

## **POLITICAL DECLARATION**

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, the State of Palestine, the Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Syria, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe, members of the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations, met at the ministerial level, in New York, on the sidelines of the High-Level Week of the 77<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, in order to undertake an assessment of recent developments in the international arena, including of challenges and threats to the Charter of the United Nations, which continues to underpin multilateralism, and to exchange views on existing, new and emerging issues of collective concern and common interest.
2. We recall the political declarations adopted on 06 July, 23 September and 12 October 2021, and renew 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 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.
3. We express our concern at attempts to establish a so-called "rules-based order", that remains unclear and which has the potential to undermine the rule of law at the international level and the very tenets of the Charter of the United Nations, including the purposes and principles enshrined therein and which constitute the only set of rules that the entire international community has agreed upon for conducting their international relations, and which form the basis for peaceful and friendly relations and cooperation among States.
4. We reiterate our serious concern at the growing resort to unilateralism, in detriment not only of multilateralism, but also of genuine international cooperation and solidarity, which must be strengthened now more than ever – particularly at the current juncture, in which we face a multifaceted global crisis, with multiple dimensions, including as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Reviving and strengthening multilateralism is essential, in order to forge collective, inclusive and





effective solutions to the common challenges and threats of a 21<sup>st</sup> century of interconnectedness. In this regard, we express our firm rejection to unilateral actions, measures and approaches that, far from bridging existing differences and bringing us closer to the realization of international peace and security, sustainable development, and respect for human rights, seem to be aimed intervening in the internal affairs of States, at destabilizing entire nations, and at claiming non-existent exceptionalisms for the purpose of exerting cultural, economic, social and political domination over those who have sovereignly and freely decided to control their own destiny and define their own systems.

5. We raise awareness, particularly in the midst of current tensions and polarization at the international level, about the dangers of the potential entrenchment of a Cold War era mentality that is based on confrontation, the deepening of divisions and the imposition of disparate visions and agendas, in an attempt to divide our world into blocs. In this context, we call for the redoubling of efforts towards the democratization of international relations and the strengthening of multilateralism and of a multipolar system, based, among others, on mutual respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, as well as on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, for the rule of law, diplomacy, political dialogue, tolerance, peaceful coexistence, respect for diversity, inclusiveness, a culture of peace and non-violence, and due consideration for existing differences, all of which are essential for constructively and effectively working together on issues of common interest and concern.
6. We acknowledge that humanity lives in an indivisible security community in which one nation's security is indivisible from the common security of a given region and that of the international community as a whole, and that therefore no State can seek its own security at the cost of the security of another State or group of States. In this regard, we remain committed to taking seriously the legitimate security concerns of all countries, including from those that are part of our Group of Friends, to upholding the principle of indivisible security, and to promoting a common security system through a balanced, effective and sustainable security architecture rooted in international law.
7. We recognize the multifaceted challenges the world is currently facing: in the environmental field, with adverse impacts of climate change and desertification, which is threatening humanity as a whole, particularly for vulnerable countries; in the food security area, with a significant increase in the number of severely food insecure peoples around the world and a real risk that multiple famines may be declared in the near future; in the energy area, with fuel prices excessively volatile





11. We renew our firm condemnation of the promulgation and implementation of unilateral coercive measures, whether of a political or economic nature, insofar as illegal means to exert pressure, in particular, but not exclusively, on developing countries, and to force the sovereign will of another State, in order to obtain from it advantages of any kind. In this regard, while highlighting the negative impact of these illegal measures, particularly on the enjoyment and full realization of human rights, including the right to development, we convey our support and solidarity with nations and peoples subjected to unilateral and arbitrary approaches that violate both the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the basic norms of international law, especially those that are part of our Group of Friends, and further renew our call for both their complete and immediate lifting, as well as for the full respect to the inalienable right of peoples to self-determination, and to the territorial integrity and political independence of all nations. We also express our concern at the continued expansion of these illegal measures, including in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, which constitute crimes against humanity and mass violations of human rights, and call on States to refrain from implementing unilateral coercive measures as a political means, within the context of bilateral relations, while urging for political relationships based on mutual respect and equal footing, in line with the principle of sovereign equality of States. We remain committed to continue organizing events aimed at raising awareness and highlighting the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on human rights, including on the margins of the General Assembly of the United Nations.
12. We, in light of all the foregoing and the realities and challenges abovementioned, stress that unilateral coercive measures, given their wide scope, extraterritorial implications and systemic nature, are deliberately exacerbating the multifaceted crisis humanity is facing today and will continue not only to negatively impact global economy as a whole, but also cause and prolong human suffering around the world, unless a complete and immediate end is put to all these illegal measures, that would then allow all nations to fully pursue their productive potentials and contribute to the stabilization and overcoming of current challenges. We therefore urge the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, established by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to urgently assess and address the negative impact of unilateral sanctions on the current global crisis, including on its food, energy and finance dimensions, in its subsequent briefs.
13. Absent of their elimination, and mindful of their hindrances, among others, on the ability to legally carry out commerce and investment amongst independent and



sovereign nations, we express our commitment to a multilateral system anchored on the Charter of the United Nations, as well as our determination to explore potential ways and means to secure a framework or platform that is truly independent and respectful of international law, for carrying out financial transactions and payments between banks worldwide; that is, to establish a safe zone, free of unilateral sanctions, in which we can trade and process payments without hazards or arbitrary impediments of a punitive nature, with the purpose of ensuring both the wellbeing of our peoples and the development of our nations.

14. 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 economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on it by the United States of America for over sixty 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, completely and unconditionally put an end to the blockade against Cuba, while looking forward to concrete measures that could foster an environment conducive to the reengagement into a political and diplomatic process towards the normalization of bilateral relations.
15. We also call for the immediate and unconditional removal of the illegal and unwarranted unilateral coercive measures imposed against the Republic of Zimbabwe after its historic land reform programme, aimed at distributing land to the previously excluded majority, and reaffirm our unwavering solidarity with the heroic people of Zimbabwe.
16. We express our determination to promote and protect the true spirit of human rights and the value of democracy, in light of ongoing and increasing attempts to weaponize them against sovereign States and national governments, including through strategies aimed at redefining human rights and the value of democracy, in an effort to categorize countries, further divide the international community and ignore global political, economic, social and cultural diversity. In this regard, while further expressing our serious concern over recurring trends, we stress the need for the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to uphold the principles of universality, objectivity, non-selectivity and non-politicization, and to strictly adhere to the purposes and principles enshrined in the UN Charter, in order to avoid that it be instrumentalized for attempting against the sovereignty of States or for interfering in the internal affairs of States.



17. We reaffirm that the United Nations remains a central and indispensable forum for addressing issues relating to international cooperation for economic development and social progress, peace and security, peaceful settlement of disputes, human rights and the rule of law, on the basis of dialogue, cooperation and consensus-building approaches amongst States, and therefore remain fully committed to both its revitalization and the strengthening of its role, particularly at the current international juncture, in which the world needs much more solidarity and cooperation. Moreover, while reaffirming the political nature of the United Nations, as well as its intergovernmental, universal and democratic character, we express our determination to actively and constructively participate in ongoing processes of a fundamental nature, which shall necessarily be States-led and driven, including, among others, the preparations for the Summit of the Future.
18. We underline the importance of ensuring the appropriate conditions for Permanent Missions and Permanent Observer Missions to both the United Nations, its Offices and other International Organizations to fully and efficiently discharge their responsibilities and fulfill their respective purposes. In this context, we call on Host Countries to facilitate, in accordance with their legally binding obligations under the relevant Headquarter Agreements and the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the timely issuance and/or renewal of multiple-entries visas, the removal of movement restrictions, as well as the provision of banking services and of protection and security for diplomatic premises and their personnel, while ensuring respect to the inviolability of diplomatic premises; all of it irrespective of the bilateral differences that may exist between Member States and Host Countries. We also recall the role of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as chief administrative officer, in ensuring that the privileges derived from hosting the United Nations, its Offices and/or International Organizations are not abused and that, should a dispute arise concerning the interpretation and application of relevant agreements, as a result of, among others, continued episodes of non-compliance, an arbitration procedure shall be promptly initiated.
19. 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 heroic 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 Israeli occupation, which constitutes an illegal colonial occupation and apartheid regime, and at achieving the independence of the State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem





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as its capital; the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including to self-determination and freedom; and a just and lasting solution to the Question of Palestine in all its aspects, including for the plight of the Palestine refugees, in accordance with international law, the relevant UN resolutions and the Charter of the United Nations. We further reaffirm our support for the long-overdue admission of the State of Palestine as a full Member State of the United Nations, which has been pending before the Security Council since 23 September 2011, and to enable it to take its rightful place among the community of nations.

20. We recognize that, since its establishment over a year ago, the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations has made significant progress in advancing its objectives and in implementing its annual Programme of Work. In this regard, we express 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 General Assembly of the United Nations during its 77<sup>th</sup> Session, as part of our continued endeavors for ensuring respect of and adherence to the Charter of the United Nations, in both its letter and spirit.
21. We express our appreciation to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for its offer to host the First Meeting of National Coordinators of the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations, in early November 2022, in Tehran, while further expressing our determination to actively participate in its preparations and subsequent deliberations, in order to ensure its success and further advance in the coordination of our endeavors in New York and beyond, including through the effective activation of Chapters from our grouping at other locations that host United Nations Offices and International Organizations.
22. 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 Political Declarations at their earliest convenience, as part of our collective efforts to advance our shared objectives and to ultimately keep delivering on the promise of the Charter of the United Nations for a more peaceful and prosperous world in which no one is left behind.

New York, 22 September 2022

