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Official Records

President: Mr. Muhammad-Bande (Nigeria)

In the absence of the President, Mr. García Moritán (Argentina), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 39 (continued)

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

Report of the Secretary-General (A/74/91/Rev.1)

Draft resolution (A/74/L.6)

Mr. Gertze (Namibia): The Namibian delegation welcomes the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba at the General Assembly, and we thank everyone for being in this Hall this morning.

More than 70 years ago, out of the ashes of the Second World War and having seen the devastation and misery caused by the cruel pursuit of power and domination, world leaders came together to found this international community of nations. They committed to doing everything in their power to do good for humankind. They had the shared objective of establishing a forum that would be at the forefront of efforts aimed at achieving peace and security in the world. It was United States President Franklin Delano Roosevelt who, I would like to believe, might have drawn inspiration from the age-old wisdom that in unity lies strength when he coined the name for the Organization now known as the United Nations.

We should never lose sight of the fact that the Organization was never envisaged to cause harm to the world's citizens; rather, it was established to seek the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Therefore, as we come together yet again to join our voices on the necessity of environment nding the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, let us send a strong and unequivocal message to the people of the Republic of Cuba that the United Nations remains steadfast in its resolve to do good for humankind and bring peaceful resolution to conflicts.

As my delegation has done for decades, we continue to stand with and reiterate our firm and unwavering support for the people and the Government of Cuba. My delegation joins the many speakers before me in reminding us all that the United States blockade contravenes international law and the Charter of the United Nations and that it represents an impediment to the implementation of Cuba's national economic and social development plan, which was put in place to accelerate its implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In 2016, we assembled in this Hall to welcome the change in United States policy towards Cuba. We expressed hopes that the blockade would finally come to an end. Three years later, we reassemble in this same Hall frustrated by United States actions that have only become more aggressive and are being imposed on a larger scale. Sadly, rather than moving forward to bring an end to the suffering and exclusion of the Cuban

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people, we have seen many steps taken backwards in 2019.

We note with great concern the new measures announced in April against Cuban enterprises, companies and individuals or third countries that do business in Cuba. No citizen or sector of the economy has escaped the negative effects of this unilateral policy, which hinders Cuba's development. We are disappointed at these new and tightened measures, and we urge the United States to reconsider them. We remain hopeful that the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba will be fully lifted, relations will improve and the two countries will restore full economic activities to their mutual benefit.

As we work to consolidate multilateralism, I would like to remind everyone of the President's call to galvanize our efforts for the inclusion of all. Rather than working in isolation, let us therefore stand together to promote a stronger culture of cooperation for the advancement of the well-being of all citizens of the world and bring an end to the Cuban people's suffering.

In conclusion, for Namibia, the Cuban people are family. Notwithstanding all the challenges the Cuban people have had to face and endure over all these years, they are a resilient people. Like many of the nations in this Hall, Cuba was at the forefront of contributing to the freedom and independence of my own country. More importantly — and again like many of the Member States here — Cuba has spared no effort in contributing to the welfare of millions of people around the world through its selfless contributions in so many cases where natural disasters or adversity had struck or through science, technological advancements, training and capacity-building support to the international community and medical professionals in much of the developing world.

Imagine how much more the people of the United States and Cuba, and indeed the rest of the world, could benefit if we could concentrate our energies on constructive engagement and interaction. This can happen only when this unjust blockade is lifted. It is against this background, and in standing up in defence of international law and United Nations resolutions, that my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution. We urge all Member States to stand by the Cuban people.

Mr. Ahmed (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Egypt aligns itself with the statements made by the observer of

Palestine and the representatives of Tunisia, Azerbaijan and Uganda on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Group of African States, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, respectively (see A/74/PV.27).

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba (A/74/91/Rev.1).

I reiterate Egypt's firm position in support of the people and Government of Cuba, as the unilateral measures imposed in the form of the embargo on the country directly and adversely affect vital economic sectors and have grave repercussions for the socioeconomic welfare of the Cuban people. The embargo obstructs access to food, medicine, education and state-of-the-art technology.

Egypt also stresses the importance of upholding the principles of multilateralism, the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and the need to respect the numerous relevant Assembly resolutions that have been adopted by overwhelming majorities. We also reiterate that the continuation of the embargo, which has lasted for more than five decades, will never deter the international community from repeatedly calling for the lifting of measures that run counter to international law.

In conclusion, Egypt calls for the full and immediate lifting of the embargo against Cuba and for enabling the Cuban people to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr. Arreaza (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela welcomes the convening of this plenary meeting to address an issue to which our delegation attaches particular importance, the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America on Cuba.

The fact that we sent a special delegation at the highest level, headed by our Minister for Foreign Affairs, reflects the importance that the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Mr. Nicolás Maduro Moros, attaches to the debate and vote on the just and legitimate draft resolution before us (A/74/L.6). We are in this Hall to support Cuba at a time when the United States Government has tightened the criminal embargo that has been imposed on its noble people for almost 60

years. But we are also in this Hall at a time of global turbulence in order to highlight how urgent it is for all Member States to strengthen multilateralism and respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations by demanding an end to all forms of unilateral coercive measures imposed in violation of international law.

In that regard, we thank Secretary-General António Guterres for submitting his report (A/74/91/Rev.1) and extend our warmest greetings and respect to His Excellency Mr. Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba, and his entire delegation, who are with us at this meeting. I assure the Foreign Minister that no matter how many obstacles we face, no action by the United States bureaucracy will be able to prevent Cuba and Venezuela from continuing to fight and win together. We are succeeding. We are in this Hall now and we will always stand with Cuba.

Our delegation also associates itself with the statements made by the observer of the Observer State of Palestine and the representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, respectively (see A/74/PV.27).

For 28 years in a row, the General Assembly — the most democratic organ of our Organization — has called for the repeal of the economic, commercial and financial embargo that seeks not only to restrict the right to development of the heroic Cuban people, but also to promote an unconstitutional change of Government in our sister socialist and revolutionary Republic of Cuba, the country of Martí and Fidel. They have not achieved that political objective, nor will they ever. The Cuban people are determined to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and thereby freely define their political, economic, social and cultural system, as laid out by Commander Hugo Chávez in a letter sent to the General Assembly in September 2011, when referring to the embargo against Cuba:

“Since all arguments of international good sense have been exhausted, we have no choice but to believe that such aggravated cruelty against the Cuban Revolution is the result of imperial arrogance in the face of the dignity and courage shown by the defiant Cuban people in their sovereign decision to determine their own fate and fight for their happiness.” (A/66/PV.29, p.4)

This nearly universal appeal is simply a sign of the firm commitment of the States Members of the United Nations to the principles enshrined in its founding Charter, which include the principles of sovereign equality and political independence of States, as well as non-intervention in internal affairs. However, the repeated appeal has been disregarded with the full contempt of those whose actions systematically violate international law with total impunity.

Venezuela demands an end to economic and financial terrorism and to the non-conventional war with lethal consequences waged against the people of the Republic of Cuba and now also against the people of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. International relations should not be managed by political intolerance. Only uncivilized, virtually primitive governing elites can use economic asphyxiation as a weapon of mass destruction in order to impose their political preferences on sovereign countries by inflicting widespread suffering on their peoples. It is a criminal practice no matter how one looks at it. In fact, it fits without a moment's hesitation into the category of crimes against humanity. It is a collective punishment that derives from the whims and arrogance of those who believe themselves to be superior and masters of the world. Incidentally, through its admirable resistance, Cuba has shown that those people are neither superior nor masters of the world. And sooner or later, they will have to compensate the Cuban people for the pain and unquantifiable impact of their brutal and arbitrary policies.

The siege policy imposed on Cuba is the most unjust, severe and prolonged system of unilateral coercive measures implemented against any people in modern history, with immeasurable human cost. The embargo on Cuba is the most emblematic example of the perversity of unilateral actions with forced extraterritorial impact, not for its duration and intensity, but because of the heroism and creativity that the Cuban people and their revolution have shown in confronting it with unparalleled dignity and courage. And we must also say that it is further emblematic because after almost 60 years of brutal application, the most powerful country on the planet has not only not achieved any of the political objectives it laid out 59 years ago but on the contrary has strengthened the national unity and shared roots of the Cuban people and bolstered popular support for its leadership and its historic revolution among the new generations.

The human consequences of the attempt to prevent the Cuban people from having access to health, education, housing, and food, and to deny them their basic social rights, have been direct and cruel. The embargo, tightened under the current United States Administration, leads to millions of dollars in losses, particularly in tourism, banking sectors, trade and foreign investment. It also affects the financial sector by harassing and threatening financial institutions and banks for carrying out perfectly legal transactions with the Government of Cuba, and leads to a phenomenon known as overcompliance, owing to its intimidating effect on the international business community.

The extraterritorial impact of these arbitrary policies also affects any country or entity that seeks to maintain economic, commercial or financial relations with Cuba in a legal and sovereign manner. It is not, as the United States Government asserts, a bilateral issue or an embargo against Cuba alone. It is a comprehensive policy that affects the entire international community, violating every rule of international law and even the multilateral trade system itself and the very nature of the World Trade Organization. The Government of the United States of America has no authority over the sovereignty of States, and its attempt to turn national laws into universal ones is spurious.

Despite the embargo, throughout its revolutionary history Cuba has not only developed a robust system of social protection and human development guarantees within its borders, it has even showed its spirit of solidarity by offering — despite its economic difficulties, and within the framework of South-South cooperation — disinterested aid and technical assistance to brotherly peoples of the developing world, particularly in the areas of health, education and sport. We commemorated the nineteenth anniversary of the signing of the Cuba-Venezuela cooperation agreement only a week ago. Thanks to the international solidarity, talent, training and integrity of individual Cubans, millions of lives have been saved and millions of Venezuelan families now have happier and fuller lives, with better education, culture and values. We remember the words of Commander Fidel Castro when he affirmed that solidarity is not sharing what we have left over but sharing what little we have.

We affirm that the blockade is an obsolete policy, with no ethical or legal basis in the twenty-first century, used in an attempt to isolate Cuba. By every measure that policy has failed, just as the coup d'état against

President Maduro in Venezuela failed. Meanwhile, thanks to its contempt for world opinion and failure to comply with the resolutions adopted year after year in the General Assembly, in addition to many other unilateral actions, it is the very Government of the United States that has isolated itself from the global community. This can be seen in many areas of international coexistence.

Today, for example, Washington seeks to revive the ancient and infamous Monroe Doctrine of 1823 — America for Americans, or rather for North Americans — according to which it considers our region, Latin America and the Caribbean, as its backyard and according to which our peoples must renounce their independence and their right to self-determination. Latin America and the Caribbean are not and never will be the backyard of any empire. We are free peoples, still resisting. With Cuba at the forefront, we are a zone of peace demonstrating the irrevocable character of our freedom and independence. Our destiny is Bolivarian unity, not Monroeist annexation.

Multilateralism is more than joint action. It is the most powerful and legitimate instrument we have, not only for the peaceful resolution of conflicts but also for the promotion of international cooperation and understanding among peoples based on mutual respect and a core value of international relations, tolerance. Today, in the face of growing tendencies towards unilateralism, Venezuela reiterates its firm commitment to an inclusive and democratic multilateralism that will enable full and effective progress towards a world of peace and prosperity.

We hope that one day the corporate elite that governs Washington will make amends and give a clear demonstration of the commitment of the United States to multilateralism and international legality through the elimination and lifting of the Cuban embargo and its series of coercive measures, which, incidentally, affect one third of the international community — one third of humankind. Until that happens, and we hope it does, it is incumbent on the United Nations to stop the attempts of the United States to impose its desire to dominate others by enforcing compliance with the Charter and its purposes and principles, and by safeguarding the very existence of the Organization.

The draft resolution that gathers us here today, which enjoys nearly universal consensus and which we will vote on for the twenty-eighth consecutive year, is critical. But Venezuela demands that all United

Nations entities, including its Secretariat, the Security Council and its human rights system, bring greater determination, courage and strength to bear, not only in denouncing any form of unilateral arbitrary measures or those disguised as false collective unilateralism, but in proposing and taking concrete actions and decisions to stop those inhuman policies, which defile the body and spirit of the Charter and therefore represent an affront to the United Nations, hampering its performance and its achievement of its noble objectives. As Cuba's apostle José Martí often said, "Action is the best way of speaking". We must bravely take action.

As a responsible member of the international community, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela concludes its statement by announcing that it will once again vote in favour of draft resolution A/74/L.6, which establishes the need to end the embargo imposed against Cuba, while demanding that the United States of America comply with the provisions of the resolution once it is adopted, and submit to the undeniable will of this General Assembly, in line with the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, adopted on 24 October 1970.

It is time to hear and obey the clamour of the vast majority, not just of Member States but of the peoples of the world, who are united in demanding an immediate and definitive end to the anachronistic and inhumane blockade of Cuba. It is time to put an end to double standards in international relations. Almost 200 years ago, the liberator Simón Bolívar prophesied that the United States seemed destined by providence to plague America with miseries in the name of freedom. It is therefore time to stop the imperialist madness and prevent it from plaguing humankind with miseries based on intolerance and in the name of a twisted and false notion of freedom.

Together the States and peoples of the world must unite in defence of peace and the Charter of the United Nations. Only when united and together can we be victorious.

Ms. Williams (Saint Kitts and Nevis): Saint Kitts and Nevis would like to add its voice to this extremely important debate on agenda item 39, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, which addresses the very core of international law, sovereignty, non-intervention

and the strengthened role of the United Nations in international affairs.

Saint Kitts and Nevis has very good relations with the United States of America. However, we are in this Hall today to lend our support to draft resolution A/74/L.6. My delegation therefore associates itself with the statements made yesterday by the observer of the State of Palestine and the representatives of Azerbaijan and Grenada on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Caribbean Community (see A/74/PV.27).

In its contribution to the Secretary-General's report on this matter (A/74/91/Rev.1), Saint Kitts and Nevis expressed its disappointment at measures being sought to intensify the economic aggression against Cuba and reiterates its unequivocal opposition to the maintenance of this unjust embargo, which continues to create widespread economic hardship for the people of Cuba. Cuba is a close ally of Saint Kitts and Nevis and has aided in my country's economic and social development, especially in the areas of agriculture, education and health. This is a testament to the fact that Cuba could do more internationally if the embargo were lifted, since it constitutes a key obstacle to Cuba's efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

We consider the financial and economic embargo to be a burden on our brothers and sisters in Cuba. The negative impact on the economy of that small island developing State is quite profound and unfair to its people. Now is a critical time for trying to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and no country should be left behind. It is a time for international cooperation and for pooling resources so as to assist each other in this great challenge. That is why Saint Kitts and Nevis once again calls on the United States of America to remove the embargo on Cuba.

The fact that the majority of the membership traditionally votes in favour of the draft resolution signifies the overriding sentiment that the embargo is wrong on all levels. We implore all States Members to respect the sanctity of the General Assembly and the decisions it makes. Failure to do so undermines the functioning of the United Nations system.

While Saint Kitts and Nevis continues to enjoy friendly relations with the United States of America and Cuba, it is my delegation's hope that both countries can improve their relationship and embark on a process of cooperation. There is much that we can learn from

each other, but the embargo remains an impediment to that. That is why Saint Kitts and Nevis supports draft resolution A/74/L.6 and will vote in favour of it. Every year we reiterate our call to both countries to find common ground so that the entire international community can move beyond the current impasse, yet every year little is done. There has to be recognizable change. We call on the United States to put an end once and for all to the unjust blockade against Cuba.

Mrs. Craft (United States of America): Every year for 28 years, the General Assembly has voted on a draft resolution calling for the United States to end its economic embargo on Cuba. For the twenty-eighth time, the draft resolution will likely be almost unanimously adopted. My Government, and perhaps a few others, will oppose it.

Like all nations, we get to choose the countries with which we trade. That is our sovereign right. So it is worrying that the international community, in the name of protecting sovereignty, continues to challenge that right. But what is even more concerning is that every year, this body entertains the claim that the Cuban regime has no choice in response to the embargo other than to abuse its own people. This claim has been made both explicitly and implicitly in the past 24 hours.

So today I want to pose a simple question. Does the United States policy force the Cuban regime to violate the human rights of its own people? Exploring this question does not require long-winded speeches — and I promise that this statement will not be long — because our aim is to reveal the truth, not confuse it.

Still, we must name the abuses endured by the Cuban people, abuses that are antithetical to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a document signed by Cuba, and ask whether the Cuban regime was forced to commit them. Article 9 of the Declaration states that “[n]o one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile”. In Cuba, reports estimate that 50,000 journalists, activists and others have been arbitrarily arrested since 2010. Just this past October, human rights defender José Daniel Ferrer García and other advocates were arrested on fabricated charges. Mr. Ferrer has not been seen since. Our embargo does not force the Cuban regime to arrest independent journalists and human rights defenders without cause. That is a choice, freely made.

Article 4 declares that “[n]o one shall be held in ... servitude”. In Cuba, doctors are sent to work abroad,

where they are stripped of their passports, kept under watch by members of Cuba’s security forces, required to work without rest and forced to turn over all but a few dollars of their income to the Communist Party. Our embargo does not force the Cuban regime to impose those conditions on women and men who have pledged to heal the sick. That is a choice, freely made.

Article 23 grants each person the right to free choice of employment. In Cuba, private industry is frequently subjected to arbitrary property seizures, business-licence suspension and demands for bribes. Our embargo does not force the Cuban regime to strangle the efforts of entrepreneurs or push women and men out of their preferred fields of work. That is a choice, freely made.

Article 19 guarantees the right to freedoms of opinion and expression, including the right to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information through any media. But in Cuba, all political parties besides the Communist Party are outlawed, political activists are silenced, and the country’s media is entirely controlled by the State. Our embargo does not force the Cuban regime to monitor or muzzle the voices of those demanding a better life for themselves and their families. That is a choice, freely made.

As with all choices, there comes a time for responsibility. But to date, responsibility is what the Cuban regime has tried to avoid — responsibility for its destructive economic decisions, repression of political diversity and denial of civil and political rights. That is not the kind of regime we should ever even expect to take responsibility. At home, it refuses to lessen the misery of its own people, unwilling to import the hundreds of millions of dollars in agricultural and medical goods authorized by the United States each year. Abroad, it collaborates with the former Maduro regime, creating an economic and humanitarian crisis that is spreading beyond Venezuela’s borders. Cuba is an active contributor to regional instability. Its leaders will not hold themselves to account.

But while the regime will not act responsibly, the General Assembly can. We can speak truthfully about what the Cuban regime is doing, and what it is responsible for, because a commitment to speaking the truth is ultimately what is at stake in this context today. If we fail to act, knowing the truth, there would be a good reason for anger. But frankly, a failure to

act would provoke even more sorrow than anger. For it is sorrowful indeed to see the futures of 11 million Cubans dimmed by the specific and informed choices of their leaders.

And so I now return to my question. I now answer that the United States is not responsible for the Cuban regime's endless abuses of its people. We do not accept responsibility for these abuses and we never will. We will vote against draft resolution A/74/L.6.

As members of the Assembly, it is our first responsibility as leaders to defend those without a voice, today most especially the people of Cuba. We should be ashamed of ourselves if we refuse to raise our voices in defence of theirs.

Ms. Mose (Solomon Islands): My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the Observer State of Palestine on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (see A/74/PV.27).

We would like to add the following remarks in our national capacity and in solidarity with Cuba on the discussions on draft resolution A/74/L.6, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba".

At the outset, I would like to express our thanks to the Secretary-General for his report on this particular matter (A/74/91/Rev.1). Solomon Islands would also like to thank Cuba for the strong bilateral relations that our two countries enjoy and in particular for Cuba's assistance to our people through its training of Solomon Islands students in the medical field.

However, we note with regret that the embargo imposed on Cuba for almost six decades remains in place. In the past year, the tightening of measures under the embargo has done Cuba severe economic damage, depriving Cubans of financial resources. They are even being denied the fuel supply they need not only for development but for their daily livelihoods.

Solomon Islands reiterates its position and calls for lifting the embargo placed on Cuba. We encourage the restoration of good relations between Cuba and the United States in the name of peace and in furtherance of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Esono Mbengono (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to extend a warm welcome and

our greetings to His Excellency Mr. Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba. We also welcome the report of the Secretary-General (A/74/91/Rev.1).

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea fully aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Tunisia and Azerbaijan and by the observer of the State of Palestine on behalf of the Group of African States, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Group of 77 and China, respectively (see A/74/PV.27), and we would like to add the following observations in our national capacity.

In accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law, with which our own foreign policy is aligned, the Government of Equatorial Guinea continues and will continue to advocate the principles of sovereign equality and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. In line with those principles and international law, as well as with the excellent bilateral relations we maintain with Cuba, Equatorial Guinea has not enacted any laws or measures aimed at imposing any unilateral economic, commercial or financial embargo against Cuba.

Furthermore, in our belief in the right of sovereign States to elect their own political, economic, cultural and social systems in order to meet the collective aspirations of their peoples, we have reiterated through our statements and our vote in favour of resolution 73/8 and its precedents how urgent it is to immediately and unconditionally lift the unilateral measures imposed on Cuba, a friendly country that has been deeply affected and punished by the economic, commercial and financial sanctions imposed by the United States, another country with which we maintain good relations. We therefore want to take advantage of this opportunity to urge both States to take the necessary measures to end the blockade and the economic isolation that Cuba has been subjected to for many years and that continue to impede its development today, causing the Cuban people suffering. We hope to see the two countries normalize their relations in all fields for the benefit of the peoples of both countries.

In conclusion, we want to express our deep concern and firm condemnation of the fact that such unilateral measures are hampering the economic development of a developing country. The Cuban delegation has also condemned this and demonstrated that the embargo

on their country has slowed its implementation of its national economic and social development plan, as well as its achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. The virtually unanimous support for resolution 73/8 showed that the blockade is universally considered to be unfair and contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

At the national level, our position remains clear on this issue. We will continue our support for the sister Republic of Cuba by voting in favour of the draft resolution (A/74/L.6) once again.

Mr. Mero (United Republic of Tanzania): Tanzania associates itself with the statements made by the observer of the State of Palestine and the representatives of Tunisia and Azerbaijan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Group of African States and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, respectively (see A/74/PV.27).

In 2015, the world welcomed a historic and momentous decision taken by the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba to restore diplomatic relations. To most of us, it was the beginning of high hopes and expectations for a harmonious coexistence. However, we have since begun to feel that those hopes are fading, because the efforts to lift the embargo, which has condemned the people of Cuba to many years of suffering, are flagging. It is important now for all of us to note that the sanctions under the embargo are unjust and that they have subjected the economy of Cuba to an unacceptable blockade that makes most policy interventions virtually ineffective.

My delegation would like to urge the international community to call for lifting the unilateral sanctions imposed on Cuba. Cuba has borne sanctions that have negatively affected its people, especially the most vulnerable — women, children and the elderly — for far too long.

Before the embargo, the United States and Cuba were natural trading partners. There is no reason to believe that if the embargo were lifted, the trading partnership between the two nations would not immediately flourish again. My delegation believes that lifting the sanctions and strengthening the bond between the two countries through trade and commerce will improve the quality of life of both Cubans and Americans. Ending the embargo is an investment in economic progress and

in a better future for both countries. They therefore have a moral obligation to try to make it happen.

In conclusion, we hope that, through the power of reason and diplomatic means, there will be a total removal of the embargo against Cuba, leading to a new dawn of cooperation.

Mr. Llorentty Solíz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation welcomes the Secretary-General's report (A/74/91/Rev.1).

We also align ourselves with the statements made by the observer of the State of Palestine and the representative of Azerbaijan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, respectively (see A/74/PV.27).

At the outset, we welcome the presence among us of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba, His Excellency Mr. Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla, and his delegation.

The economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba is one of the most important items on the United Nations agenda and one that warrants serious attention, because it embodies the *raison d'être* and the very purpose of our Organization, as well as the challenges that threaten it. The embargo on Cuba is illegal, unjust and immoral, and it violates the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the economic and social rights of the Cuban people.

I would like to remind the Assembly of the special declaration of the fifth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, issued on 25 January 2017, concerning the need to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo of Cuba by the United States of America, which stated that the Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean,

“[r]eaffirm[ed] their strongest rejection of economic coercive measures not supported by the international law, including all those unilateral actions imposed on sovereign countries for political reasons that impair the well-being of their peoples and are designed to prevent these countries from exercising their right to decide, by their own free will, their political, economic and social systems”.

I know that today's General Assembly meeting is being watched in the homes, universities and workplaces of all Cubans. I extend to all of them my

heartfelt tributes and revolutionary greetings. This meeting is a demonstration of the world's solidarity with Cuba. The embargo is real. It affects international cooperation, health, food, education and culture in Cuba. It impairs its foreign trade, foreign investment, construction, tourism, transportation, civil aeronautics and sugar industry.

But today's meeting is more than a show of solidarity with Cuba. It is a meeting to express our thanks for Cuba's enormous, wonderful and exemplary solidarity with the peoples of the world. When racism and colonialism held our African brothers hostage, Cuba was there. When illiteracy held back many of our peoples, Cuba was there. When Ebola, malaria and other diseases attacked the poorest of the planet, Cuban solidarity was there. When hurricanes struck our brothers in the Caribbean, Cuban solidarity was there. When earthquakes hurt our brothers in Asia, Cuban solidarity was there. In the words of Nelson Mandela,

“The Cuban people hold a special place in the hearts of the peoples of Africa. The Cuban internationalists have made a contribution to African independence, freedom and justice, unparalleled for its principled and selfless character”.

I want to pay tribute to the almost 30,000 Cuban health-care professionals who provide support in 85 countries around the world. As President Evo Morales has said, they share what little they have and do so selflessly. They have never asked anyone for mining, oil or forest concessions in exchange for their solidarity and support.

But we are not merely discussing Cuba today, we are talking about the entire multilateral system, which is under threat. Multilateralism is under deliberate attack. We have only to look at what is happening with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the International Criminal Court, the Human Rights Council and agreements on denuclearization and disarmament, or to consider the unilateral military actions and threats of the use of force against Member States and the proliferating unilateral coercive sanctions. What should we do? We must fight to defend the multilateral system, the United Nations, international law and the purposes and principles that unite us as an international community.

We are not just voting against the economic, commercial and financial embargo at today's meeting. We are voting for hope, for the wonderful possibility

of making the world more just. Bolivia joins its voice to those who ask, call for and demand the lifting of the embargo.

Mr. Ke (Cambodia): At the outset, allow me to warmly welcome His Excellency Mr. Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, to this important meeting. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the issue before us (A/74/91/Rev.1).

My delegation associates itself with the statements delivered by the observer of the State of Palestine and by the representatives of Azerbaijan and of Singapore on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, respectively (see A/74/PV.27).

Cambodia will vote in favour of draft resolution A/74/L.6, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United State of America against Cuba. We join the overwhelming majority of Member States in urging the United States to lift a unilateral economic measure that has adversely affected the living conditions and rights of the Cuban people and has undermined the Cuban Government's efforts to achieve its trade, economic and development objectives.

As the global community strives to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a timely manner, it is crucial to ensure that nations strengthen their economic, commercial and financial ties through closer cooperation and engagement so that they can fulfil their shared development ambition of leaving no one behind. In this context, all nations should fully embrace the promotion of global trade and the end of preferential treatment and trade barriers. It is through respect for the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of equality, multilateralism and friendly cooperation among States that the global community will flourish. How any nation chooses to conduct its domestic affairs must be left to its people. They are the ones who can rightfully decide their own fate in accordance with their national culture, traditions, history and circumstances without external interference or pressure.

Cambodia and Cuba have enjoyed long-standing bilateral relations. I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Cuba for the generous assistance and support it has provided to Cambodia, particularly in the health-care sector.

I would like to conclude by stressing that an open, friendly and constructive dialogue between the United States and Cuba is important if this long-standing problem is to be properly addressed. We believe that such a dialogue could lead to the normalization of bilateral cooperation between the neighbouring countries. It is time to immediately end the unilateral sanctions against Cuba.

Mr. Al Habib (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, I want to take this opportunity to offer our warm welcome to the Foreign Minister of Cuba.

We are currently witnessing the fact that the expansionist and arrogant approach of a certain Government presents the greatest threat and challenge to world peace and security today. Increased reliance on unilateral coercive measures, coupled with an interventionist, flawed and short-sighted foreign policy, is one of the clearest symptoms of unilateralism. Unilateral embargoes and coercive sanctions are one of several ways of achieving national policy objectives that have a seriously adverse impact on the promotion of peace both regionally and internationally. They are fundamental impediments to establishing not only a peaceful and prosperous world, but also a just and equitable international order, which is a vital prerequisite for sustainable development.

The inhumane sanctions and blockade imposed on Cuba by the United States for almost six decades represent the most unjust and prolonged system of unilateral measures ever applied against any country. These aggressive measures constitute a gross violation of the norms and principles underpinning the order of international relations. No Cuban citizen or sector of the economy has been immune to the negative effects of this unilateral policy, which is hindering the development that every country is entitled to construct in its own sovereign manner.

In the past year, the tightening of the blockade has continued to be the central focus of United States Government policy on Cuba, with ever-more notable effects in its extraterritorial applications. We deplore the United States Department of State's expansion on various occasions of its list of entities associated with Cuba that are restricted under blockade regulations, which has done considerable damage to the country's economy as it has had the effect of intimidating the international business community. In fact, the United States has been addicted to imposing unilateral

sanctions when it comes to States that do not submit to or follow its contradictory and expansionist policies.

In reality, Iran and Cuba are paying the price for their resistance to and independence from the United States colonialist policies. Iran has experienced the United States' unlawful sanctions since the triumph of the Islamic Revolution 40 years ago. In the past four decades the rate of the unilateral coercive measures it has imposed on the Iranian people has increased to the extent that the current Administration's defiance of the established norms has even targeted the importation of medicine and medical equipment. Patients, women, children, refugees, the poor and those in vulnerable situations have consequently become a prime target of the United States genocidal economic terrorism, in violation of all principles of international law.

The United States Administration wants the world to believe that it is concerned about the Iranian people. Yet the very first sanctions that it reimposed, under absurd pretexts, revoked licences for the sale of more than 200 passenger jets, endangering ordinary Iranians. The hypocrisy of the United States knows no bounds.

The economic war that the United States has initiated under the rubric of exerting maximum pressure through the imposition of new sanctions not only targets the Iranian public, it also has harmful repercussions for the peoples of other countries and has disrupted the state of global trade. The message of today's meeting is a reaffirmation of the fact that the time for interventionist policies and interference in the farthest reaches of the world is long over.

Iran will continue working with its partners to create a new environment in which self-respecting nations can pursue their own interests and fulfil their international obligations. We will continue to work to offset unlawful United States sanctions and irreversibly eliminate the destabilizing phenomenon of the extraterritorial application of United States domestic legislation. The world must find solutions to counter such destructive interventions and unilateralism. Iran strongly believes in cooperating with friendly countries, including Cuba, to prudently address this challenge and prevent the United States Administration, which has stripped United States foreign policy of every principle, from achieving its illegitimate objectives.

Ms. Matyola Lemba (Zambia): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Zambian delegation.

At the outset, I would like to state that my delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Tunisia and Azerbaijan and by the observer of the Observer State of Palestine on behalf of the Group of African States, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Group of 77 and China, respectively (see A/74/PV.27).

Over the years, Zambia has supported the call for lifting the economic, commercial and financial blockade on Cuba, and today we reiterate that call. We remain concerned about the impact of the continued blockade, which has lasted almost six decades. In the recent past, the world witnessed improved relations between Cuba and the United States of America, in an indication that the two nations can in fact work together. The lifting of the embargo would therefore be for the mutual benefit of the peoples of the two countries and, of course, the world at large.

As indicated in the conclusions of the report of the Secretary-General (A/74/91/Rev.1), it is estimated that the total cost of this blockade, over its existence for almost six decades, is more than \$138.4 billion. In the one year ending in April 2019, it created losses for Cuba in excess of \$4.4 billion. It is therefore clear that the impact of the embargo will make it almost impossible for Cuba to be able to successfully implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development while the blockade remains ongoing. How then are we, as a global family, to uphold our collective undertaking of leaving no one behind?

Cuban businesses, including entrepreneurial ventures, continue to suffer repercussions that in turn have an effect on third countries, which amplifies the already dire effects that the blockade has had on the social and economic development of Cuba and ultimately on ordinary Cuban citizens. The Zambian Government continues to appeal for unrestricted people-to-people contact and for allowing normal operations of non-commercial aircraft and passenger ships in order to create a normal economic environment between Cuba and the United States.

Zambia therefore once again stands in solidarity with the General Assembly in calling for the abrogation of the 1996 Helms-Burton Act and the normalization of trade relations in order to allow for free trade of Cuban goods and services. It is in keeping with the spirit of solidarity with the suffering people of Cuba that we join the global consensus on this matter. We would like

to reassure the Cuban people that they can count on Zambia's continued support.

Mr. Khan (Pakistan): I acknowledge the presence among us of the Foreign Minister of Affairs of Cuba and welcome him to the United Nations.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Azerbaijan and Uganda and by the observer of Palestine on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Group of 77 and China, respectively (see A/74/PV.27).

The United Nations Resident Coordinator has made the assessment that ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo would be a significant step towards improving the quality of life of the people of Cuba and ensuring their human rights, particularly their right to development, information that is also included in the report of the Secretary-General (A/74/91/Rev.1).

My delegation considers that the imposition of unilateral economic measures is counterproductive and inconsistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Such measures decrease the prospects for the peaceful resolution of differences and disputes between Member States. Accordingly, Member States should resolve disputes in an environment based on trust that is conducive to friendly negotiations.

Mr. Barman (Trinidad and Tobago): At the outset, Trinidad and Tobago aligns itself with the statements delivered by the observer of the State of Palestine and the representatives of Azerbaijan and Grenada on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Caribbean Community, respectively (see A/74/PV.27).

In 2015, the General Assembly committed to a new collective vision for the peoples of the world through the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda marked a new phase in the focus of multilateralism and displayed the evolution of the United Nations as a dynamic body capable of responding to the emerging needs and challenges facing all people across the globe, with the clear and unambiguous goal of leaving no one behind. Yet despite that universal commitment, the economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba continues to impede its potential to fully achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and hinders its full enjoyment of human rights,

including the right to development. Trinidad and Tobago therefore remains resolute in its principled view that discriminatory trade practices and extraterritorial application of domestic laws are in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and serve only to undermine the collective ambitions enshrined in the 2030 Agenda.

Opposition to this anachronistic policy is now almost universal, with the General Assembly having adopted a resolution on the subject every year since 1992, condemning the embargo's impact and declaring it in violation of the Charter and international law. Trinidad and Tobago had therefore welcomed with enthusiasm the reopening of direct and frank dialogue between both parties in 2015 and the adoption of a previous iteration of this very draft resolution at the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, when not a single Member State voted against it (resolution 71/5). Regrettably, however, that optimism was short-lived, and additional restrictions through the Helms-Burton Act were imposed that Trinidad and Tobago maintains are inconsistent with international law.

In the light of this, my delegation would like to emphasize that the challenges we face as an international community require us to emphasize multilateral rather than unilateral approaches. We should be strengthening our partnerships through mutual respect and cooperation. Trinidad and Tobago consistently supports subregional, regional and international efforts aimed at promoting constructive dialogue to bring an end to the embargo on Cuba, which significantly challenges the achievement of sustainable development in the country and by extension the wider Caribbean.

In conclusion, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago remains fully committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter and, in particular, to the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention, non-interference and the freedom of international trade and navigation. In keeping with this commitment to the Charter and the 2030 Agenda, which, again, calls for no one to be left behind, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago reaffirms its unceasing call for the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba sooner rather than later and the full reintegration of Cuba into the international system. It is in this context that Trinidad and Tobago will once again support the draft resolution on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial

embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba (A/74/L.6).

Mr. Thomas (Antigua and Barbuda): I have the honour to speak in my national capacity. We align our statement with those made by the observer of the State of Palestine and the representatives of Azerbaijan and Grenada on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) (see A/74/PV.27).

The continued economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba continues to have catastrophic consequences for ordinary Cubans, but especially the most vulnerable. The embargo, which has lasted more than 50 years and has failed in its intent to break the relationship between the Cuban people and their Government, has had unintended consequences far beyond the shores of Cuba. It greatly affects my country's ability to expand trade with Cuba and build on the generosity of its Government and people in order to expand the delivery of technical assistance that Cuba so generously gives to my nation.

Antigua and Barbuda considers Cuba a legitimate member of our community in the western hemisphere and a member of the CARICOM family of nations. We call on the United States to lift the embargo, which has gone on for far too long and has no useful purpose. The Government of Cuba remains relevant and popular with its people. Good governance depends on the legitimacy it receives from its people, and legitimacy of a Government is a function of that popularity. Because the Government of Cuba remains popular and functional, it should not be subject to any force from outside simply on the basis of others' dissatisfaction with the structure and function of the Cuban Government.

Antigua and Barbuda believes that dialogue and diplomacy are essential tools for ending the embargo. The application and tightening of unilateral measures impedes progress towards normalization and positive relations between the two countries.

Antigua and Barbuda considers both the United States and Cuba as friends. We see both of these countries as essential partners in matters of trade, economic cooperation, cultural exchange and regional security. As I said, the unilateral economic embargo has extraterritorial effects for Antigua and Barbuda that are negative in nature and hinder the full realization of economic and commercial relations between Antigua and Barbuda and Cuba.

It is my Government's view that the United States embargo is a hindrance to Cuba's achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sustainable Development Goals and other internationally agreed goals. Against this background, we once again call on the United States and the Government of Cuba to meet and find peaceful ways to bring about a relationship based on mutual respect and shared responsibility between the peoples of both neighbouring nations.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, to introduce draft resolution A/74/L.6.

Mr. Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): In recent months, President Donald Trump's Administration has begun to escalate its aggression against Cuba through the implementation of non-conventional measures to prevent the supply of fuel to our country from various markets from reaching us, including through sanctions and threats against vessels, shipping companies and insurance companies. The goal in this regard, aside from affecting our economy, is to damage the living standards of Cuban families.

The United States Government is responsible for this aggression. In April the filing of lawsuits before United States courts against Cuban, North American and third-country entities was authorized under Title III of the Helms-Burton Act; attacks on our financial and banking relationships with the rest of the world have intensified; remittances sent to Cuban citizens have been restricted; the number of visas granted has been reduced and consular services have been limited; an agreement between the baseball federations of both countries has been cancelled, as has individual travel by United States citizens; direct flights to Cuban airports, except for La Habana, and cruise-ship stops have also been banned; aircraft leasing and the acquisition of technology and equipment with United States components composing more than 10 per cent have been prohibited; and commercial promotion activities and cultural and educational exchanges have ceased.

The United States Government is responsible for this aggression. It has aggressively intensified the extraterritorial implementation of its blockade against Cuba to reach third States, their companies and citizens. It does not conceal its intention of economically suffocating Cuba and exacerbating the damages, deficiencies and hardships that our people

face. The United States Government has also resolved to sabotage the international cooperation that Cuba offers in the area of health. In a campaign of lies, United States officials and politicians are directly attacking a programme based on genuine proposals for South-South cooperation that has been recognized by the international community.

The United States Ambassador has grossly manipulated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, particularly article 3 on the right to life. The embargo on Cuba has caused incalculable humanitarian damage. It constitutes a massive, systematic and flagrant violation of human rights and an act of genocide under sub-paragraphs (b) and (c) of article II of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

There is not a single Cuban family that has been spared from suffering the consequences of this aggression. A Cuban child with severe heart disease does not have access to the most advanced paediatric mechanical circulatory support because the device in question is manufactured in the United States, and although repeated requests to acquire it have been made, no response from the North American companies selling it has been received. As a result of the prohibitions imposed on Cuba, a person suffering from severe heart disease cannot access the ventricular-assistance equipment that prolongs the lives of patients in critical conditions until it is possible to perform a heart transplant or, in some cases, until they recover their cardiovascular function.

As a result of the blockade, 16-year-old Bryan González Santisteban and 19-year-old Leydis Posada Cañizares, who are going through periods of growth spurts, have no access to extensible internal prostheses — stents — so they are restricted to using fixed prostheses and must therefore undergo frequent surgeries to replace them. These stents are manufactured by the American company Stryker, and its Government is therefore responsible for this situation.

The blockade also makes it impossible to access new cancer treatment drugs that are manufactured solely by American pharmaceutical companies. Mayra Lazus Roque, aged 57, is a renal-cancer patient who cannot be treated with the optimal drug, sunitinib, which is only produced by the American company Pfizer. Thanks to the treatment she has received with pharmaceuticals from the Cuban biotechnology industry, she is generally

in good health. Eduardo Hernández Hernández, aged 49, suffers from a metastatic melanoma. The optimal treatment for this type of cancer is nivolumab, a drug only manufactured by the company Bristol-Myers Squibb in the United States. As we have no access to it, the patient has had to be treated with alternative therapies. The United States Government is responsible for this outcome.

Here at Headquarters, year after year, the United States delegation has declared — as its Ambassador just did, with a healthy dose of cynicism — that its Government supports the Cuban people. Can anyone believe such a statement? The Government of the United States spreads lies and falsifies data with respect to alleged licences for operations to sell medicines and foodstuffs to Cuba, which are highly unlikely to materialize.

The United States delegation sitting in this Hall should explain to the Assembly the conditions that it is imposing on Cuban purchases. There is no access to credit, official or private, so payments must be made in cash when merchandise arrives in port. The banks that handle our transactions are subject to mistreatment, and the use of Cuban vessels is prohibited. The United States Government is responsible. Who in the world can trade under such conditions? The successful and effective Cuban social model has guaranteed and continues to guarantee equal opportunities, equality and social justice for Cubans, despite hostility and coercion.

The United States Government has no moral authority whatever to criticize Cuba or anyone else with regard to human rights issues. We reject the repeated manipulation of human rights for political ends and the double standards it embodies. The Ambassador said that her aim was to reveal the truth, but a guilty conscience has betrayed her words even if she did not come to the Assembly to make a confession.

Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulates that everyone has the right to life. The deaths of civilians at the hands of United States troops in various parts of the world, the use of torture, the murder of African-Americans by the police and of migrants by border-patrol officers, the deaths of unaccompanied minors in immigrant detention centres and the abusive and racially discriminative use of the death penalty, applied to minors and mentally disabled persons, warrant condemnation. Article 5 sets out the right that no one shall be subjected to torture.

The impunity of the gun lobby is to blame for the rise in homicides, including of teenagers. During the first eight months of 2019, approximately 250 confrontations involving firearms took place, resulting in almost 1,000 victims, nearly one quarter of which were fatal. In 2018, 100 Americans lost their lives to and 274 were injured by firearms every day. In the United States, there are 2.3 million people in detention, who account for a quarter of the world's prison population, and, during the span of one year, 10.5 million arrests were made. Article 9 states that no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest.

Every day, 137 Americans die from opioid overdoses, 251 die from heart disease, and another 231 lose their lives prematurely to cancer owing to the lack of proper treatment. Some 170 preventable amputations owing to complications associated with diabetes take place every day. Article 25 states that everyone has a right to health.

The repression and police surveillance of immigrants, the splitting up of families, the separation of parents from their children, the indefinite detention of more than 2,500 children, the deportation of 21,000 of them, and the brutal measures threatening the children of illegal immigrants who grew up and were educated in the United States are abhorrent. Article 1 establishes the right to dignity and freedom.

Article 7 sets forth the right to due process. The United States Government is indefinitely holding prisoners in legal limbo without legal defence, courts or due process in the prison of the naval base at Guantánamo, territory that it illegally usurped from us.

Article 25 states that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate to their well-being. In the richest country, 40 million Americans live in poverty. Of them, 18.5 million live in extreme poverty. As of the end of last year, 25.7 per cent of people with disabilities were living in poverty. More than half a million of its citizens sleep in the streets.

Article 23 sets forth the right to work. As of the end of 2018, 6.6 million people were unemployed in the United States.

Article 25 also refers to the right to medical care. Some 28.5 million citizens lack health insurance and, thanks to recently announced measures, millions more low-wage earners will be deprived of it.

Article 26 speaks of the right to education. Quality education is not accessible to the majority of Americans. Half of the adult population is unable read a book written for readers at the eighth-grade level. Equal opportunity in the United States is a fantasy. Teenagers and young people are justifiably protesting, as their Government is depriving them of environmental rights.

Article 2 sets forth the right to non-discrimination. Women in the United States earn approximately 85 per cent of what men earn and would have to work 39 additional days per year to make the same salary. There are widespread reports of sexual harassment. The average wealth of white families is seven times greater than that of families of African descent. The death rates for children under the age of one and for mothers at childbirth for the same demographic are twice those for white people. There is a discriminatory racial pattern reflected in the American prison population and in the length of prison sentences.

The political system and the electoral model are rife with corruption, in contravention of the provisions of Article 21 of the Universal Declaration with regard to the right to participate in public service. There is a widening gap between Government decisions and the will of the people. Powerful and special interest groups, in particular corporations, decide on the character and make-up of the Government, Congress and the justice and law-enforcement institutions.

The United States is a country in which human rights are systematically and flagrantly violated, often on a massive scale. It is party to only 30 per cent of international human rights instruments and accordingly fails to recognize the right to life, peace, development, security and food, and the rights of children.

Article 13 establishes the right to travel. The blockade also violates the human rights and civil liberties of United States citizens, whose freedom to travel to Cuba — the only destination in the world that they are prohibited from travelling to — is unjustly and arbitrarily limited. The Government of the United States is responsible for this result.

In the past year, the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the United States Department of the Treasury and other United States agencies have imposed fines on third-country financial entities such as the UniCredit Group of Italy and Société Générale of France for violating the sanctions regime against Cuba. Dozens of

foreign banks have been intimidated and limited and disrupted in their financial dealings with our country.

Natural legal persons — in other words, people — are also victims of the blockade. A German citizen working at the Cuban Embassy in Berlin received notification that her Amazon account was being closed, allegedly owing to blockade regulations. The aggressive actions of the United States against Cuba are carried out in accordance with the illegal Helms-Burton Act, which blatantly seeks to violate the Cuban nation's right to self-determination and independence. It also imposes United States legal authority over other countries' commercial and financial relations with Cuba and establishes the presumed primacy of United States law and jurisdiction over third countries. The embargo as a whole constitutes a serious violation of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace.

Not everyone complies with the illegal extraterritorial implementation of the restrictions imposed by the legislation of the United States. In June, a trial judge of a court in The Hague ruled in favour of the company PAM International, based in Curaçao, in a lawsuit it filed against the Dutch company Exact Software Delft, which is currently a subsidiary of the United States company KKR, for enforcing provisions of the United States embargo against Cuba, requiring Exact Software Delft to continue providing its services to PAM International for the supply of software to Cuban companies and organizations. Examples such as this show that there are antidote laws, forums within the World Trade Organization, and other ways and means to deal with the extraterritorial application of the embargo against Cuba.

The cumulative damages incurred after almost six decades of the embargo amount to \$922 billion, taking into account the depreciation of the dollar against the price of gold. In current prices, it has caused quantifiable damages amounting to more than \$138 billion.

Throughout the years it has been in force, the embargo has been a critical impediment to the aspirations of well-being and prosperity of several generations of Cubans and remains the greatest obstacle to the country's economic development. It represents a major constraint on the modernization of Cuba's economic and social development model and on the implementation of its 2030 national plan for fulfilling

the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and attaining the Goals set forth in it.

The impact of the embargo, especially the travel restrictions, has hit the non-State sector of the economy particularly hard. Without the revenue lost to Cuba in terms of exports of goods and services and the costs of geographic trade relocation, which has forced us to maintain very large inventories of stock, Cuba's gross domestic product would have grown at an average annual rate of approximately 10 per cent at current prices over the past decade. The annual damages incurred due to the embargo greatly exceed the volume of foreign direct investment required for Cuba's development.

For almost six decades Cuba has been victim to the most unjust, severe and protracted system of sanctions ever applied against any country. The Government of the United States is responsible for this situation. Despite all the difficulties and limitations facing our people, Cuba has managed to counteract the stated objectives of the embargo, its overwhelming effect for six decades and its unquestionable impact on the country's potential.

Despite all the limitations, thanks to the effectiveness of the Cuban socialist system and State, and to our people's patriotism, revolutionary convictions, solidarity, consensus and unity, Cuba has been able to overcome the serious challenges imposed on it. One wonders whether all industrialized and technologically advanced countries would be able, as Cuba has done, to endure such a prolonged and overwhelming onslaught while also ensuring modest but sustained economic growth, preserving development programmes, progressing towards a service and knowledge economy and ensuring the equal enjoyment of all human rights by all citizens.

The General Assembly has repeatedly confirmed its rejection of the use of unilateral coercive measures as contrary to international law and the Charter of the United Nations. The United States implements systems of coercive measures against more than 20 countries and specific unilateral measures against dozens of nations, a trend that has intensified under the present Administration. As Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz expressed from this very rostrum at the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations,

“[w]e lay claim to a world without ruthless blockades that cause the death of men, women and children,

young and old, like noiseless atom bombs” (A/50/PV.35, p. 20).

The Government of the United States seeks to exercise imperialist domination over our America. It is once again revising the old, aggressive Monroe Doctrine and gunboat diplomacy. It is redeploying its Fourth Fleet and increasing the presence and power of its military bases in the region.

The definition of the embargo policy was captured best in the infamous memorandum written by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Lester Mallory in April 1960.

“There is no effective political opposition ... The only foreseeable means of alienating internal support [from the Government] is through disenchantment and disaffection based on economic dissatisfaction and hardship... [E]very possible means should be undertaken promptly to weaken the economic life ..., denying money and supplies to Cuba, to decrease monetary and real wages, to bring about hunger, desperation and overthrow of Government.”

The representative of the United States offends the Assembly with the interventionist and unacceptable language she used in reference to the heroic people of Venezuela, its civic and military union, and the Bolivarian and Chavista Government headed by President Nicolás Maduro Moros, with whom we express our unwavering solidarity.

The Government of the United States is resorting to falsehoods and slander as a pretext to step up its aggression against Cuba. I reiterate that neither threats nor blackmail will ever extract even the smallest political concession from us. Nor will we back down from our determination to forge civilized relations with the United States based on mutual respect and recognition of our deep-rooted differences.

As was pointed out by Army General Raúl Castro on 10 April before the National Assembly of People's Power,

“Despite its immense power, imperialism does not have the capacity to crush the dignity of a united people proud of its history and of the freedom won through so much sacrifice”.

Cuba recognizes the ethical and political chasm that exists between the people of the United States and their

Government and will do everything it can to develop the deep and far-reaching bonds that unite it to its citizens.

We acknowledge with profound gratitude all those who have repudiated the embargo on our country and who have always stood with us throughout our tireless struggle against this policy. As President Miguel Díaz Canel Bermúdez of Cuba affirmed on 10 October,

“Intense and challenging days await [the Cuban people], but no one will ever take away from us the confidence in the future that we owe our children in the homeland our parents won for us by standing firm.”

On behalf of the heroic, self-sacrificing and fraternal people of Cuba, I once again ask the Assembly to vote in favour of the draft resolution contained in document A/74/L.6, entitled “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item. We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/74/L.6.

Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote before the voting, I should like to remind delegations that explanations of vote should be limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Salovaara (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The candidate countries Turkey, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania, and the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, align themselves with this statement.

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba has a damaging impact on the economic situation of the country and negatively affects the living standards of the Cuban people. External trade and foreign investment will play a crucial role in setting the country on a path towards modernization, reform and sustainable growth. The EU therefore believes that lifting the embargo would facilitate the opening of the Cuban economy to the benefit of the Cuban people.

The EU believes that positive change in Cuba is best brought about by closer engagement at all levels — in terms of Government, the economy and

civil society and through people-to-people exchanges. We therefore deeply regret the reintroduction of restrictions on United States relations with Cuba by the current Administration. The measures restricting individual self-directed travel and, as of June, banning people-to-people travel and cruise tourism, not only curtail possibilities for engagement with the Cuban people but are also taking a severe toll on Cuba’s burgeoning private sector, which had benefited most from such visits.

Beyond the damaging impact of the embargo on ordinary Cubans, the unilateral sanctions and other unilateral administrative and judicial measures by the United States are also negatively affecting EU economic interests. We have firmly and consistently opposed any such measures, due to their extraterritorial application and impact on the European Union, in violation of commonly accepted rules of international trade. We cannot accept that unilaterally imposed measures should impede our economic and commercial relations with Cuba.

The EU strongly rejects the activation in April by the United States of Titles III and IV of the Helms-Burton Act, which breaches the commitments made by the United States in its agreements with the European Union of 1997 and 1998. We will draw on all appropriate measures to address the effects of the Helms-Burton Act, including in relation to our World Trade Organizations rights and through the use of the EU Blocking Statute, which protects against undue interference and problems for EU citizens, businesses and non-governmental organizations residing, working or cooperating in Cuba.

For the EU, international cooperation, dialogue and closer engagement, even if critical, are the way to go with Cuba. On 1 November we marked the second anniversary of the provisional application of the EU-Cuba Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement, which has put our bilateral relationship on a new and solid legal footing and sets out an agenda of critical engagement with Cuba that will also allow us to support and assist the country on its path of reform and modernization. We are also enhancing dialogue and cooperation on issues on which we still have fundamental differences. To this end, the Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement has established a human rights dialogue as a key pillar of our relationship. The second formal meeting of the Dialogue was held last month in a constructive and frank atmosphere.

We reiterate our call to the Cuban Government to fully grant its citizens internationally recognized civil, political and economic rights and freedoms, including freedom of assembly, freedom of expression and free access to information, to ratify the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and to extend a standing invitation to all United Nations special procedures mechanisms to visit Cuba.

Following the generational leadership change that took place in Cuba in April 2018 and in the context of the implementation of the country's new Constitution, we call on Cuba to pursue a comprehensive reform and modernization agenda, extending economic and social reforms and implementing them in a manner that will address the key concerns of the Cuban population and meet the legitimate aspirations of the Cuban people for more opportunities to participate in shaping the country's future.

Through the EU-Cuba Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement, the EU offers Cuba a consistent and reliable partnership of support in seeking to reform its political and economic model, pursue sustainable development and find common solutions to global challenges, while we continue to vigorously promote democracy and respect for human rights.

It is our considered view that the United States embargo does not contribute to promoting the foregoing aims but rather impedes their achievement. Against this background, the States members of the European Union will vote unanimously in favour of draft resolution A/74/L.6.

Mr. Guillermet-Fernández (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica has historically always voted in favour of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. We have always given reasons in justification of our vote. This year we will do the same.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote before the voting.

The General Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/74/L.6, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania,

Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Brazil, Israel, United States of America

Abstaining:

Colombia, Ukraine

Draft resolution A/74/L.6 was adopted by 187 votes to 3, with 2 abstentions (resolution 74/7).

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote after the voting, I would like to remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Verdier (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I want to welcome the presence with us today of Mr. Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, and to thank him heartily for introducing resolution 74/7.

Argentina fully aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the State of Palestine on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (see A/74/PV.27), and would like to add the following remarks in its national capacity.

Argentina reiterates its long-standing position that the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba must be brought to an end as soon as possible. It runs counter to international law, in particular the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, freedom of trade and of international navigation, and the peaceful resolution of disputes.

In keeping with our absolute commitment to the Charter of the United Nations, international law and multilateralism, Argentina opposes the use of unilateral coercive measures, the extraterritorial application of national laws and the adoption of discriminatory trade practices. Argentina has therefore always supported General Assembly resolutions opposing the embargo and has spoken out whenever this issue has arisen in regional forums or international organizations.

We regret the fact that the laws extending the embargo remain in force and that their application continues to hamper the full development of the Cuban

people. The adoption of resolution 74/7 by a large majority emphasizes the international community's unequivocal message that the embargo against Cuba must come to an end. Argentina reaffirms its conviction that dialogue between the two parties without preconditions and based on mutual recognition by the Governments as legitimate and equal interlocutors would facilitate the resolution of all pending issues between the United States of America and Cuba, including lifting the embargo.

Mr. Amorín (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to welcome the presence in the Hall of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, Mr. Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla. We took due note of his detailed introduction of resolution 74/7, which we have just adopted.

As in previous years, Uruguay voted in favour of the resolution because the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba runs counter to international law and violates the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. The position of Uruguay is based on the principles of respect for international law, the sovereign equality of States, non-interference and the peaceful resolution of disputes, which constitute the cornerstones of our foreign policy. Based on these principles, Uruguay does not recognize any extraterritorial application of the domestic laws of another State, and we reject any mechanism, direct or indirect, that constitutes unilateral action by any State seeking to sanction sovereign decisions adopted by another State on a political, economic, trade or any other matter.

Accordingly, Uruguay once again reiterates its opposition, stated on many occasions, to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba. Not only is the embargo a violation of international law, it also has a very negative impact on the well-being of the Cuban people, leading to shortages and suffering among the population and impeding their legitimate right to development.

My delegation also regrets the recent cooling in relations between the two States in question. The recent process of rapprochement and mutual adoption of measures to improve relations, which had improved bilateral relations, are tangible proof that reaching an understanding is possible. Uruguay therefore urges both parties to resume dialogue and move forward

towards solving the problems remaining between these two countries of our continent.

In voting in favour of resolution 74/7, Uruguay reiterated its commitment to multilateralism, which we see as the legitimate means for resolving disputes and an effective tool for promoting cooperation and understanding among peoples.

Ms. Tiwet (Malaysia): Malaysia reaffirms its support for the General Assembly and voted in favour of resolution 74/7, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba. We remain opposed to all forms of unilateral economic, financial and commercial embargo that contravene the norms of international law and purposes and principles of the United Nations

as set forth in its Charter. Malaysia urges that an end be put to the unilateral embargo by the United States of America on Cuba, which has impeded the nation's development and caused significant suffering to the Cuban people, and calls on both parties to resolve their disputes amicably through dialogue and negotiation.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 39?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.