We condemn the Occupying Power's decision to blatantly disregard and systematically violate its legally binding obligations, including those derived from the norms of international humanitarian law, as well as from the multiple Security Council resolutions on the Question of Palestine – which are legally binding by virtue of Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations – and the recent orders of provisional measures issued by the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

5. We, while acknowledging that the protracted occupation of the State of Palestine is the main source of instability and conflict in the Middle East region, reaffirm our demand for an immediate, permanent and fully respected ceasefire and a halt to all acts of violence, atrocities and hostilities, particularly those directed against civilians, including women and children, confident that this will be a step in the right direction for putting an end to the months of collective punishment and suffering endured by the Palestinian civilian population, and widespread destruction, while allowing for humanitarian actors on the ground, including United Nations Specialized Agencies, led by UNRWA, to provide rapid and unhindered support and assistance to those in desperate need, including to alleviate the acute food insecurity affecting the entire population and the horrific conditions of famine in northern Gaza. In this context, we further demand the removal of all current impediments for the delivery, in a consistent, safe and at scale manner, of humanitarian aid critically needed to alleviate the ongoing catastrophe on the ground, and for which it is also necessary to guarantee an environment in which humanitarian actors can carry their mission safely and effectively, without obstructions, threats and harassment, as stipulated by international humanitarian law. We also demand an end to the provision of means to the Occupying Power, which ultimately only further prolong the human suffering of the Palestinian people and foster the perpetuation of this already protracted tragedy.
6. We further reaffirm our unwavering support for the long-overdue admission of the State of Palestine as a full Member State of the United Nations and to enable it to take its rightful place among the community of nations. We regret the latest developments in this regard, as a result of the negative vote casted on 18 April 2024 by a permanent member of the Security Council, the United States of America, which has prevented that body from fulfilling its responsibilities in this regard, in total contradiction to the overwhelming call for the realization of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and for preserving a political horizon to achieve a just and lasting solution to the Question of Palestine, in accordance with international law and the relevant UN resolutions, including the realization of the independence and

sovereignty of the State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with the pre-1967 lines. We remain committed, however, to making this aspiration a reality, insofar the admission of the State of Palestine to the United Nations constitutes an important expression of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and independence, and remain ready to support any effective and lasting initiative aimed at addressing this question, including within the context of the General Assembly. We welcome, in this connection, the recent adoption of General Assembly resolution A/RES/ES-10/23, and call on the Security Council to shoulder its responsibility and reconsider favorably the question of the request of the State of Palestine for admission to membership in the United Nations, in strict conformity with article 4 of the UN Charter.

7. We, in line with our principled and historic positions, reaffirm our firm commitment to the just cause of Palestine, as well as our unwavering solidarity with the Palestinian people in their ongoing struggle to achieve their inalienable rights, freedom and justice. We further reaffirm our full and continued support to all efforts aimed at ending the grave injustice inflicted on the Palestinian people since the 1948 *Nakba*. We also remain committed to strengthening our efforts, including active engagement in international initiatives, aimed at ending the illegal Israeli occupation and at achieving the independence of the State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem / Al-Quds Al-Shariff as its capital; the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including to self-determination and freedom; and a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the Question of Palestine in all its aspects, including for the plight of the Palestine refugees and the realization of their right to return, in accordance with international law, the relevant UN resolutions and the Charter of the United Nations.
8. We express our serious concern at the continued attempts of the Occupying Power to ignite and explode the Middle East region, as demonstrated, among others, by its reiterated aggressions against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic, coupled with the non-stop threats against Lebanon, which demonstrate an intent to expand its illegal aggressions in the region, at the expense of the human rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories. We cannot overemphasize, that a further dangerous destabilization of the situation must be prevented, in order to prevent a spillover effect into the entire Middle East region which will have grave repercussions and ultimately unchain a full-scale regional conflict with ramifications on international peace and security. We call on all relevant actors to strictly abide by the norms of international law



and to exercise maximum restraint, while highlighting that the realization of a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the Question of Palestine in all its aspects will serve the purpose of fostering durable peace, security and stability in the Middle East and thereby international peace and security.

9. We stress that establishing peace in the Middle East requires Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, including the occupied Syrian Arab Golan, and implementing relevant United Nations resolutions, most notably Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and 497 (1981), which reaffirmed that the acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, and that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan is null and void and without international legal effect.
10. We reaffirm the principle of the inviolability of diplomatic and consular premises and personnel must be respected in all cases, in accordance with international law, and categorically condemn recent attacks and assaults against diplomatic and consular premises and personnel, including the one recently carried out against the Iranian diplomatic premises in Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic, on 01 April 2024. We further reaffirm the provisions of the Special Communiqué issued on 03 April 2024 and stress that violations of this principle jeopardize the fulfillment of the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.
11. We renew our serious concern at the growing resort to unilateralism, including group unilateralism, and at the attempts to undermine the intergovernmental nature of the United Nations, including through multi-stakeholder approaches, to the detriment, not only of true multilateralism, but, also, of genuine international cooperation and solidarity, which must be strengthened now, more than ever, as the world grapples with a multifaceted global crisis. In this context, we emphasize that multilateralism is essential, in order to forge collective, inclusive and effective solutions to the common challenges and threats of the 21st century, as well as for the realization of the aspirations of our peoples. Thus, we reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the strengthening and revitalization of an inclusive multilateralism, with the United Nations at its center.
12. We recognize that, since its establishment, in 2021, the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations has made significant progress in advancing its objectives, both in New York and Geneva, and in

implementing its annual Programme of Work, and, in that context, express our appreciation to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for its leadership and coordination efforts.

13. We renew our determination to redouble efforts aimed at positioning our Group of Friends as an active and key player at all relevant international forums and intergovernmental processes, including in the context of the United Nations System, as part of our continued endeavors for ensuring respect for and adherence to the Charter of the United Nations, in both its letter and spirit. In this context, we reiterate our attachment to the work of the “Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the strengthening of the role of the Organization”, 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, within the framework of a process that should undoubtedly be advanced based on the principles and procedures provided for in the Charter of the United Nations itself.
14. We recognize that development remains the top priority for developing countries and also that the world today is still far away in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and that it is even off track for meeting the SDGs on time, while many of the hard-won achievements in the development field have even been reversed in multiple cases. In this context, and as our countries engage in preparations for the upcoming Summit of the Future, we expect that this be an opportunity to turbocharge the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and that its outcome documents – to be agreed by consensus, following a process of intergovernmental negotiations – are oriented towards that direction and towards revitalizing multilateralism, which entails, among others, the removal of unilateral coercive measures and the reform of the international financial architecture, and towards reaffirming both the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the intergovernmental nature of the UN, as well as towards the fulfillment of previously made commitments in various international fora and which are critical to the realization of development in its three dimensions, without necessarily triggering new processes or follow-up mechanisms.
15. We recall that inclusive and sustainable industrial development is of paramount importance, on the one hand, for achieving sustainable economic growth, and, on the other one, for increasing, among others, productivity, job creation, and income generation, while contributing to poverty eradication and

to addressing other development goals. In this context, and as part of our ongoing efforts to achieve the core objectives of our Group of Friends, we look forward to promoting greater coordination, insofar as possible, on issues related to the industrialization of our nations and linked to the attainment of SDG 9 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly within the context of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), in Vienna.

16. We reaffirm our commitment to ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture, as foreseen in SDG 2 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this context, and as part of our ongoing efforts to achieve the core objectives of our Group of Friends, we look forward to promoting greater coordination, insofar as possible, on issues related to sustainably increasing agricultural production, improving the global supply chain, decreasing food losses and waste, ensuring that all our peoples have access to safe and nutritious food, and enhancing both our food and agriculture systems, particularly within the context of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), in Rome, and building on the common positions established in the Special Declaration on Food Security, adopted at the ministerial level on 22 September 2023.

17. We express our categorical rejection of all unilateral coercive measures, including those applied as tools for political or economic and financial pressure against any country, in particular against developing countries, and, in this context, reiterate our unwavering support and solidarity with nations and peoples subjected to such measures, which violate both the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the basic norms of international law, especially with those that are part of our grouping, while renewing our call for their complete, immediate and unconditional lifting. We express our firm adherence, in this context, to the provisions of the Special Declaration adopted on 22 September 2023 on this subject and express our determination to actively participate, at the highest possible level, in the plenary meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations scheduled for 13 June 2024 for conducting a debate under the agenda item entitled “Elimination of unilateral extraterritorial coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion”. We further express our commitment to working together, and in coordination with the Group of the 77 plus China, to promote the holding of a debate on this agenda item on either an annual or biennial basis, including through the presentation of a relevant resolution or decision before the General Assembly before the conclusion of its 78th Session.



18. We welcome the adoption of General Assembly resolution 78/135 on “Unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries”, particularly the request to the Secretary-General to monitor the imposition of such measures and to study, with the support of UN Country Teams, their impact on affected countries, including on trade and development. In this context, and mindful of its core mandate, we reiterate our call on UNCTAD to support efforts aimed at measuring the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures, including on international trade and development, and to provide concrete policy recommendations on the basis of its findings.
19. We, in line with our historic and principled positions, express our unwavering solidarity with the people and government of the Republic of Cuba, which has heroically endured the negative impact of the criminal and illegal economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on it by the United States of America for over sixty five years, representing the single major impediment for its full economic and social development, and urge the government of the United States of America to immediately and unconditionally put an end to the blockade against Cuba and to exclude it from the arbitrary and unilateral list of State sponsors of terrorism.
20. We also reaffirm our strongest rejection and condemnation of the illegal imposition of unilateral coercive measures against the people and government of the Republic of Nicaragua, as well as of aggressions that have a negative impact on its development and prosperity. In this sense, we demand the immediate end of such measures.
21. We express our serious concern at the politicization of global health emergencies and pandemics, as well as at “vaccine nationalism”, including on the basis of the most recent experience during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this context, we call for a comprehensive reform of the relationship model between science, pharmaceutical companies, private healthcare providers, and international supply chains, which should be oriented towards equality and social justice, wherein health is recognized as a universal and inalienable human right, rather than a business commodity. In this regard, we continue to follow closely the current negotiation process, within the framework of the World Health Organization (WHO), aimed at adopting a convention, agreement or other international instrument on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response, building on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

22. We renew our determination to promote 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 raise 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. We express our firm adherence, in this context, to the Special Declaration on “Decolonization and Modern Neocolonial Practices”, adopted on 22 September 2023, while expressing our readiness to both jointly submit a draft resolution to the Special Committee of the United Nations on the Situation with regards to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (C-24) on “Eradicating Colonialism and All its Contemporary Forms and Practices” and to continue discussions aimed at fine-tuning a common strategy that will ensure its adoption.
23. We commend the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for its commitment and efforts in contributing towards the effective implementation of the Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, as demonstrated, among others, by its offer to host the 2024 Caribbean Regional Seminar, organized by the Special Committee of the United Nations on the Situation with regards to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (C-24), to be held from 14-16 May 2024, in Caracas, while pledging our support to this important initiative and wishing it great success and that its deliberations positively contribute to the common cause of achieving a world free of colonialism, in order to settle once and for all our pending debt with humanity regarding the definitive conclusion of the outstanding decolonization processes around the world.
24. We reaffirm our responsibility, insofar as responsible members of the international community, as well as that of the United Nations, towards the people of the Western Sahara, Puerto Rico and Palestine, among others, and, in that context, we remain committed to promoting efforts that will enable them to fully exercise 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).
25. We note that presidential elections are scheduled for 28 July 2024 in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and, in that regard, express our confidence



on the robust participative and protagonist model of democracy prevailing in that nation, while looking forward to the holding of said electoral process in a civic and peaceful manner. We firmly reject any attempt from external forces to meddle into or disrupt the upcoming presidential electoral elections in Venezuela, including through the resort to violence, hate speech and other extremist practices, for the purpose of curtailing the right to self-determination, as well as the sovereignty and political independence of the Venezuelan people, while threatening their wellbeing and right to peace. We also firmly reject the imposition of unilateral coercive measures against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, including within the context of the upcoming electoral process, as part of blackmailing efforts that seek, among others, to continue pushing for a failed regime-change strategy.

26. We express our appreciation and gratitude to the People and Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for their generous and kind hospitality, as well as for the excellent organization and all efforts put for ensuring the success of the Second Meeting of National Coordinators of the Group of Friends in the Defense of the Charter of the United Nations.
27. We reaffirm our readiness to be joined in this important task, at this historic time, by those members of the international community that are committed to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, with the values of dialogue, tolerance and solidarity, as well as to the strengthening and revitalization of an inclusive multilateralism, in which all regions and all States, small or large, are equally engaged alike, to consider joining our Group of Friends at their earliest convenience, for each national contribution is essential for achieving the goals that motivated the establishment of the United Nations in 1945 and for overcoming the current global multifaceted crisis, including the common challenges humanity as a whole is currently facing.
28. We stress our commitment to maintaining close coordination, including through the network of National Coordinators, with a view to fully realizing the potential of and achieving the objectives of the Group of Friends in the Defense of the Charter of the United Nations, including by having a meaningful impact on relevant intergovernmental processes at various international fora, while further advancing our common interests and priorities.



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

Caracas, 13 May 2024