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Official Records

*President:* Mr. Körösi ..... (Hungary)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

## Agenda item 36

### Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba

**Reports of the Secretary-General (A/76/405 and A/77/358)**

**Draft resolution (A/77/L.5)**

**The President:** Members will recall that, in its decision 76/563, of 11 May 2022, the General Assembly decided to defer its consideration of agenda item 36, as well as the report of the Secretary-General.

**Mr. Gafoor** (Singapore): I have the honour to address the General Assembly on behalf of the 10 States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to express our support for the draft resolution contained in document A/77/L.5 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial, and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against the Republic of Cuba. ASEAN would also align itself with the statements to be delivered later by the representatives of Azerbaijan and Pakistan, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China, respectively.

The General Assembly began to vote annually on this issue starting in 1992. For the past 30 years, the resolution has consistently been adopted by an overwhelming majority of States Members of the United Nations standing on the side of the fundamental principles underlying the United Nations system

and the multilateral rules-based order, namely, the principles of sovereign equality, non-interference and non-intervention, as enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

This is the seventh year that ASEAN has made a statement at the General Assembly urging the United States to lift its economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba as soon as possible. It is our firm belief that dialogue and engagement in good faith are indispensable to any meaningful effort to peacefully resolve differences between States. The alternatives of confrontation and isolation seldom yield the intended results. They also ultimately weaken the multilateral rules-based system that all countries, large and small, have both an interest and a duty to uphold.

As the reports of the Secretary-General (A/76/405 and A/77/358) once again remind us, the United States embargo against Cuba continues to cast a long shadow on the well-being, health and development prospects of the Cuban people, including their timely access to humanitarian aid. This is especially so considering the severe and lingering impacts of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and the increasing frequency of such natural disasters and extreme weather events as Hurricane Ian.

ASEAN notes from the Secretary-General's report contained in document A/76/405 that the embargo had negatively affected the implementation of United Nations initiatives targeting health, food security, social protection, economic recovery, livelihood reactivation and developing financing

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during the pandemic. We also note from the Secretary-General's report covering the period August 2021 to February 2022 (A/77/358) that the embargo violated the right to life and health of all Cubans and that not a single measure to ease the blockade was applied during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021. This hindered the arrival of donations and purchased materials indispensable for the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19.

Furthermore, the continued existence of the embargo does not augur well for better regional relations. It also detracts from the General Assembly's efforts to leave no country behind in its pursuit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its laudable goals. ASEAN believes that ending the United States embargo on Cuba will contribute significantly to improving the quality of life and living standards of the Cuban people and to enabling the United States and Cuba to take a major step towards the normalization of relations.

The world is at an inflection point, and a business-as-usual approach will not do. ASEAN joins other members of the General Assembly to reiterate our strong support for the United States lifting its unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba as soon as possible. We also encourage the United States and Cuba to remain committed to an open and constructive dialogue, underpinned by mutual respect.

**Mrs. Cedano** (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the Central American Integration System (SICA): Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama and my country, the Dominican Republic. SICA reiterates its historic and unwavering solidarity and heartiest wishes for the welfare and prosperity of the Cuban people. We welcome and appreciate the presence of His Excellency Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba.

In a complex international environment, Cuba continues to be subjected to an unjustified economic, commercial and financial embargo, which, in addition to undermining its ability to overcome the current effects of the pandemic, has hindered its national plan for achieving sustainable development for the past three decades. We recognize and appreciate the efforts of Cuba, which during its struggle against the unjust embargo has nonetheless been able to produce

and distribute coronavirus disease (COVID-19) vaccines and contribute brigades to the Henry Reeve international contingent of doctors specializing in disasters and serious epidemics, working with others to prevent, fight and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in 55 countries in various parts of the world. The crisis unleashed by the pandemic not only enabled the world to see Cuba's ability and solidarity, but it also showed that Cuba does not merely give what it has to spare, but shares what it has.

SICA deplores the fact that the effects of the global multidimensional crisis on the energy, food, environmental, economic and financial sectors, in addition to the impact of two years of the pandemic, have failed to inspire a policy shift and closer relations between the United States and the Republic of Cuba, two brother countries and members of our Americas. The unjustified inclusion of Cuba on the list of State sponsors of terrorism has exacerbated the country's difficulties in engaging in international trade and conducting financial transactions, resulting in the cancellation of contracts and failed relations with banking institutions, among other challenges, with incalculable costs and consequences for the Cuban people and economy. The member countries of SICA will support the adoption of draft resolution A/77/L.5, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", while reiterating their full adherence to the purposes and principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law, including those related to mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

SICA hopes that in the not-too-distant future, instead of adopting a draft resolution such as the one before us today, which we have been discussing for 30 years, we will convene to celebrate the end of an unjustified policy and of suffering for another generation of Cubans. Living in peace and cooperating with each other in the quest for solutions to our shared challenges is vital and the only way to create the future we want for all.

**The President:** Unless I hear any objection, I would like to propose that the list of speakers for the debate on this item be closed, in view of the large number of delegations already inscribed on the list.

*It was so decided.*

**Ms. Squeff** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the members of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

CELAC welcomed the steps that were taken between 2015 and 2016 by Cuba and the United States to commence the process of normalizing their diplomatic relations, which began a new chapter in the history of peace and coexistence among nations of the Americas. However, we regret that the embargo remains a reality for the Cuban people and unquestionably continues to be the main obstacle to normal development in Cuba. The report of the Secretary-General (A/77/358) confirms the cost of the policy for Cuba, as it does substantial and unjustifiable harm to the well-being of the Cuban people and is contrary to the desire for peace of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, as set out in the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace. The economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba is contrary to the letter, spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. CELAC reiterates its firm rejection of the application of laws and measures that are contrary to international law, such as the Helms-Burton Act, including their extraterritorial effects, and the increasing persecution of Cuba's international financial transactions, which runs counter the political desires of the international community.

We are also opposed to the unjust inclusion of Cuba on the list of State sponsors of terrorism, which, in addition to being unsubstantiated, has increased the chilling effect of embargo-related restrictions and worsened Cuba's chances of establishing commercial and financial relations with international partners. We urge the Government of the United States to put an end to those measures. CELAC underscores its special declaration on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba, adopted at the sixth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, held in Mexico City on 18 September 2021. In it, we request the Government of the United States to abide by the successive resolutions of the General Assembly, and in response to repeated calls from the international community, to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. Furthermore, CELAC reiterates its deep concerns about the tightening of the policy, especially in the context of the

coronavirus disease pandemic, and its rejection of the extraterritorial dimension of the embargo, which has had a severe impact on Cuba's international financial transactions and the welfare of the Cuban people.

The Charter of the United Nations sets out rights, obligations and principles that have become part of the legal heritage of humankind as well as international law. They should not be violated or undermined by any member. Member States should modify their national and international actions in line with the rights, obligations and principles set out in our Charter. The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States strongly supports the adoption of draft resolution A/77/L.5, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". We underscore the inconsistency of applying unilateral coercive measures that are not supported by international law or by the letter, spirit, purposes or principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We reiterate our call on the United States to respond to the appeal by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, every region of the world and its own people and to put an end once and for all to the unjust embargo on Cuba.

I would now like to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

Argentina has traditionally rejected the policy of an embargo on Cuba imposed by the Government of the United States. That practice, which has lasted more than half a century, in addition to being morally unjustifiable, constitutes a violation of the Charter of the United Nations, the norms of international law and the spirit of multilateralism. Argentina reiterates its full commitment to the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention in States' internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation. The blockade is immoral, unjust and illegal.

It is clear to the international community that the embargo is the main obstacle to social and economic development for the Cuban people. The statistics presented in the report (A/77/358) demonstrate the depth of the measure's consequences for every aspect of life in Cuba. In the current complex international context, the blockade of Cuba has become more inhumane and unjustifiable than ever, resulting in nothing but suffering and deprivation for the people of Cuba. The embargo, which has been repeatedly condemned in General Assembly and Security Council resolutions

that enjoy practically unanimous support, creates grave humanitarian and economic costs that do irreparable damage to the welfare of the Cuban population. The blockade is an obstacle to the realization of people's basic rights in areas such as health, education, food, tourism, transport, industry and culture, to name but a few. Moreover, it has a negative impact on every area of the country's economy, serving as a barrier to favourable credit conditions, the transfer of cutting-edge technologies, the mobilization of foreign capital, direct foreign investment, environmental protection and the country's full integration into the global economy.

We also object to the unfair inclusion of Cuba on the list of State sponsors of terrorism, which, in addition to being unsubstantiated, has increased the intimidating effect of the restrictions associated with the blockade and has exacerbated Cuba's struggle to establish trade and financial relations with international partners. We urge the Government of the United States of America to put an end to such measures.

Despite the limitations imposed on it by the embargo and the related measures, Cuba has continued to advocate for itself and has demonstrated its leadership in various areas of international cooperation and solidarity. Argentina expresses its full support for Cuba, as well as its adherence to the principle of the legal equality of all States with regard to their sovereignty, affirming that unconditional respect for all differences, economic, political or otherwise, should prevail. The embargo on Cuba, the most protracted system of unilateral sanctions ever applied to any country, must end. Every year since 1992 the General Assembly, by an overwhelming majority, has declared itself in favour of respect for international law, adherence to the purposes and principles of the Charter and the right of the Cuban people to choose their own destiny.

Finally, Argentina will vote in favour of draft resolution A/77/L.5, demonstrating once again its firm opposition to the economic, trade and financial blockade imposed on Cuba, as well as to the use of unilateral coercive measures, the extraterritorial application of national trade laws and the adoption of discriminatory trade practices. We hope that there will cease to be a need to adopt any more resolutions of this nature in future and that the unjust embargo on Cuba will be brought to an end once and for all.

**Mr. Khan** (Pakistan): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 36,

entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba".

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive reports on the item we are discussing today (A/76/405 and A/77/358).

The Group regrets that the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba for more than six decades remains in full application and continues to be enforced. In that regard, we would like to recall here the positive steps taken by the United States Administration between 2015 and 2016. While they were not sufficient to effectively end the impact of the embargo, they were moving in the right direction. We regret the policy established by the recent United States Administration aimed at reinforcing the embargo on Cuba, which remains in effect despite the change in Administration and which we believe is an obstacle to the process of achieving normalized relations between the two countries. We are deeply concerned about the widening of the extraterritorial nature of the embargo on Cuba, including the full implementation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act and the unjust inclusion of Cuba on the list of State sponsors of terrorism. We reject the United States Government's reinforcement of the financial measures it has adopted aimed at tightening the embargo.

The Group of 77 and China reiterates its commitment to the purposes, principles and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly regarding the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in States' internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation. We believe that it is the duty and responsibility of every Member State to strictly comply with those principles and that any policy or action that disregards them — in this case, unilateral economic, commercial and financial sanctions against Cuba — should be immediately repealed.

The Group of 77 and China is deeply concerned about the debilitating impact that the United States' embargo of more than 60 years has had on Cuba and its people. Between August 2021 and February 2022 the embargo caused more than \$3.8 billion in losses to Cuba. The limited foreign investment and difficulty of access to development credits translate directly into economic hardship and humanitarian suffering for the people of Cuba. The embargo has also been a severe obstacle to the country's socioeconomic reforms. We



are concerned about the possibility that if the economic sanctions continue, Cuba's development potential will be unfairly undermined in both economic and human development terms and that it will be impossible for it to successfully embark on the path towards sustainable development envisaged in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to which all Member States have pledged support.

Cuba has extensively and consistently contributed to the international community for many decades, particularly through South-South cooperation. Its assistance to other countries in the context of the coronavirus disease pandemic has been a great example of South-South cooperation. We, the members of the Group of 77 and China, reiterate our support for draft resolution A/77/L.5, as well as our call for an end to the United States' economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba. The urgency and necessity of lifting the blockade is ever clearer, especially considering that this is the thirtieth occasion on which the General Assembly will adopt a resolution to call for its end. We therefore appeal to the international community to step up its efforts for the elimination of the embargo, not just to improve Cuba's prospects but to help all members of the global community in their quest to fully realize their economic and social development.

**Mr. Smith** (Bahamas): I have the honour to address the General Assembly on behalf of the 14 States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) on agenda item 36, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba".

The Caribbean Community aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Pakistan, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and Argentina, on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, as well as the statement to be delivered by the representative of Azerbaijan on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

I would like to acknowledge the presence today in the General Assembly Hall of His Excellency Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba.

We return to this Hall to yet again reaffirm the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for sovereignty, non-interference, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the maintenance of friendly relations among

States. We reaffirm as well that there are no exceptions for violations of international law. The unilateral, economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba is a clear violation of the Charter and international law. The extraterritorial application of third States' laws is contrary to the letter and spirit of the provisions of the Charter and eschews the principles of multilateralism, to which we are all committed. For those reasons, for more than three decades the General Assembly has consistently and overwhelmingly called for the lifting of the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba. Yet the embargo persists in defiance of international law and 29 General Assembly resolutions.

CARICOM strongly deplores the continued imposition of the embargo, and we reiterate our concern about the profound negative impact that the measures have had on the socioeconomic development of Cuba and the livelihoods and well-being of the Cuban people. As it has always done, CARICOM therefore once again joins the call today for the immediate end to the embargo. CARICOM also condemns the unwarranted designation of Cuba on the list of State sponsors of terrorism, a measure that serves only to further compound the inhumane consequences of the embargo. Cuba is contending with the global fuel, food and financial crises, the lingering impact of the pandemic, the climate emergency and recovery from the catastrophic impact of Hurricane Ian. The multiplicity of crises faced by Cuba, the full application of the Helms-Burton Act, including its Title III, the unfounded designation of Cuba on the list of State sponsors of terrorism and the pernicious media campaign have combined to exact a devastating and inhumane toll on Cuba and its people, their economic recovery and the country's efforts to achieve its sustainable development.

CARICOM and Cuba share a historic, extensive and robust partnership based on mutual respect, solidarity and shared commitment to Caribbean development and cooperation. Next month, CARICOM and Cuba will celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations, a milestone in our long-standing fraternal relations. Notwithstanding the severe constraints caused by the embargo over the past five decades, Cuba has contributed immensely to Caribbean development. CARICOM and Cuba continue to cooperate in areas such as health, education, trade, disaster-risk reduction and sports. Cuba was the first to deploy health-care personnel to several CARICOM member States in the early days of the coronavirus

disease pandemic to augment the region's public health systems, in addition to the health-care personnel who had already been assigned to member countries in the region and who play an ongoing role in supporting our countries' efforts to improve access to health care. Cuba has also provided many tertiary and professional-level scholarships, thereby supporting the human resource development of our region.

The close partnership between CARICOM countries and Cuba is an enduring model of what South-South cooperation can accomplish towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. CARICOM urges the United States to heed the call of the General Assembly to immediately end the embargo, which is an essential prerequisite for resuming the normalization of relations with Cuba. The United States, CARICOM and Cuba all have a shared interest in a peaceful Caribbean underpinned by friendly relations among the States of the region on the basis of mutual respect and respect for international law. CARICOM member States stand in solidarity with Cuba and will support draft resolution A/77/L.5.

**Mr. Mahmoud** (Egypt): I have the honour to deliver this statement on draft resolution A/77/L.5, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", on behalf of the members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

It is particularly concerning that the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba still remains in force after six decades. We highlight that this is the thirtieth time that the General Assembly considers an annual draft resolution thereon. Despite the overwhelming message the Assembly has sent on the previous occasions we have met, the embargo has not ceased but is stronger than ever. The embargo has not only affected Cuba's commercial sector and national economic activities but has also had disastrous humanitarian consequences for the Cuban population. The policy furthermore hinders the ability of other countries to invest in and trade with Cuba because of its extraterritorial effects.

Between August 2021 and February 2020, the embargo caused more than \$3.8 billion in losses to Cuba, which represented critical damage to Cuba's national economy in a global context that was already challenging for developing countries. Furthermore, Cuba's success in halting the spread of the coronavirus

disease pandemic risks being jeopardized. The embargo has a significant impact on the national health system, which is reflected in the difficulties encountered by national industry in purchasing the materials needed to preserve food and produce medicines and other products, given the existing restrictions on Cuba against procuring goods containing more than 10 per cent of United States components. The general situation remains a source of deep concern.

We strive to work for the benefit of humankind and the well-being of our peoples. Our leaders here at the United Nations agreed on the Sustainable Development Goals and committed to responding to the aspirations of the international community to ensure that no one is left behind. In that regard, the embargo against Cuba represents an obstacle to its people in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and runs counter to our commitment to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The OIC therefore joins the call of the overwhelming majority to end the embargo against Cuba. The OIC member States support draft resolution A/77/L.5 and call on Member States to vote in favour of it, as they have done in previous years.

**Ms. Tesfamariam** (Eritrea): The State of Eritrea has the honour to take the floor on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations. For our Group, the consideration of this group is of crucial importance in terms of the endeavour that unites us to achieve strict respect to the purposes and principles of the Organization, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

The unjust and abusive blockade against Cuba constitutes without any doubt one of the most serious, prolonged and systematic violations of international law and the Charter. On 3 February, this policy of siege, intimidation and harassment marked the sixtieth anniversary of its entry into force, which is inadmissible. The blockade against Cuba, in addition to being morally and politically shameful by attempting to subjugate a small, peaceful and supportive country by means of extreme pressures, transgresses the very foundations of the Organization, which is why it qualifies as illegal.

Article 1 of the Charter states as one of its purposes to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and the self-determination of peoples. However, the blockade not only violates the right of Cubans to conduct their affairs

in a sovereign manner without interference, but it also restricts other States of the world from freely developing their commercial ties with Cuba. Any nation in the world, rich or poor, is exposed to reprisals by the United States authorities if it maintains economic relations with Cuba. The punitive and extraterritorial nature of the blockade was reinforced as never before after the full application of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act in May 2019, which opened up the possibility of filing lawsuits in United States courts against international companies operating with properties nationalized by the Cuban State. As a fundamental element of the declared purpose and successive Governments of the United States to undermine the social project of the Cuban revolution, the blockade threatens the political independence of Cuba, which is contrary to what Article 2 of the Charter advocates with regard to relations among States Members of the Organization.

The economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba is probably one of the issues that have been the most systematically and forcefully condemned by the international community over the years. On 29 occasions, the Assembly adopted a resolution demanding the end of that policy with an overwhelming majority. Despite that unequivocal message to the most representative and democratic organ of the United Nations, the United States has continued to act unilaterally, punishing the Cuban people, maintaining a colossal barrier to normal relations between Cuba and the United States and hindering Cuba's relations with the rest of the world.

The rejection of that aggravation of the Cuban people is not a question of sympathies or ideologies; it is a matter of defending justice, international law and the elementary sense of humanity that should prevail in the world. To oppose the blockade against Cuba is to act on behalf of hundreds and thousands of families who are victims of a logic of domination that is inconceivable in the twenty-first century. Year after year, the reports of the Secretary-General presented under this item illustrate the numerous and sensitive consequences caused by the blockade for the Cuban people. It is children and young people who suffer such impacts, and it is mothers and the elderly who live in deprivation and are victims of a harmful and inhumane blockade driven by political motivations.

Article 13 of the United Nations Charter confers on the Assembly, among its functions and powers, the promotion of international cooperation in the economic,

social, cultural, education and health fields. Given that the blockade against Cuba is a major impediment to the achievement of that objective, as well as an obstacle to increasing the valuable contribution that Cuba can make to international cooperation, the General Assembly will fail in its functions until that harmful policy is eliminated.

We express our solidarity with the people and the Government of Cuba. We demand an immediate and unconditional end to the blockade, and call on all States Members of the Organization to once again support draft resolution A/77/L.5, to be introduced by the Cuban delegation.

**Mr. Aliyev** (Azerbaijan): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 120 States members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM).

At the outset, we would like to acknowledge the presence of, and extend our warmest welcome to, His Excellency Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba. We are also grateful to the Secretary-General for the reports on this important issue (A/76/405 and A/77/358).

Every year for three decades, the General Assembly has expressed its overwhelming support for, and solidarity with, the people and the Government of Cuba through its principled position in favour of the resolution calling for the lifting of the embargo imposed against that sovereign country by the United States. At the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, the overwhelming majority of Member States voted in favour of resolution 75/289. In that regard, the Non-Aligned Movement once again reiterates its strongest opposition to the promulgation and imposition of unilateral coercive measures that are not authorized by the relevant organs of the United Nations, and which are inconsistent with the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, given their extraterritorial implications and illegal character.

The Non-Aligned Movement has repeatedly emphasized its call on the United States Government to put an end to the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo that it has illegally maintained against Cuba for more than six decades now. The embargo, which is a breach of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles governing inter-State relations, constitutes a violation of Cuba's right to fully interact with the international community.

The Non-Aligned Movement has historically maintained the principled position of rejecting unilateral coercive measures that are not authorized by the relevant organs of the United Nations, that are inconsistent with the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, that contravene the basic principles of the multilateral trading system or that are used as a tool of political or economic and financial pressure against States, in particular developing countries. That position was reaffirmed by the eighteenth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Baku.

The embargo on Cuba is a perfect example of the adverse effects of unilateral coercive measures on the well-being of affected peoples, preventing them, inter alia, from fully enjoying and realizing their human rights, including the right to development. In the past five years, there has been a progressive and systematic increase in the aggressiveness of the United States policy against Cuba and all sovereign States that maintain or attempt to establish economic, commercial and financial relations with that country. More than 240 measures were implemented during the previous United States Administration, with more than 50 of them adopted in 2020 alone amid the coronavirus disease pandemic. The majority of those additional measures still stand today.

The direct and indirect damage inflicted by the embargo against Cuba is enormous. It affects all critical sectors of the Cuban economy, including public health, nutrition and agriculture, as well as trade, investment, tourism and banking. The banking sector has been especially hard hit, in particular since the most recent consideration of this agenda item. The persecution of Cuban financial transactions in third-country jurisdictions, which has a significant deterrent effect in economic terms, continues. From August 2021 to February 2022, the effects of such penalties on the Cuban economy amounted to \$260.8 million. Cuba is also being denied access to markets, international aid from international financial institutions and technology transfers, which creates serious obstacles to the socioeconomic development of the country. In addition, the embargo is the main impediment to broader access to the Internet, people-to-people contacts and the development of cultural, athletic and scientific relations.

The Non-Aligned Movement reaffirms that the continuation of the embargo is completely unjustifiable,

and that it does not correspond to this time in history. It also runs counter to Cuba's continued efforts to realize its sustainable development, including the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

The Movement expresses its deep concern over the widening of the extraterritorial nature of the embargo against Cuba, including the full implementation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act. The Non-Aligned Movement also rejects the reinforcement of financial measures adopted by the United States Government to tighten the embargo, which inflicts economic damage on the Cuban people amounting to \$1.39 trillion, taking into account the depreciation of the dollar in relation to the price of gold on the international market. At current prices, during all these years, the blockade has caused more than \$154 billion in damages. It is worth highlighting that, in the first 14 months of the current United States Administration alone, the cost of the damage caused by the blockade exceeded \$6.3 billion, which represents an impact of more than \$454 million per month — more than \$15 million per day.

The Non-Aligned Movement views the strengthening of the embargo against Cuba adopted by the United States Government in June 2017 as a serious setback in the process of normalization of bilateral relations between the two countries. The Movement also strongly condemns the inclusion of the Republic of Cuba in the unilateral list of State sponsors of terrorism of the Department of State of the United States of America, as announced on 11 January 2021. NAM rejects the politicization of the fight against terrorism, including through the unilateral adoption of lists accusing States and their constitutionally established institutions of allegedly supporting terrorism, and it therefore rejects the unfounded accusation that Cuba sponsors terrorism. NAM looks forward to the current United States Administration taking the necessary action to reverse those reckless steps and moving towards normalizing relations.

The fact that 184 Member States voted in favour of resolution 75/289 represents an expression of unanimity within the international community in demanding an end to the 61-year-long embargo and full adherence to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law, including those relating to mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. Currently, more than 190 nations engage economically and politically with Cuba, while the United States



remains alone in pursuing its unjustified and illegal economic sanctions policy. Consequently, the member States of the Non-Aligned Movement once again urge the United States Government to yield to the will of the overwhelming majority of the international community and rectify its failed policies by fully complying with all relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, which call for the immediate and complete end of the embargo imposed against Cuba.

In conclusion, the Non-Aligned Movement, while reiterating its commitment to the promotion, preservation and strengthening of multilateralism, reaffirms that full respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly those referring to sovereign equality, non-interference and non-intervention, is critical for the effective maintenance of international peace and security. Therefore, the international community must continue working together on the reversal and elimination of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba, given, *inter alia*, its illegal character and its extraterritorial implications.

**Mr. Afonso** (Mozambique): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of African States on the agenda item entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”.

This matter continues to be of great importance and concern to the African Group, and indeed to Africa as a whole. For the thirteenth time, our Heads of State and Government, at the thirty-fifth ordinary session of the African Union Assembly, held in February, reiterated their position calling for the lifting of sanctions on Cuba’s people and Government. The African Group reiterates its position that the illegal sanctions, particularly the implementation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, are the main obstacles to Cuba’s realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Africa has consistently been concerned about Cuba’s dilemma because of the importance it attaches to the achievement of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda. It is clear that, as a responsible member of the international community, Cuba has made numerous positive contributions over the decades to Africa and many other States and peoples all over the world.

In addition, the adoption of the annual draft resolution on ending Cuba’s blockade by the United States has represented a call to all countries for already

30 years now and the African Group will continue to reaffirm its full support for that draft resolution. The African Group wishes to express its regret about the setback in the bilateral relations between Cuba and the United States, and we call on the United States Government to work towards restoring positive relations and lifting that long-standing blockade imposed on the people and the Government of Cuba. The African Group wishes to reiterate that it will remain firm in its principled position of total solidarity with Cuba, its people and its Government, while calling for an immediate end to that economic, commercial and financial blockade.

**Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to welcome the presence in this Hall of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla.

The economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba for almost six decades and the continuous disregard of General Assembly resolutions by a permanent member of the Security Council, which has a special responsibility to defend the purposes and principles of the United Nations, are simply unacceptable in the light of international law and the constitutional precepts of Mexico’s foreign policy. The Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations allows us to consider the situation on the agenda of this meeting on the following basis: first, the self-determination of peoples; secondly, the duty not to intervene in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of any State; and, thirdly, the duty of States to cooperate with one another.

Within this normative framework, the Declaration provides that:

“No State may use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights and to secure from it advantages of any kind.”

Consequently, any unilateral measure conceived as a means of political pressure to externally promote changes in the internal decisions of another State contravenes the principles of the United Nations Charter and is contrary to the obligation to cooperate and maintain friendly relations among States.

Mexico condemns in the strongest possible terms the economic, commercial and financial blockade that has been imposed on Cuba for almost six decades as well as the decision to apply Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, also known as the Helms-Burton Act, which has affected not only the sovereignty of the Cuban people, but also the rights of third countries.

In the face of the severe health crisis caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic and the natural disasters resulting from Hurricane Ian, we have seen how the embargo has affected the delivery of medical supplies to respond to the pandemic, as well as food for the Cuban people. Starving the civilian population is another form of conduct that is prohibited under international humanitarian law — even more so in times of peace, and it is still worse when the United States and Cuba have resumed diplomatic relations governed by the Charter of the United Nations.

Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations reserves to the Security Council the exclusive power to impose coercive measures to restore or maintain international peace and security. My country maintains that there should be no sanctions of any kind, other than those that the Security Council decides to adopt.

Added to the foregoing is the reinclusion of Cuba, in January 2021, on the United States list of countries sponsoring terrorism, which, beyond being clear nonsense, constitutes, by blocking the country's financial operations and other transactions, another attempt to undermine the Government and the people of Cuba. We note that one of the justifications offered for reincluding Cuba on the United States sanctions list was that, in the spirit of promoting the peace dialogue in Colombia, Cuba had hosted members of that country's Ejército de Liberación Nacional. Accordingly, it is worth noting that, just a few days ago, the Security Council welcomed the announcement that the dialogue between the Government of Colombia and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional had resumed. Again, only the Security Council can make determinations related to groups or entities that carry out or promote terrorism.

It follows from the foregoing that the measures applied by the United States against Cuba are in violation of international law and give rise to international liability. The United States must cease these measures, repair damages and offer guarantees that it will not repeat them, as required under international law. For

its part, the General Assembly should demand that the United States immediately put an end to the economic and financial blockade it maintains against Cuba.

**Mr. Pérez Ayestarán** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela thanks you, Mr. President, for convening this plenary meeting to address an issue to which our delegation attaches particular importance. We also thank the Secretary-General for his most recent reports on the issue before us today (A/76/405 and A/77/358).

We also wish to convey our warmest greetings to His Excellency Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba, who is with us at today's meeting. Our delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Pakistan, Azerbaijan, Argentina and Eritrea on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States and the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations, respectively.

For 30 consecutive years now, the General Assembly — the most representative body of the United Nations — has made a near-universal call for the repeal of the economic, commercial and financial blockade that our sister Republic of Cuba has been facing with great gallantry, conscience and patriotic sense of unity for more than 60 years. The blockade is illegal because it violates every rule of international law and the precepts enshrined in the founding Charter of the United Nations. It is a criminal blockade because it causes death, pain and indiscriminate suffering for an entire people. It is an inhumane blockade because it deliberately and systematically violates the human rights of more than 11 million Cubans, therefore representing the main obstacle today to the fulfilment of their inalienable right to development. The blockade constitutes a collective punishment whose pernicious effects are clear crimes against humanity. The blockade is part of an act of economic aggression that operates within the framework of a policy of maximum pressure, and which, as is well known — it having been widely documented — has a destructive and lethal impact, similar to that produced by conventional wars. It is also a policy of economic terrorism which, due to its extraterritoriality, affects any country or entity that intends to maintain economic, commercial or financial relations in a legal and sovereign manner with our sister Republic of Cuba.

Despite the claims the United States Government makes to justify its aggression, this is not a bilateral issue or an embargo against Cuba alone; in reality, it is a policy that affects the entire international community, in contravention of the norms of international law and even of the multilateral trade system itself. Even more serious, it is a blockade that has been expanded in recent years, following the activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act and the arbitrary inclusion of Cuba on a unilateral list as an alleged promoter of terrorism, which was even more frighteningly intensified when the world was facing the most difficult moments of the worst pandemic in the last 100 years. That shows how the United States Government has itself become a promoter of economic terrorism, as it confirmed its determination to use the pandemic as a weapon of war to advance narrow national interests and fulfil its ambitions for neocolonial domination.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the imperial policy of the United States has not achieved and never will achieve its objectives in socialist revolutionary Cuba, because the people of that sister country are determined to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and freely and sovereignly define their political, economic, social and cultural system. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Cuba today continues to renew its humanist aspirations and its spirit of cooperation and solidarity, selflessly providing many countries with support and technical assistance in various areas, including education and sports. But what is perhaps most outstanding in recent months has been the contribution of the Cuban people in the area of health. It is impossible to forget how less than two years ago, when humankind was facing the worst of the onslaught of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), dozens of Cuban medical brigades were deployed to more than 35 countries in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East and Europe to save the lives of millions of people. It is also impossible to forget how, based on its own efforts and despite the difficulties imposed by the criminal embargo, Cuba managed to develop five COVID-19 vaccines. We must stress that that achievement will be forever etched in the history of humankind.

While the United States assigned thousands of officials to extort money from dozens of countries plagued by disease and suffering, Cuba assigned thousands of doctors and scientists to defend the right to health and life of our peoples. It is worth asking ourselves: how much more could Cuba provide to us? How much

more could it expand its international cooperation if all the obstacles that were illegally and arbitrarily imposed on it 60 years ago were removed and it could thereby fully harness its capabilities and potential? Today, more than ever before given the current international situation, we must clearly state that the world does not need any more embargoes or unilateralism. Only through concerted action, in the context of a revitalized and truly inclusive multilateralism that is based on mutual respect and tolerance, will we be able to overcome together the major and pressing challenges that lie ahead for humankind.

The obsolete policy of asphyxiation imposed by the United States against Cuba through its illegal embargo represents the most unjust, severe and protracted system of unilateral coercive measures ever imposed on any country in modern history, with an immeasurable human cost for the population of that sister country. It is a crime that affects us all equally because it constitutes a denial of the world's political, economic and cultural diversity and our right to national sovereignty. Even more serious, it is an attack on the entire system of international relations and an attempt to impose Washington's national power on the rights of dozens of countries. Economic aggression based on the illegal application of unilateral coercive measures appears to have become the preferred tool of the United States Government for expanding its perpetual war against more than one third of humankind. From this rostrum, we therefore call upon the Government of the United States to respect the Charter of the United Nations and international law and put an end to all measures that threaten international peace and security, including the criminal imposition of embargoes and other arbitrary and unilateral measures.

It is time to hear the clamour of an immense majority that collectively demands the immediate and definitive cessation of all anachronistic regimes of sanctions and blockades, including the embargo imposed against Cuba. It is time to put an end to double standards in the application of international justice, the promotion of the rule of law and the protection of human rights. Let us not continue to tolerate the violations that have been committed — until now with total impunity — by a regime that, with its contemptuous attitude to world opinion, has become the most isolated State in the world and whose actions are detrimental to the well-being of our peoples and their right to live in peace.

Tomorrow, when draft resolution A/77/L.5 is introduced for consideration, my delegation will be unable to vote in favour of the text precisely because of the criminal embargo that was illegally imposed by the United States against Venezuela. However, we strongly support the draft resolution and conclude our statement by calling for overwhelming support in favour of it. A vote in favour of the document is a vote in favour of the independence of Cuba and a vote in favour of international law and multilateralism. Last but not least, it is a vote in favour of the end of neocolonial plans for alleged domination and oppression based on embargoes and unilateral sanctions, which have no basis in the twenty-first century and will therefore continue to be doomed to failure. We say yes to Cuba and no to the embargo.

**Ms. Espinoza Madrid** (Honduras) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation aligns itself with the statements made earlier today by the representatives of Azerbaijan, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, by Argentina, on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, by the Dominican Republic, on behalf of the Central American Integration System, and by Pakistan, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

My country welcomes and appreciates the presence of His Excellency Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the sister Republic of Cuba, in the Assembly Hall, where we defend the right to peace and dignity of all its members. Seventy-seven years ago, the Organization was established to maintain peace in the world, find solutions to disputes and respect and promote human rights. We wanted to create a new order — a free world. However, we seem to have forgotten the lessons of history. As expressed by Her Excellency President Xiomara Castro Sarmiento in her address at the general debate of the current session,

“Today, as war is once again punishing the world’s poorest and our countries are invaded, we call for a return to respect for the self-determination of peoples and a rejection of the abominable and brutal blockade of the people of our sister Republic of Cuba” (A/77/PV.5, p.3).

As of 7 February this year, it has been 60 years since the economic, commercial and financial embargo was imposed on the Republic of Cuba. For half of that time, we have gathered here at the General Assembly to almost universally condemn an embargo that

restricts the socioeconomic development of the Cuban people. Honduras deplores the fact that the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba remains in full force and continues to be strengthened. The time has come for a sovereign debate on how we want to be part of a new, decolonized, multipolar, anti-racist, anti-fascist, anti-patriarchal, feminist and deeply humane world order.

For 30 years we have been ignored. Therefore, today we once again reiterate our concern at the extension of the extraterritorial nature of the embargo against Cuba and other measures, such as the inclusion of Cuba on sanctions lists, that severely affect the Cuban people. The embargo is a violation of the rights of Cubans since it affects the Cuban population not only economically but also in other aspects of their well-being, such as public health. We experienced some difficult years around the world owing to the coronavirus disease pandemic. As sovereign countries, each one responded to the situation differently, but we also reminded each other that solidarity is an essential part of a humanistic world. In spite of its struggle against the embargo, Cuba has contributed extensively, continuously and in solidarity with the international community, in particular with technical assistance whenever we required it, especially in the areas of health, natural disaster prevention and scholarships, as well as through cooperation in sports and culture. In October, in the context of friendly relations and cooperation with the brotherly people of Cuba, the Government of Honduras finalized three agreements, in the areas of education, sports and health regulation.

We reiterate our commitment to the purposes, principles and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs, as well as freedom of international trade and navigation. We believe that it is the duty and responsibility of each Member State to comply strictly with those fundamentals. My Government is of the view that any policy or action that disregards those principles — in this case, the unilateral economic sanctions against Cuba — should be reversed. We call on the international community to redouble its efforts in support of the lifting of the embargo. As José Francisco Morazán Quesada, the great Central American unionist, said:

“I speak to those men who have abused the most sacred rights of the people for their own sordid



and petty interests: the greatness of a people is not measured by the size of their territory, but by the dignity and honour of their children”.

**Mr. Nebenzia** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the participation of the Cuban Foreign Minister, Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, in our meeting this morning.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Eritrea on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations. I would like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

Russia, together with the overwhelming majority of the members of the international community, remains firmly and consistently in favour of the immediate lifting of the illegitimate blockade against Cuba. We express our categorical rejection of the anti-Cuban sanctions policy of the United States. Although the issue here concerns a gross, decades-long violation of international law, primarily the Charter of the United Nations, in relation to a specific State Member of our Organization, we cannot help but note the blatant trend of turning such a practice into an illegal strategy for the persecution and suppression of inconvenient Governments around the world.

Washington is attempting to give the notorious Monroe Doctrine global scope and make illegal unilateral sanctions an instrument of coercion for dissenters who refuse to do their bidding. Cuba is a vivid example of the vicious nature of that pernicious policy, which is used by the United States solely to fulfil its narrowly selfish opportunistic tasks, with total disregard not only for geopolitical realities but also for elementary moral principles. A recent example was Washington's decision in September to extend its anti-Cuban sanctions legislation for another year. We consider that illegal practice to be nothing less than a challenge to the entire system of international relations, which undermines the foundations of global and regional stability and an attempt to misrepresent such restrictions as normal for inter-State relations. That basically constitutes economic terrorism. We believe that the Secretary-General, whose duties include facilitating the implementation of General Assembly decisions, should pay special attention to the issue.

A clear example of the discriminatory policy of the United States is the inclusion of Cuba on its list of States sponsors of terrorism in January 2021. Leaving

aside the absurdity of that decision, it exacerbated the detrimental effect on the island's socioeconomic development and led to grave humanitarian consequences for the entire Cuban people. It also directly contradicts the provisions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which the United States adopted, along with all other countries. We urge the United States authorities to reconsider that decision, particularly since the United States no longer has even purely formal grounds for keeping Cuba on that list. Maintaining restrictive measures against Cuba, at a time when the world is facing energy and food crises that are compounded by the effects of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and the recent Hurricane Ian, is nothing less than a manifestation of inhumanity and cynicism. The colossal losses from the ongoing American blockade on the Cuban economy are obvious. The numbers speak for themselves: in the first 14 months of President Biden's Administration — from January 2021 to February 2022 — the total damage caused by anti-Cuban sanctions measures amounted to \$6.3 billion, or more than \$15 million per day.

Meanwhile, the losses due to the United States embargo grew at a record pace from August 2021 to February 2022, reaching \$3.8 billion in six months. As of October 2022, the overall damage to the Cuban economy throughout the history of the embargo has risen to \$154.2 billion. Taking into account the depreciation of the dollar against the price of gold, that now represents \$1.39 trillion. We noted that, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Washington refused to make any exemptions with regard to the sanctions against Cuba, preventing Havana from being able to purchase vaccines, medical oxygen, ventilators and other life-saving products. Once again, the Cuban people demonstrated heroic resistance by developing their own vaccine. Against that background, the assurances of the United States that all restrictive measures were directed exclusively against Cuba's leadership are especially hypocritical, as the real victims of the White House's voluntarist policy are the island's critical services and, as a result, the Cuban people themselves, whose rights are supposedly of great importance to their northern neighbour.

*Mr. Wallace (Jamaica), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

Despite all those challenges, the Cuban Government continues to consistently implement measures for the socioeconomic development of the country, pursuing an independent foreign policy line and determining its own

approaches to issues on the global agenda. Reaffirming our principled position and in solidarity with the brotherly people of Cuba, we will once again unconditionally support the draft resolution demanding the lifting of the blockade without preconditions (A/77/L.5), guided by the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations on the inadmissibility of any unilateral sanctions measures, infringement on national sovereignty or interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States. We call on all Member States to support this resolution.

**Mr. Dai Bing** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China welcomes the presence of the Cuban Foreign Minister, Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, at today's meeting.

We align ourselves with the statements delivered by the representative of Pakistan, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and the representative of Eritrea, on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations.

The coronavirus disease pandemic continues to linger, while climate change, geopolitical conflicts and food and energy crises, among other challenges, are intertwined and pose grave challenges to global economic recovery. Countries' efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals on schedule are also being hampered. The international community should uphold the concept of a community with a shared future for humankind, while making concerted efforts to tackle the crises and challenges faced in order to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

However, the United States continues to impose a series of unilateral coercive measures against Cuba and other countries, which constitutes a grave violation of the international consensus reached in the 2030 Agenda. It also severely undermines the right to subsistence and development of all peoples and is incompatible with the international trend towards peaceful development and win-win cooperation. The blockade imposed by the United States runs counter to the efforts of countries to recover and develop and must therefore be brought to an end immediately.

For 29 consecutive years since 1992, the General Assembly has adopted, by an overwhelming majority, an annual draft resolution entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", which urges all countries to abide by the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law and

to revoke or repeal any type of law or measure that has an extraterritorial effect or that affects the sovereignty of other States, the legitimate rights and interests of entities and individuals within their jurisdiction or the freedom of trade and navigation. It represents the just call of the international community and must be effectively implemented.

Regrettably, the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba has not abated, but instead has continued to intensify since the outbreak of the pandemic. The United States has imposed dozens of sanctions against Cuba, in grave violation of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and relevant General Assembly resolutions. It also severely restricts the Cuban people's access to medicine, vaccines and other supplies needed to fight and recover from the pandemic, significantly hampers the Cuban people's efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, such as poverty eradication, and critically hinders normal economic, financial and development cooperation between Cuba and other Member States.

The international community should speak with one voice in condemnation of such actions. All countries in the world form a community with a shared future. Dialogue on an equal footing and friendly consultation are the best way to resolve differences. Unilateralism, protectionism and bullying ultimately serve no one's interests.

China has always advocated respecting the right of countries to choose their own social systems and development paths, upholding the international order underpinned by international law, defending international justice and opposing the use of military, political, economic or other means to impose unilateral coercive measures on other countries. China urges the United States to immediately and fully lift its economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba and to develop normal relations with other Member States, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and the basic norms governing international relations, which would serve the common interests of the peoples of the two countries and contribute to regional peace and stability. China will once again vote in favour of the draft resolution to be introduced by the delegation of Cuba under this agenda item.

**Mr. Pary Rodríguez** (Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to thank the President for convening this meeting of justice and dignity for the Cuban people, today represented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the sister Republic of Cuba, His Excellency Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, and his entire delegation, whom I warmly welcome. I also thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/77/358).

My delegation associates itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Azerbaijan, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, of Pakistan, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, of Argentina, on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, and of Eritrea, on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations.

One of the most important debates in the United Nations today is focused on implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, despite the profound economic challenges facing our peoples. The effects of the multidimensional crisis that we are going through require a global response, and international cooperation plays a central role.

The coronavirus disease pandemic showed us how fragile we are but, above all, it showed us that the international community is interconnected. However, that did not change the conditions of the inhumane commercial blockade of Cuba illegally set up by the Government of the United States, which for 60 years has continued to violate the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the economic and social rights of the Cuban people. That inhumane blockade leads to suffering and constitutes a massive, flagrant and systematic violation of human rights. In accordance with international treaties, the blockade qualifies as an act of genocide and as an act of economic war, since it profoundly affects construction, tourism, transportation, civil aeronautics and the sugar industry.

Bolivia recognizes in Cuba a people in solidarity with the causes of the peoples and respectful of international law. We therefore once again join the international community in condemning and repudiating, in the most emphatic manner, the unilateral, immoral and criminal economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against the sister Republic of Cuba for more than half a century.

The blockade against Cuba is unjust. The lawsuits filed under the so-called Helms-Burton Act imply the persecution of companies, ships and shipping companies that send fuel supplies to the country. The blockade therefore not only undermines the right of the Cuban people to self-determination and the efforts of its Government to fight against poverty and inequality, but it is also aggressively extraterritorial and a violation of international law. Practically, we are facing a threat to multilateralism and a transgression of international trade rules and freedom of navigation.

Likewise, we deeply regret that the State Department maintains Cuba on its list of State sponsors of terrorism, because the dissuasive and intimidating impacts of the blockade have been strengthened, thereby preventing Cuba from engaging in international trade and financial operations. The human consequences are incalculable for the Cuban people and economy.

The adoption and implementation of unilateral coercive measures as an instrument of political and economic coercion is an attack against the full enjoyment of all human rights, against independence, sovereignty and the right to self-determination of the peoples.

For 30 years, the General Assembly has been adopting resolution after resolution demanding that the various United States Administrations put an end, unconditionally, to their blockade policy against Cuba. The failure to abide by those resolutions shows that there are countries that have used the creation of the Organization to grant themselves the special privilege of not respecting the decisions that do not suit them.

Against that backdrop, Bolivia once again supports the draft resolution before this Assembly, since we not only reject this immoral economic, commercial and financial blockade, but we also demand that the inhumane and unilateral blockade imposed by the United States be lifted immediately.

**Mr. Gertze** (Namibia): Allow me, at the outset, to express my appreciation to the President for convening the twenty-sixth plenary meeting, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. I join other colleagues before me in welcoming Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla here today.

Namibia wishes to align itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Group of African States, the Group of 77 and China and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

My delegation further extends its gratitude to the Secretary-General for his candid report on the matter at hand, in which he indicates that the embargo has “escalated to a qualitatively more harmful and inhumane level” (A/77/358, p.1).

As we reflect on the multidimensional global crisis brought about by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) epidemic, climate change and geopolitical tensions, which has resulted in financial uncertainty, high inflation, rising borrowing costs and skyrocketing fuel prices, my delegation continues to observe with great disappointment and growing concern the economic and financial hardships imposed upon the Cuban people by the unprecedented tightening of the United States blockade for almost 60 years.

The report of the Secretary-General reveals that the additional unilateral coercive measures imposed during the previous Administration of the United States Government, which mostly remain in force, prolong the policy of maximum pressure against Cuba. Those measures pose severe challenges to realizing human rights in Cuba, advancing the country’s social and economic infrastructure and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Men, women and children all pay a high price for this arbitrary blockade. Indigenous people, persons with disabilities, the poor, the elderly and those afflicted by terrible diseases, such as COVID-19, are most in need of humanitarian assistance and support.

In addition to the impossible situation that Cuba continues to face, the unilateral coercive measures have impacted humanitarian aid, making it difficult for the country to buy or deliver the necessary equipment and maintain essential life-supporting food, water, sanitation and health infrastructure, and electricity supply systems, as well as to ensure the delivery of adequate health services. Those aggressive actions go directly against the principles of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the laws protecting civilians worldwide.

The United States embargo severely compromises the legal rights of many nations and organizations and their citizens by preventing mutually beneficial bilateral

trade and engagement. As a nation that promotes and defends the rights of all nations to live in peace and security, while recognizing each State’s inherent worth and dignity and supporting free and open trade among all countries, we cannot accept that.

The report of the Secretary-General highlights that the continued inclusion of Cuba in the list of State sponsors of terrorism has worsened the dissuasive and intimidating impact of the blockade, complicating how the country engages in international trade and conducts financial operations. My delegation also agrees with the findings of the report that characterize the attempts of some media and communication campaigns as malicious, with the blatant intent of destabilizing Cuba. Those undermining actions are a violation of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

Despite our gratitude for the Biden Administration’s loosening in May of some of the restrictions of the embargo against Cuba, my delegation remains concerned about the escalation of actions taken by the United States, such as its continued implementation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, which continues to cripple Cuba’s attempts to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Those actions go against the principles of the United States and its strategy from 2016 — a time when we all cheered for the positive policy shift and hoped the blockade would be lifted.

As we work towards our shared goals and commitments for shared growth, prosperity and sustainable development, we strongly urge a review of the enforcement of unilateral coercive measures. My delegation therefore wishes to place on record our strong support for draft resolution A/77/L.5, which calls for the unconditional lifting of the embargo against the Republic of Cuba. Only through multilateralism and cooperation will we be able to succeed in our future development efforts and achieve the SDGs.

In conclusion, Namibia is grateful for the solidarity of the United Nations. My delegation has consistently stood with, and reaffirmed its unshakable support for, the Government and the people of Cuba. Namibia will vote in favour of draft resolution A/77/L.5 and calls on all Member States to support it as well. For us, lifting the embargo on Cuba means giving the Cuban people an opportunity to fulfil their hopes and dreams for economic and social progress, rights that should be



accorded to all equally, without conditions and without further delay.

**Mr. Darroux** (Dominica): On behalf of the Commonwealth of Dominica, I have the privilege of delivering the following statement on draft resolution A/77/L.5, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of the Bahamas, on behalf of the Caribbean Community, the representative of Pakistan, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and the representative of Azerbaijan, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The Commonwealth of Dominica unreservedly opposes the economic, commercial and financial embargo that has been imposed on the Cuban people by the United States for the past 61 years, which continues to have a significant negative effect on the Cuban economy and on the standard of living of the citizens of Cuba. The losses incurred by the Government of Cuba, local Cuban businesses and ordinary Cubans in obtaining goods, services and financing are definitely in the billions of dollars. We view the embargo as an egregious and flagrant violation of the fundamental human rights of the Cuban people. For the past 61 years, the only outcome that has been achieved through that unilateral coercive measure and unjustified action is increased economic and social hardship for the Cuban people. The embargo has critically restricted advancing science and technology and destroyed any chance of maximizing the opportunities provided by broadband Internet access. Moreover, the embargo represents the most severe and protracted system ever applied against any country and continues to be the main obstacle to the development of all the potentialities of the Cuban people.

Every year, natural disasters wreak havoc and undermine Cuba's economic efforts to import goods and services at competitive prices, as evidenced as recently as September by the devastation unleashed by Hurricane Ian that followed a massive fire at a storage facility in Cuba's western port of Matanzas in August. The Government of Dominica therefore strongly urges the few States that continue to support the embargo to heed the call of the overwhelming majority of States gathered here and lift that archaic embargo so that all United Nations States Members may support the

full integration of the Cuban people into the global, financial and trading systems.

Many banks have suspended their operations with Cuba, including transfers for the purchase of food and medicines, fuel and life essentials for the population. The prohibition on regular bilateral trade and the importation from third countries of goods containing more than 10 per cent United States components remains in force. The unilateral and arbitrary list of restricted Cuban entities and the list of prohibited lodgings also continue to be in force, in addition to the inclusion of Cuba on the list of State sponsors of terrorism. Dominica therefore calls for the immediate removal of Cuba from the list of countries that sponsor terrorism and asks instead for all efforts to be redirected to combating the real threats to global peace and security in our region.

Dominica has observed an escalation of this abusive blockade since 2019, exacerbated by the coronavirus disease pandemic, energy crisis, food insecurity and the climate crisis. The embargo prevents Cuba from building and repairing infrastructure, creating a vibrant economy and improving the standard of living of its resident population.

The 11 million people of Cuba need to see a discontinuation of this American policy, which has been maintained and hardened by at least 13 successive American Presidents, from 1960 to 2022. The Cuban nation needs to see a favourable multilateral response from the international community on their behalf. Indeed, as the Cuban Foreign Minister asks: "How could such an airtight system have been created to prevent an entire people from acquiring essential foodstuffs and medicines?"

For decades Cuba has been training medical doctors, nurses, engineers and other professionals, as well as providing technical assistance to developing countries as part of its South-South cooperation. In addition, Cuba continues to add its voice to the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking, in the Caribbean and the rest of the world.

This resolution has historically received more than two-thirds support of the States Members of the United Nations, which symbolizes a clear and distinctive recognition for the need to end the blockade. The Government of Dominica will continue to embrace the Government and the people of Cuba as a fellow Member of the United Nations and a sister nation of the Caribbean.

Dominica's diplomatic relations have provided a platform for strengthening cultural and political ties, with some key areas of solidarity including education and health services. The Government of Dominica further views the application of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act as a serious concern, resulting in negative consequences, and therefore reiterates the call for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba. The Commonwealth of Dominica calls for a greater sense of diplomatic intercourse to prevail as a key strategy for resolving outstanding issues among members of the international community.

In that regard, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution to end this long economic, commercial and financial embargo against the Cuban people.

**Mr. Francis** (Trinidad and Tobago): At the outset, Trinidad and Tobago aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of the Group of 77 and China, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

The scale and scope of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has revealed the profound fragilities of our interconnected world, bringing to the forefront the deeply woven interdependence of our societies and peoples. We have learned, at phenomenal cost to lives and livelihoods, that only through solidarity, multilateralism and genuine cooperation can the world effectively face, and indeed surmount, the daunting common challenges that lie before humankind.

At the height of the uncertainty posed by the pandemic, in May 2020, Trinidad and Tobago received a team of Cuban nurses to assist with its COVID-19 efforts, through the Henry Reeve International Medical Brigade. Moreover, Cuba's support to the health sector in the Caribbean has a long and exemplary history, with many CARICOM countries, including Trinidad and Tobago, benefiting from Cuban Government scholarships for the study of medicine in Cuba, not to mention the increasing number of nationals availing themselves of highly rated specialist medical care in Cuba. Throughout our history, Cuba has been, and will no doubt continue to be, a reliable partner to many, especially those in the global South.

If the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the global blueprint for accelerating action and delivery in order to build back better and create more

resilient and prosperous societies, then the challenges we face as an international community require that we place increased emphasis on multilateral approaches, not unilateral ones. Our collective ambitions to ensure that no one is left behind must be rooted in maintaining the integrity of the 2030 Agenda and its full implementation. Yet the economic, commercial and financial embargo unjustly imposed against Cuba continues to impede its potential towards the full achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and hinders the full enjoyment of human rights by the Cuban people, including the right to development.

Trinidad and Tobago therefore remains resolute in its principled view that discriminatory trade practices and the extraterritorial application of domestic laws are in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law and serve only to undermine our collective ambitions enshrined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Opposition to this anachronistic policy is now almost universal in nature, with the General Assembly having adopted this resolution every year since 1992, condemning the ongoing impact of the embargo and declaring it to be in violation of the United Nations Charter and international law.

Trinidad and Tobago therefore welcomed with enthusiasm and hope the reopening of direct and frank dialogue between both parties in 2015 and the adoption of this very resolution during the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, when not a single Member State voted against it. However, regrettably, that optimism was short-lived, and additional restrictions were imposed through the Helms-Burton Act, which Trinidad and Tobago maintains is inconsistent with international law.

The unconvincing designation of Cuba as a State-sponsor of terrorism in January of last year serves only to deepen the chasm of mistrust and further frustrates any possibility for the normalization of diplomatic relations and finally burying this last vestige of the Cold War.

In December, Trinidad and Tobago, together with Barbados, Guyana and Jamaica, will proudly celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba, acknowledging the Cuban people as an integral part of the Caribbean family — a family that, although separated by the cultures and languages of our former colonizers, is nevertheless joined by geography and by a common heritage. Cuba is a Caribbean State, and its future is inextricably tied to that of other Caribbean nations.

Trinidad and Tobago will continue to support regional and international efforts to promote constructive dialogue so as to bring about the cessation of the embargo in place against Cuba, which significantly challenges the achievement of sustainable development in that country and, by extension, the wider Caribbean region.

In conclusion, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago remains fully committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular to the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference and to the freedom of international trade and navigation. In keeping with that commitment to the Charter and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which again calls for no one to be left behind, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago reaffirms its unswerving call for the cessation of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, sooner rather than later, and for the full and unconditional reintegration of Cuba into the international system.

It is within that context that Trinidad and Tobago will once more support the draft resolution (A/77/L.5) on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo by the United States of America against Cuba.

**Mr. Lagdameo** (Philippines) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba, Mr. Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla.

(*spoke in English*)

The Philippines aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Azerbaijan, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Pakistan, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

For the thirtieth year, we are witnessing today clear expressions of solidarity with the Cuban people through overwhelming support for the draft resolution (A/77/L.5) on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. The international community once again calls for an end to the six-decade embargo, an unjust and unjustified economic sanctions policy. It is also the thirtieth consecutive year that the Philippines

will support the draft resolution and the seventh year that ASEAN has made a statement on this important issue before the General Assembly.

The extraterritorial nature of the blockade continues to intensify, exacerbated by the United States decision to include Cuba in the list of State sponsors of terrorism. It has been reported that, at current prices, damages to Cuba's economy during the six decades of implementing this policy have reached over \$150.4 billion; around \$3.8 billion between August 2021 and February 2022.

The blockade presents a main obstacle for Cuba's socioeconomic development. It poses a serious challenge for Cuba's implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It violates international law. It is contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. With cultural and economic ties dating as far back as the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade in the early sixteenth century, Cuba and its people will always have the support of the Philippines.

The United States should lift the embargo against Cuba unconditionally and once and for all.

**Mr. Song Kim** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Sixty years ago, the United States imposed an all-out economic embargo against Cuba for the sole reason that the Cuban Government and people had chosen a socialist system. Since then, the Cuban people have been subjected to immeasurable pain and suffering amid the brutal and prolonged blockade imposed by the United States. The mere fact that Cuba suffered a loss of hundreds of billions of dollars in damage due to the United States economic embargo over the past 60 years clearly shows the degree of suffering the Cuban people have had to endure. The brutal, inhumane sanctions and blockade of the United States, continuing for more than half a century against one country and nation, should be duly denounced by the people of the whole world.

My delegation condemns the embargo on Cuba as an infringement upon its sovereignty, in contravention of the ideals and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as a crime against humanity and a violation of human rights.

We also strongly urge the United States to immediately lift the unilateral and extraterritorial economic and financial embargo against Cuba, as stipulated in the relevant General Assembly resolutions adopted by consensus, in reflection of the unanimous

desire of the States Members of the United Nations. The United States should abandon, as soon as possible, its anachronistic illusion that it can disrupt the Cuban socialist system and bring the Cuban people to their knees by dint of sanctions and pressure.

Recently, the United States has been hell-bent on sanctions, pressure and overthrowing the system, including through the extension to Cuba of the Trading with the Enemy Act, but that is no more than a desperate measure to recover from the failure of the hostile policy against Cuba pursued for six decades.

The embargo of the United States against Cuba, which runs counter to the general will of the international community and the trend of the times, is doomed to failure and frustration in future too.

The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea takes this opportunity to once again express its unreserved support to, and solidarity with, the Cuban Government and people in their struggle to foil United States sanctions and embargoes, ideological and cultural poisoning, as well as attempts to overthrow the system through counter-revolutionary forces at home and abroad and to foil the independent development and prosperity of the country.

The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will vote in favour of the draft resolution (A/77/L.5) on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba and calls upon all Member States to support the draft resolution as a reflection of the unanimous desire of the international community.

**Mr. Evseenko** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The Republic of Belarus aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of Azerbaijan, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and the representative of Eritrea, on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations.

We welcome the presence in the General Assembly Hall of Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba.

We are categorically opposed to the use of any unilateral restrictive measures against sovereign States Members of the United Nations. The principal aim of States that use illegal restrictive measures is to inflict maximum economic harm on another State and overthrow its existing Government. Recourse to

unilateral restrictions represents direct interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States, in gross violation of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Such actions are also contrary to the principle of multilateral cooperation, undermine international relations and foment hostility among the subjects of international law.

The more than 60-year-old economic, trade and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba is a flagrant violation of the human rights of all inhabitants of the island. It is an act of genocide under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The economic embargo against Cuba has become the longest, most inhumane act of economic warfare ever perpetrated against a sovereign State. Its effects continue to limit the possibilities for the country's economic growth, curb foreign investment, hinder trade relations with third countries and create the maximum possible obstacles to banking and other financial operations.

The extraterritorial extension of those restrictive measures is in direct violation of the legitimate rights of other States to fully cooperate with Havana. Once again, we strongly call on the United States of America to reconsider its decision and end the economic, trade and financial embargo on Cuba. Belarus will vote in favour of draft resolution A/77/L.5.

**Mr. Dang** (Viet Nam): I would like to extend our warmest welcome to His Excellency Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba.

Viet Nam aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of Azerbaijan, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the representative of Pakistan, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and the representative of Singapore, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Our plenary meeting today marks 30 years since the General Assembly began to consider and take action every year on a draft resolution entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", and 60 years since the imposition of the embargo on Cuba. Regrettably, during those three decades, the ultimate goal of the text has not been realized despite the strong messages of increasing and ceaseless support from people all over the world for



the legitimate claims of the Cuban people, as reflected by an overwhelming majority supporting the annual draft resolution.

The economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba is a violation of international law and the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations and runs counter to the common desire of nations to develop equal international relations, regardless of political systems, based on respect for each nation's right to choose its own path of development. It is the most unjust and prolonged system of unilateral sanctions ever imposed against a country in our modern world history. It has inflicted enormous damage on all sectors of the Cuban economy and caused untold hardship for generations of the Cuban people.

In recent years, the suffering of the Cuban people has multiplied due to the impacts of the coronavirus disease pandemic and major crises, such as the explosion at Hotel Saratoga in May, a major fire at a crucial oil storage facility in August and Hurricane Ian in late September this year. We commend the Cuban people for their resilience in overcoming those tremendous difficulties.

Today Viet Nam will vote unreservedly in favour of draft resolution A/77/L.5. Viet Nam maintains its consistent policy of opposing the imposition of unilateral embargoes and coercive measures on a sovereign State. The continuation of the embargo against Cuba is unjustifiable and will seriously hinder the efforts and endeavours of the people and the Government of Cuba, not only in the area of economic development but also in the area of international trade. It will also hinder the country's full participation in ongoing global development processes, including the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Viet Nam has experienced at first hand the tremendous suffering caused by a trade embargo and fully understands the difficulties and damage it incurs. At the same time, having established a comprehensive partnership with the United States, Viet Nam also fully recognizes that only constructive dialogue and engagement can foster mutual trust and bring about positive change.

Viet Nam once again urges the United States to put an end to its unilateral embargo against Cuba so that Cuba may be free to participate equitably and fairly in economic and trade relations, in accordance

with international law. We also urge the United States Government to reverse its current policy towards Cuba, not only for the benefit of the people of the two countries but also to promote peace, stability and development in the region and the world at large. Meanwhile, we appreciate Cuba's desire to continue respectful dialogue and cooperation on topics of mutual interest, as well as to engage in negotiations on outstanding bilateral matters with the United States on the basis of equality, reciprocity and respect for each other's national sovereignty and independence.

My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to reiterate Viet Nam's strong support for, as well as its friendship, cooperation and solidarity with, the brotherly people of Cuba and its unwavering commitment to safeguarding the principles of international law, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. We will continue to do our utmost to help the people of Cuba to overcome the difficulties and challenges caused by the embargo.

**Ms. King** (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): Permit me to take this opportunity to extend fraternal greetings to Mr. Bruno Rodríguez, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba, who joins us today.

My delegation also wishes to align itself with the statements made earlier by the representative of the Bahamas, on behalf of the Caribbean Community, the representative of Argentina, on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, the representative of Azerbaijan, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the representative of Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and the representative of Eritrea, on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines stands unwaveringly in solidarity with our sister Caribbean nation Cuba, and we reiterate our unequivocal support for draft resolution A/77/L.5, which calls for an immediate end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States. The annual draft resolution on that subject has received near unanimous support since 1992, sending a firm and clear message that the international community rejects this anachronistic, illegal and illegitimate blockade.

For six decades, the Cuban people have suffered under the weight of a hurtful policy of maximum pressure and aggression, which is designed to isolate Cuba, cripple its economy and cause damage to the well-

being of its people. Despite it all, the indomitable spirit of the Cuban people has persevered through those six decades. In the face of its own monumental challenges, Cuba's achievements have been remarkable and heroic. It has remained steadfast in demonstrating solidarity with many of the States Members of the United Nations, including my own country, by extending support in the areas of health care and humanitarian assistance on numerous occasions. Cuba and its people epitomize the spirit of solidarity, integrity and cooperation that is paramount in our rules-based international system, and we thank Cuba for its enduring selfless generosity.

We deplore Cuba's permanence on the unilaterally constructed list of State sponsors of terrorism. That classification is wholly objectionable, as there exists no legitimate evidence that Cuba supports or harbours terrorist entities of any type. This improper and absurd characterization does not help the global fight against the scourge of terrorism, and Cuba's name ought to be removed from its designations immediately. We also reject the enforcement of unilateral legislation with extraterritorial effects and therefore remain deeply disturbed by the widening of the extraterritorial nature of the blockade through the application of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act. We recognize the announcement in May by the Biden Administration that it would be reversing previously instituted harsh policies regarding travel and remittances, which is indeed a step in the right direction. However, those measures still fall short of meaningfully supporting Cuba and normalizing relations between the two countries. Unquestionably, only the complete lifting of the blockade will truly make life easier and demonstrate respect for the fundamental human rights of the Cuban people.

Soaring inflation and rising global food prices are creating undue hardship across the world, and many countries, regardless of their economic status, are struggling to confront those challenges. For Cuba, those multidimensional issues are made worse by the continuation of the embargo, which has cost the country's economy billions of dollars and denied it countless development opportunities. It is past time for that unjust instrument of oppression to end. Accordingly, we believe that dialogue and constructive engagement between our two respected friends and partners, Cuba and the United States, are essential for the mutual benefit of both countries, as well as for strengthening our hemispheric relations, regional integration and multilateral diplomacy.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines will continue to vigorously advocate for the complete lifting of the economic, commercial and financial blockade, which flagrantly violates the sacrosanct principles of international law. That is necessary to enable Cuba to achieve its development goals and full prosperity, which are its right and legitimate aspiration. It is our sincere hope that the overwhelming support that draft resolution A/77/L.5 will receive today will serve as renewed encouragement to the United States to finally cast aside its harmful policy, delink the Cuban Revolution from the presidential, senatorial, congressional and gubernatorial politics of Florida, unshackle the Cuban people and work on building a new and positive relationship with Cuba.

**Mr. Ndong Mangué** (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, my delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Mozambique, on behalf of the Group of African States, Azerbaijan, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Eritrea, on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations, and Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

In its national capacity, Equatorial Guinea welcomes the Foreign Minister of Cuba to New York and wishes him a pleasant stay. We also welcome the comprehensive reports of the Secretary-General on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba (A/76/405 and A/77/358).

For more than half a century we have been observing with concern the enormous difficulties faced by the Government and people of the Caribbean State of Cuba due to the unjustifiable unilateral blockade. The Governments of almost all the States Members of the United Nations and its bodies and agencies, as well as other entities and organizations, have repeatedly called for it to be lifted. That imperative need has become urgent in light of the devastating consequences the embargo is having not only for Cuba's economy but for that developing country's overall progress.

Equatorial Guinea deplores the protracted punishment of a country with which we enjoy close relations in a spirit of friendship and brotherhood. That is why we once again urge the United States, with which we also maintain excellent relations, to consider the suffering it is inflicting on the population and take the measures needed to put an end to the blockade and to Cuba's economic isolation. Why continue condemning

children and the elderly, and this country's vulnerable population in general, to misery? How can we say that Cuban children and young people are the future of their country when they are enduring so many restrictions?

Equatorial Guinea's condemnation of the embargo and our concern about it are not solely due to the good relations we enjoy with Cuba but also because ours is a country that maintains its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We advocate for the principles of sovereign equality and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, friendly relations among States, the peaceful resolution of international disputes, and of course the promotion of multilateralism — as opposed to protectionist policies and unilateralism — in order to strengthen the diplomacy of peace and respond to the challenges that affect us all.

In conclusion, we would like to express our concern about Cuba's continued inclusion on the list of State sponsors of terrorism. As Cuba has alleged and evidenced, its inclusion on that list has reinforced the discouraging and intimidating impact of the blockade, as well as exacerbating the country's difficulties in engaging in international trade and conducting financial operations. That has resulted in the termination of contracts, loss of relations with banking entities, debt and delays in sending and receiving funds and goods, among other things, with incalculable costs and consequences for the Cuban people and the Cuban economy.

If the United Nations is indeed a bastion of democracy, then our unanimous votes year after year demanding the same outcome should ensure that the United States hears our overwhelmingly united voices in favour of lifting the embargo. At the national level, we have made our position on the issue clear. We will continue on the same line of solidarity with our friendly sister Republic of Cuba by once again voting in favour of this year's draft resolution A/77/L.5, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba".

**Mr. Sabbagh** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Pakistan and Eritrea on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the Group of Friends in Defence of the United Nations Charter, respectively. I will make the following remarks in my national capacity.

At the outset, I welcome the participation of His Excellency Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, in today's meeting, which is held as part of the General Assembly's consideration of an important and historic item on its agenda.

The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates its unwavering and ongoing support for the resilience of the friendly people of Cuba against the unjust and illegal United States embargo imposed on them since 1962. Syria reiterates its full commitment to and staunch support for United Nations resolutions calling for an immediate end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba, which constitutes a serious breach of human rights, international humanitarian law and relevant resolutions of international legitimacy. The embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States is also a serious breach of the United Nations Charter and a systematic violation of the human rights of the Cuban people. The embargo is considered one of the longest-running unilateral coercive measures ever imposed, which is extremely serious. It is a main obstacle to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to ensuring that no one is left behind.

My delegation is proud to have consistently voted in favour of the draft resolution that has been presented to the General Assembly on an annual basis. The annual vote on that resolution, which has achieved near-consensus at the international level, sends a strong message calling for consecutive United States Administrations to lift the unlawful embargo against the Cuban people and cease its policies that impose unlawful unilateral sanctions on them, pursue companies and ships supplying fuel to the country, and listing Cuba arbitrarily and without justification by the State Department as a State sponsor of terrorism.

Targeting all sources of income in the country while intimidating Governments and banking institutions along with businessmen who deal with Cuba throughout the world is an essential part of the United States strategy to isolate Cuba and bring about its economic downfall. That has adversely affected the standard of living of the Cuban people and prevented them from meeting their food and other basic needs. Cuban diplomatic missions around the world have also been affected in their relations with banks that provide them with banking services, as a result of fear of retaliation from the United States Administration.

The periodic reports of the Secretary-General and the monthly reports that the Cuban delegation fervently circulates to Member States provide additional evidence of the suffering of the Cuban people resulting from the coercive measures that have been imposed on them for many decades. The relevant reports demonstrate in numbers the extent of the damages suffered by Cuba and the losses incurred by the Cuban people on a daily basis owing to the suffocating siege, including when the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic was spreading, causing devastating impacts on the peoples and economies of the world. Nevertheless, Cuba, by itself, managed to save thousands by creating its own COVID-19 vaccine, which it has provided to more than 35 countries across the world, through the medical services its teams deliver.

Like Cuba and a number of other countries, the Syrian Arab Republic remains today a target of multiple unilateral coercive measures that the United States is imposing in an illegal manner and counter to principles upheld by the United Nations and international legitimacy. That constitutes economic terrorism against my country and supplements the terrorism exercised from 2011 to date by such terrorist organizations as Da'esh, the Al-Nusra Front and other affiliated entities. That economic terrorism against my country has affected the lives of all Syrians by depriving them of the ability to meet their daily needs. It has also undermined the ability of the Syrian Government to provide basic services and support to those who need them. My country therefore once again calls on the United States to immediately and finally put an end to its unilateral coercive measures against the peoples of the world and its efforts to prevent them from enjoying their human rights, including the right to economic development and social welfare.

In conclusion, it is no longer acceptable for anyone to call for respecting the United Nations Charter, international humanitarian law and international human rights law without also calling for the immediate cessation of those unjust, unethical and inhumane measures imposed by some countries against others just because they do not subscribe to their same policies. Any pretexts or excuses that are used by those countries in that regard constitute political hypocrisy and double standards.

**Mrs. Zalabata Torres** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome the convening of today's meeting of the General Assembly as well as the draft resolution before us (A/77/L.5).

Colombia aligns itself with the statements of made on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China, and it welcomes the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, to today's meeting.

Colombia notes that the embargo against Cuba is one of the measures that has most often been condemned in the General Assembly every year since 1992, with more than 180 votes in favour of the draft resolution calling for its termination. The recommendations of the General Assembly have not been accepted, which is why today we reiterate our firm call for the full implementation of the resolutions calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. The report of the Secretary-General (A/77/358) affirms the cost to Cuba of that policy, which causes significant and unjustifiable damage to the well-being of the Cuban people.

Colombia recognizes that, for more than 40 years, Cuba has hosted delegates from both the Colombian Government and armed groups with the aim of engaging in dialogue and achieving peace. We must remember that Cuba was the birthplace of the 2016 final peace agreement with the former Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo, which is today seen an example for the whole world in terms of peacebuilding and peace consolidation. As a result, Colombia rejects the classification of Cuba as a country that sponsors terrorism, which has been used to deny its commitment to peace in Colombia and the world. The President of the Republic, Mr. Gustavo Petro Urrego, has described that designation as unjust.

I would like to express Colombia's support for the draft resolution submitted to this session, and we will vote in favour of it.

**Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett** (Guyana): My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of the Bahamas, on behalf of Caribbean Community, Azerbaijan, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Pakistan, on behalf of Group of 77 and China, and Egypt, on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. We warmly welcome His Excellency Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba, to today's meeting, and we extend our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his reports (A/76/405 and A/77/358).



Guyana joins in calling for an immediate and unconditional end to the commercial, economic and financial embargo imposed against Cuba by the Government of the United States of America. My Government attaches the highest priority to respect for the principles of the sovereign equality of States and non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, as well as international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States. On that basis, and as a matter of principle, Guyana is consistent and firm in its opposition to the embargo and calls for its immediate end. We will therefore vote in favour of draft resolution A/77/L.5, which is before us today.

Guyana shares the concerns expressed here today about the findings in the Secretary-General's most recent report, which highlight the profound negative impact that the embargo has on socioeconomic development in Cuba. We are alarmed by the assertion that the embargo has hindered the implementation of the United Nations development system's programmes and initiatives in the country, especially during the most complex period of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Similarly, reports of the far-reaching impact of the continued and unjust inclusion of Cuba on the list of State sponsors of terrorism, especially at a time when the country is still grappling with the effects of the pandemic and recovering from a devastating hurricane, is a cause of great concern to Guyana. We therefore reaffirm that the blockade against Cuba has no place in modern international relations and runs counter to our commitment to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and leaving no one behind. We remain consistent in calling for the embargo to be lifted so that the Cuban people can rightfully pursue and realize their social and economic development.

Guyana and Cuba have long shared fraternal bonds of friendship, grounded in mutual respect and understanding and marked by close cooperation and collaboration at the political, economic and cultural levels. Despite the challenges brought about by the embargo, Cuba continues to generously provide medical assistance, training and scholarships to many Guyanese, assisting us in our own human development. We are grateful for, and commend, the Cuban Government's efforts to also provide support to

neighbouring countries to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and, indeed, for its consistent global humanitarian commitment.

It has been 60 years too long since the imposition of the embargo against Cuba. We call on the international community to redouble its efforts to encourage constructive dialogue between the United States of America and Cuba as a means of building trust and, ultimately, leading to the complete normalization of relations between the two countries. Guyana firmly believes that the normalization of relations between the countries would have a beneficial impact on peace in the hemisphere and would result in greater prosperity for all.

**Ms. Mwanjila (Kenya):** We would like to extend our warm greetings to His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba.

Kenya aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Mozambique, on behalf of the Group of African States, Pakistan, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and Azerbaijan, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. I will now make the following remarks in our national capacity.

We gather here today to deliberate yet again on the perversions of the sanctity of the principles that outline statehood in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The Charter not only outlines the rights of sovereignty and non-interference, but also enshrines our collective will for development and prosperity.

As the longest trade embargo in modern history, the embargo against Cuba by the United States has deeply undermined development for 60 years. Estimates place the cost of the embargo at more than \$130 billion.

As many countries here continue to feel the impacts of the cascading crises, Cuba is facing an additional and unjustifiable constraint. We must reiterate that generalized sanctions and embargoes run counter to our collective objectives of development, peace and human rights. They are an affront to sovereignty and self-determination and should be regarded as a tool from an unfortunate bygone era.

Our United Nations is bound by international law and an abiding aspiration to a multilateralism that respects every Member State as equal.

For all those reasons, Kenya strongly expresses its support for Cuba and the Cuban people and will vote in favour of draft resolution A/77/L.5. The result of the

voting will demonstrate overwhelming support for, and solidarity with, Cuba. We call for the immediate lifting of the embargo, and will continue to do so, because we are convinced that that upholds our values as a country and as a Member of the United Nations.

**Mr. Tavoli** (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, I would like to take this opportunity to offer our sincere welcome to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba, His Excellency Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla.

I would also like to align myself with the statements made on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Group of 77 and China.

The United States expansionism and arrogant approach continues to present the greatest threat and challenge to global peace and security that we are seeing today. Its unilateral coercive measures, including economic sanctions and embargoes, have failed to bear fruit and realize its political agendas, but they have had a severe and adverse impact on the promotion of peace at both the regional and international level. An increased reliance on unilateral coercive measures, coupled with an interventionist, flawed and short-sighted foreign policy are clear warning signs of unilateralism. The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the view that the imposition of any unilateral coercive measures runs contrary to the purposes and principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations. In practice, such measures weaken the rule of law, the world order, international solidarity, multilateralism and ultimately the authority of the United Nations itself.

Year after year, the General Assembly has expressed its overwhelming support for and solidarity with the Government and the people of Cuba through its decisive votes in favour of resolutions calling for lifting the decades-long United States embargo on Cuba. Despite those steadfast calls, the economic, commercial and financial embargo on the Cuban people is still in place. Such measures serve no purpose other than to inflict tremendous hardship and suffering on the people of Cuba. The sixty-first anniversary of the entry into force of this malign policy is only a few months away. The detrimental repercussions of the embargo have spared no Cuban citizen or sector of the economy.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has itself been a target of unlawful and inhumane sanctions imposed by the United States since 1979. In the past 40 years, the rate of unilateral coercive measures imposed on the Iranian people has exponentially increased to the extent that the United States has even targeted imports of pharmaceutical and medical equipment. In addition to reimposing its unilateral illegal sanctions on Iran, in gross violation of its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations as well as Security Council resolution 2231 (2015), the United States has continued to brazenly threaten other States, putting them in the position of choosing between violating the resolution or being punished, and Iran and Cuba are paying the price for resisting and maintaining their independence from the United States' colonialist policies. Iran will continue working with its partners to create a new environment in which we can work to offset the United States' unlawful sanctions and irreversibly eliminate the destabilizing issue of the United States' extraterritorial application of its domestic legislation.

The blockade not only violates Cubans' right to conduct their affairs in a sovereign manner and without hindrance, but it also restricts other States' ability to freely develop commercial ties with Cuba. We firmly believe that the international community must work to find solutions to counter such destructive interventions and unilateralism. The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly believes in cooperating with friendly countries, including Cuba, to prudently address that challenge and prevent the United States from achieving its illegitimate objectives.

Lastly, my country expresses its solidarity with the people and Government of Cuba and would like to reiterate that the United States must immediately and fully comply with its international obligations and cease the application and imposition of all unilateral coercive measures.

**Mr. Ke** (Cambodia): I would like to begin by warmly welcoming His Excellency Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba, to this very important meeting.

Cambodia associates itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Singapore, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Eritrea, on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations, Pakistan, on behalf of

the Group of 77 and China, and Azerbaijan, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Unilateral sanctions imposed on any country go against the very foundation of the Charter of the United Nations and Member States' concerted efforts to uphold multilateralism and enhance international cooperation. It has been more than 60 years since the United States unilaterally imposed an economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba. It has had an adverse impact on the lives and livelihood of the Cuban people, including by preventing them from fully enjoying fundamental rights. The unfair and discriminatory policy has prevented the country from realizing its goals under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the global Agenda that we all adopted. For those six decades, the blockade paradigm has benefited no one. The United States has failed to achieve its ultimate goals and continues only to cause chronic shortages and damage economic conditions for

a population of more than 11 million. The people of Cuba deserve to live with peace and stability and enjoy social development. Cambodia will continue to join the international community in standing in solidarity with the Cuban people and Government by voting in favour of draft resolution A/77/L.5, and by continuing to urge the United States to immediately lift its embargo and remove Cuba from the list of State sponsors of terrorism.

In conclusion, Cambodia calls on both countries to resolve their differences through dialogue and return to a normalization of their relations.

**The Acting President:** We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item for this meeting. We shall hear the remaining speakers tomorrow, 3 November, at 10 a.m. in this Hall.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 36.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*