

**POLITICAL DECLARATION DURING THE SECOND
MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE “GROUP OF FRIENDS IN
DEFENSE OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS”**

1. We, representatives of Algeria, Angola, Belarus, Bolivia, Cambodia, China, Cuba, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Iran, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Nicaragua, State of Palestine, Russia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Syria, and Venezuela met at the ministerial level, in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia, on the sidelines of the High-Level Commemorative Meeting to Mark the 60th Anniversary of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which we commend in a heartfelt manner, in order to continue our assessment of recent developments in the international arena, including of challenges and threats to the Charter of the United Nations, which underpins multilateralism, and to exchange views on existing, new, and emerging issues of collective concern and common interest.

2. We welcome the decision of the Republic of Zimbabwe to join us and become our nineteenth member, while looking forward to working closely together in pursuing the aims of our Group of Friends and effectively advancing in the defense of the Charter of the United Nations.

3. We recall the declarations adopted on 06 July and 23 September 2021, in New York, and reaffirm that the Charter of the United Nations and its purposes and principles 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 all human rights for all, but also for

achieving a more peaceful, prosperous, just and equitable world, and a system based, precisely, on the rules contained in that universal and legally binding instrument that constitutes an exceptional achievement for humankind and a true act of faith on the best of humanity.

4. We express our serious concern at the systematic threats to multilateralism and the growing resort to unilateralism, marked by isolationist and arbitrary actions and approaches that violate both the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law, which have a detrimental impact, among others, on States' stability, freedom of trade, investment and development and that not only undermine national and international efforts in the current fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, but also hamper the economic and social advancement and development of all peoples, contrary to the spirit and letter of the Preamble of the Charter. Hence, we further express our determination of considering possible options for safeguarding the principle of national sovereignty and ensuring compliance with the general principles governing the international trading system and trade policies for development contained in relevant resolutions, rules and provisions of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

5. We decide to hold periodic meetings, at the ambassadorial level, in New York, in order to enhance the coordination of our joint efforts and ensure that they have an impact, as we redouble efforts in our common struggle for guaranteeing the prevalence of international legality and the Charter of the United Nations.

6. We reiterate our invitation to 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 an effective and inclusive multilateralism, in which all regions and all size of States are equal and engaged alike, to consider joining our Group of Friends and/or endorsing this and previous Declarations at their earliest convenience, as part of our collective efforts to advance our common agenda and to ultimately keep delivering on the promise of the Charter of the United Nations and ensuring that no one is left behind.

Belgrade, 12 October 2021