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Official Records

*President:* Mr. Francis ..... (Trinidad and Tobago)

*In the absence of the President, Mrs. Bouchikhi (Morocco), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.*

## Agenda item 28 (continued)

### Elimination of unilateral extraterritorial coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion

**Mrs. Zalabata Torres** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): First, I would like to thank the President of the Assembly for convening this plenary meeting.

Colombia is a country committed to the promotion of peace and justice. Its foreign policy is based on respect for international law, the promotion and protection of human rights and the fostering of friendly relations, dialogue and peaceful solutions.

Colombia joins other delegations in expressing concern with regard to the imposition of unilateral coercive economic measures, which are incompatible with the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Such measures harm the economies of developing countries in particular and undermine the ability of their Governments to make crucial investments to support social justice and the economic and social development of their peoples. Such measures also have a negative impact on international economic cooperation and are inconsistent with the efforts being deployed around the world to consolidate a multilateral trading system based on the principles of openness and non-discrimination. Unilateral

coercive economic measures constitute a violation of the principles of international law as enshrined in the United Nations Charter, and they do harm to all aspects of life in the countries against which they are directed. In particular, they negatively affect access to food, clean water and sanitation, electricity, sufficient medicines, medical equipment, prevention and control of diseases, training, and the latest scientific, technological and research knowledge, thereby undermining Governments' capacities to guarantee the well-being of their populations.

For these reasons, the application of such measures limits economic and social development and stands in the way of the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, which jointly serve as a universal plan of action for people, the planet and prosperity and which must be implemented fully and comprehensively.

Unilateral coercive economic measures have a particular impact on civilian populations, in particular women, children and other vulnerable persons, thereby limiting their ability to realize and effectively enjoy their economic, social, cultural and environmental rights.

Colombia therefore once again calls upon Member States to abstain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures that are not in accordance with international law and the United Nations Charter and that prevent the full achievement of economic and social development, especially in developing countries, in line with paragraph 30 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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**Mr. Vongnorkeo** (Lao People's Democratic Republic): At the outset, my delegation expresses its sincere appreciation for the convening of this important debate on the necessity of eliminating unilateral extraterritorial coercive measures as a means of political and economic compulsion. We firmly believe that the continued application of unilateral coercive measures against sovereign States is contrary to the recognized principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. In this regard, the Lao People's Democratic Republic reiterates its unwavering commitment to promoting the principles of the United Nations Charter, which includes respecting the sovereignty of States, refraining from interfering in the internal affairs of other countries and promoting friendly relations among all nations.

Against this backdrop, the Lao People's Democratic Republic has closely followed, with deep concern, the negative consequences that unilateral sanctions have had on the lives of innocent people in many countries. As widely recognized, the impact of unilateral coercive measures extends far beyond the realm of the economy. Such measures, which are currently imposed on more than 30 countries, detrimentally affect the fundamental rights of people, including the right to development and survival, and impede their access to essential needs, including food, medicines and other means of daily subsistence. On the whole, unilateral coercive measures can exacerbate extreme poverty and hunger, disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable populations. All this contravenes the overall objectives contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

At a time when the international community is already facing the multifaceted and severe impacts of global insecurity, it is morally indefensible to impose additional deprivation on innocent people. Moreover, unilateral coercive measures have hindered the collaborative efforts required to address our common challenges, such as climate and global health crises and economic stagnation. As we continue to promote multilateralism, the repercussions of such measures are not limited to the targeted States but can ripple outwards, affecting regional and international efforts to advance the sustainable development agenda.

*Mr. Pieris (Sri Lanka), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

As a strong supporter of multilateralism, the Lao People's Democratic Republic is among the overwhelming majority of Member States that voted in favour of the resolutions entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial, and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". The Lao People's Democratic Republic stands firmly in solidarity with the Cuban people, emphasizing that the embargo, which has persisted for more than six decades, is in direct contradiction with the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter and established international norms. This prolonged embargo has severely hindered Cuba's social and economic development, depriving its people of the ability to advance their national development efforts. On this note, we reiterate our steadfast support for the global call for an immediate end to the unilateral coercive measures imposed on Cuba and for its removal from the list of State sponsors of terrorism.

In conclusion, the Lao People's Democratic Republic calls for a renewed commitment to peaceful dialogue and diplomacy as the only means of resolving international disputes, in line with the principles of the United Nations Charter. We urge all Member States to amplify our collective determination to foster equitable and sustainable development while safeguarding the legitimate rights of all countries, especially in this time of challenging global uncertainty.

**Mr. Bendjama** (Algeria): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the Assembly for convening this debate on this important topic.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of African States and the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations (see A/78/PV.89).

The unilateral coercive economic measures, such as economic sanctions and trade embargoes, imposed on several developing countries undermine the principles of the sovereign equality of States and of non-intervention, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. These measures restrict not only the free flow of trade and have a negative impact on populations by depriving them of access to food, medicine and other essential goods and services, but also constitute a violation of international law and the United Nations Charter.

Algeria expresses its support for all countries under unilateral coercive measures and firmly believes that it is crucial for all countries to refrain from promulgating and applying such measures and policies against other nations. Moreover, I seize this opportunity to reaffirm that dialogue, diplomacy and mutual understanding should be prioritized to resolve differences by peaceful means, in accordance with the United Nations Charter. Furthermore, we call on the international community to strongly reject unilateral coercive measures and instead promote and strengthen mechanisms for resolving disputes through accepted legal, fair and equitable processes.

Last but not least, we reaffirm that this matter should be accorded the importance that it merits, as millions of individuals currently endure the repercussions of such restrictions. In this context, the Pact for the Future and its annex should reaffirm our collective global commitment to abstain from imposing unilateral coercive measures.

To conclude, I would like to reiterate my delegation's support for the international community and the Secretary-General's call to lift all unilateral coercive measures and to strengthen our collective efforts to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals.

**Ms. King** (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): We begin by underscoring our support for the statements delivered by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations and by Uganda on behalf of the Group of 77 and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/78/PV.89), and we would now like to make an intervention in our national capacity.

We the peoples of the United Nations are determined to reaffirm our faith in, *inter alia*, fundamental human rights, the dignity and worth of the human person and the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom. Explicit within the preamble of the Charter of the United Nations is this ambitious and unambiguous people-centric declaration, which enshrines our commitment to always put first the dignity and worth of the human person. This declaration embeds the immutable notion that the United Nations was created to serve all humanity and is not a mere forum to house alliances of sovereign States. This is

a fundamental notion, from which our non-derogable commitments flow.

Today's timely, albeit overdue, discussion is occurring at a pivotal moment. The world is fraught with discord, and we are witnessing increasing recourse to the promulgation of unilateral economic coercive measures, which are often applied against developing countries by developed countries in the pursuit of nationalistic agendas or for the sake of political expediency. This constitutes a grave threat to the norms and principles governing friendly relations among States, further undermining the very rules of engagement upon which our international system has been built and threatening an already fragile multilateral order.

Such measures are imposed in violation of international law and have been condemned categorically by an overwhelming majority of the General Assembly, as in the case of the resolution entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba". This indicates that their use is at variance with the goodwill of the international community and the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

No State has the right nor the authority to circumvent international law. The promulgation and application of unilateral coercive measures is a violation of the commitment made by we the peoples of the United Nations. It demonstrates a blatant disregard for multilateralism and multilateral institutions, suggesting that international norms, standards and laws can be flouted with impunity, the result of which is an erosion of trust, always with dire consequences for citizens.

Too often, unilateral coercive measures are a tool used as part of the power dynamic between States, without regard for the often-devastating effect that they have on the well-being of peoples. These measures impede the full realization of human rights and constrain access to healthcare and other basic, everyday necessities, of which every human being is deserving. They also often have far-reaching consequences, such as impeding efforts to strengthen South-South cooperation. The disruption of the PetroCaribe agreement — the concessionary financial oil agreement between Venezuela and Caribbean Member States — had a significant impact on the economies of the parties to the agreement. Moreover, the application of unilateral coercive measures impedes the overall development

of a State, including its ability to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and attain the Sustainable Development Goals — another framework within which we have made a people-centric promise.

Are the peoples of the world, whom we represent, to infer today that the commitments made at the United Nations are mere verbiage, confined to the documents on which they are inscribed, or mere rhetoric that is invoked when convenient?

With all eyes on the Summit of the Future, it is time to renew our commitment to our existing obligations, including those under international law, and to safeguard their full and equal application. No State is exempt from these provisions. The unconditional lifting of unilateral coercive economic measures is a necessary starting point for a future that was first envisioned in the Preamble to the United Nations Charter, defined by diplomacy and the multilateral order, with respect for international law, and underpinned and guided always by genuine concern for the peoples of the world.

**Mr. Pary Rodríguez** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, allow me to thank the President for convening this important debate on the elimination of unilateral extraterritorial coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion, 14 years after the topic was last discussed within the General Assembly (see A/65/PV.63).

We welcome the presence of the Minister of People's Power for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, His Excellency Mr. Yvan Gil Pinto, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, Mr. Elio Rodríguez Perdomo, the representative of Nicaragua, Mr. Iván Lara Palacios, and all delegations in attendance.

My country aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Uganda, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Group of 77 and China, and of Venezuela, on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations.

Bolivia condemns each and every one of the unilateral coercive measures that have been arbitrarily imposed over the years against sovereign countries, primarily developing countries. Such measures are illegal and constitute a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter and the basic rules of international

law, including human rights law and international humanitarian law.

Unilateral coercive measures — as the name describes clearly — are arbitrary, capricious measures imposed by one State on another with the aim of generating adverse economic, trade and financial effects for political reasons, which have devastating consequences on the economies and stability of the populations of the countries affected. Such measures not only affect Governments but also directly affect peoples, undermining their well-being, their development and their ability to lead their lives and causing suffering to vulnerable groups such as women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities and Indigenous peoples.

It is clear that unilateral coercive measures are applied as a tool of political, economic and financial compulsion against free peoples and sovereign States. One of the most infamous examples of the failure of such measures is the economic, trade and financial blockade imposed for over 60 years by the United States against the brotherly Republic of Cuba. The restrictions imposed have made it difficult to access food, medicine and other essential goods, in addition to international markets and financial resources, thereby limiting Cuba's capacity to modernize its infrastructure, improve its health and education services and sustainably develop its economy.

Once again we reiterate our unfailing solidarity with the people and Government of Cuba. We call upon the Government of the United States of America to put an end to its inhumane embargo unconditionally and without delay. Likewise, we reiterate that the united and dignified people of Cuba should be immediately removed from the arbitrary and unilateral list of State sponsors of terrorism.

Unilateral coercive measures not only affect countries' development and exacerbate poverty and inequality but also constitute serious violations of human rights, as they aim to make peoples suffer and deprive them the basic requirements needed for their personal, family and community development.

Our commitment to the United Nations Charter and the basic principles of international law should unite all of our countries, particularly developing countries, in efforts to definitively eliminate unilateral coercive measures and prevent them from posing an impediment to trade and investment among independent and sovereign nations.



The use of unilateral coercive measures should therefore be a source of concern — not only for the countries affected, but also for the entire international community — since it pertains to multilateralism. Bolivia therefore supports the General Assembly's request for the Secretary-General to prepare a report, accompanied by key findings, in order to monitor the imposition of unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion and to study, *inter alia*, the negative impact of such illegal measures on the countries affected, including their impact on trade and development.

In conclusion, we express our firm support and solidarity with all peoples and Governments that suffer from the application of unilateral coercive measures, in particular the Latin American peoples of Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua, given that those measures also affect our regional economic and trade integration.

**Mr. Young** (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom maintains that our autonomous sanctions strongly support and are consistent with the fundamental purposes of the United Nations, as expressed in the Charter of the United Nations.

The United Kingdom's preference is to support sanctions through the Security Council in order to advance international peace and security. Unfortunately, the veto is being used with increasing frequency, most recently in relation to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in order to undermine the integrity of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime.

The United Kingdom's autonomous sanctions are consistent with international law. They are targeted and are focused on deterring and disrupting malign behaviour and demonstrating support for international norms.

We recognize that other General Assembly members also use sanctions, even if they do not call them that, as do some regional organizations. The United Kingdom defends the right of States to use sanctions in compliance with international law.

The United Kingdom's sanctions legislation is binding only on persons of the United Kingdom or persons within the United Kingdom. While it regulates how those within our jurisdiction engage with sanctioned individuals, entities and States, it does not attempt to regulate the activities of those outside our jurisdiction.

Every sanction of the United Kingdom complies with our domestic and international legal obligations, including our human rights obligations, which are individually assessed for each listing. Our legislation provides for a transparent and robust system of legal challenge and review.

We use sanctions proportionately and rigorously, including by taking careful steps to mitigate any unintended negative impacts. That includes issuing licences to respond to humanitarian emergencies, such as earthquake relief in Syria.

We will continue to engage with the General Assembly to support an effective United Nations sanctions architecture and to use the sanctions tool to advance shared principles and objectives.

**Ms. Tesfamariam** (Eritrea): Let me first thank the President of the Assembly for convening this plenary meeting of the General Assembly on a subject of serious concern that has detrimental ramifications for many Member States and millions of people across the global South.

My country associates itself with the statements delivered by the delegation of Uganda, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Group of 77 and China; the delegation of Nigeria, on behalf of the Group of African States; and the delegation of Venezuela, on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations (see A/78/PV.89). Let me briefly state the following in my national capacity.

The application of unilateral extraterritorial coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion does not only contravene the fundamentals of the Charter of the United Nations and the general principles of international law but is also an inhumane and immoral practice of its architects, aimed at impoverishing and depriving nations. Neither the norms of international relations nor the rules of the international trading system justify the application of such egregious policies dictated at the whim of the proponents of global hegemony. Those Powers have been unapologetic with their intentions and deeds; as expressly stated in their foreign-policy toolbox, such policies are used to compel those who do not conform with their self-professed ideals.

My country, Eritrea, has been the victim of illegal and unjust sanctions. It continues to endure unilateral

coercive measures targeting its most critical sectors, including the economic and national security sectors. The ulterior political motives are too evident to merit explanation. Among such illicit measures, in 2021 Eritrea was excluded from the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) system, which is used to conduct international financial transactions. The country is further sustaining illegal unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States Administration. In addition, only a few weeks ago, the European Union renewed the imposition of such measures against Eritrea in its pursuit of advancing perceived geopolitical objectives, which have been proved not only to be flawed but to be contributing to regional destabilization. The crippling socioeconomic effects of those illegal sanctions on the country's development programmes are indeed colossal.

All forms of unilateral coercive measures must be lifted immediately, and the injustices and damages endured by the affected nations need to be rectified. Unilateral coercive measures run contrary to the globally agreed development goals, underpinned by the motto of "leave no one behind", as they are impoverishing those in the global South and widening the development gap. The sovereign equality of all nations and the right to development, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, must be fully respected. Any unilateral action outside the cardinal principles of the Charter of the United Nations needs to be rejected and repealed in totality.

In conclusion, Eritrea expresses its strong solidarity with all those unjustly affected nations and peoples and calls categorically for the lifting of the unlawful embargoes imposed on the brotherly people of Cuba for over 60 years and for the delisting of that country from the list of so-called State sponsors of terrorism.

**Mr. Heartney** (United States of America): Let me begin by saying that economic measures, including sanctions, are a legitimate, appropriate and effective tool for addressing threats to international peace and security. The United States is not alone in this view or practice.

The United States uses sanctions to address some of the most abhorrent and destabilizing activities of our time. We use sanctions to deter terrorism, proliferation, trafficking in persons, trafficking in wildlife and trafficking in drugs. We use targeted sanctions to

address behaviours that threaten our security and undermine human dignity.

In some cases, we use our sanctions because there is no avenue for pursuing action at the United Nations, either because there is no applicable authority or because a minority of States are obstructing the implementation of United Nations sanctions. The loudest proponents of the so-called unilateral coercive measures narrative simultaneously obstruct the implementation of United Nations sanctions and often blatantly violate them.

In such cases, we and other Member States will work to address threats to peace and security as best we can within the means at our disposal. We would much prefer to see United Nations sanctions fully implemented and updated in line with the threats that they are designed to deter.

To echo what our colleagues from the European Union have said, United Nations sanctions are one of the most powerful, peaceful tools that the international community has to address threats to international peace and security. We support their use whenever appropriate, and we work closely with international partners in building the capacity of Member States to implement United Nations sanctions fully and effectively.

In cases where United Nations action is not feasible, the United States often works in tandem with other Member States to implement autonomous sanctions to address threats to our security and values. Sanctions impose financial costs on corruption and restrict the flow of dual-use components to Governments that are working hard to build weapons of mass destruction that they will use to menace their neighbours and, indeed, the entire world. We also use sanctions to hold to account State actors who violate the rights of select minorities, of women and of their political opponents.

Those that stoke the unilateral coercive measures narrative contend that autonomous sanctions undermine the principles of sovereignty and non-interference. Our autonomous sanctions are targeted and crafted with a clear nexus to the United States.

The most flagrant violation of sovereignty and non-interference in the Charter of the United Nations today is Russia's continuing war against Ukraine, which has resulted in tens of thousands of civilian casualties and untold abuses of human rights. Sanctions help us deprive Moscow of the means of more easily prosecuting its war of aggression.

Some allege that our sanctions harm innocents, when in fact we use our sanctions to target those who obstruct the delivery of humanitarian aid and those who strip their citizenry of wealth through corruption. We use sanctions to uphold the rights of those who cannot defend themselves.

The United States has taken concrete actions to mitigate any unintended consequences of sanctions domestically and at the United Nations. Notably we advanced the landmark Security Council resolution 2664 (2002), which created a carveout for humanitarian efforts across United Nations sanctions regimes. Our efforts include codifying a historic package of humanitarian-related authorizations across our domestic sanctions programmes. That initiative has eased the delivery of humanitarian aid, including to those most in need in conflict zones, while mitigating the risk of its diversion or abuse by malicious actors. Lastly, the United States apply sanctions consistent with international law.

Allow me to leave you today with one final observation: the United States has been the target of autonomous sanctions by some of the most vociferous critics of so-called unilateral coercive measures. They have actually sanctioned us as well, which is the height of hypocrisy. These States aim to denigrate all sanctions with this narrative, which is designed to challenge the ability of independent nations to ensure their collective security through the peaceful regulation of their own resources. We hope that everyone here will see this political theatre for what it is.

We urge one and all to join us in our efforts to make greater use of United Nations sanctions by demanding accountability for those that undermine their implementation and by participating actively in efforts to ensure that such sanctions are up to date and enforced.

The United States has been greatly criticized by various countries. I will refrain from responding to most of them, but I will respond to Venezuela, who said some very outrageous and extreme things. I would point out that the goal of the United States is to promote democracy, the United Nations Charter and human rights. The United States accepts free and fair elections. The question is how elections are conducted, not who wins. Venezuela has repeatedly held fraudulent elections and committed blatant violations of human rights. The regional Organization of American States,

composed of 35 American States, has repeatedly passed resolutions condemning the fraudulent Venezuelan elections and its violations of human rights. It is important to know that the United States stands in support of the people of Venezuela and other countries because we believe that they should enjoy their human rights and that all the principles of the United Nations Charter should be protected.

**Mrs. Mamesah** (Indonesia): Indonesia aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representative of Uganda on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Indonesia welcomes this debate, which highlights the impact of unilateral extraterritorial coercive measures, both on the countries affected and on the multilateral system, and amplifies the calls for ending the use of such measures as means of political and economic compulsion. This meeting is timely and important to our collective efforts to ensure respect for international law, achieve sustainable development for all, reform the multilateral system and strengthen confidence in multilateralism.

Today the global community is facing challenges. The use of unilateral coercive measures has not only undermined international law and the multilateral system, but has also demonstrated hypocrisy, double standards and a widening trust deficit and has broken solidarity. We regret that countries are often pressured to take sides and apply unilateral coercive measures on issues not directly related to them. Indonesia therefore continues to support efforts within the United Nations to call for the elimination of such measures.

Allow me to highlight three elements for advancing efforts in eliminating the use of unilateral coercive measures.

First, we need to have genuine dialogue that brings us closer to reality. The negative impacts of unilateral coercive measures on the ground are far too great to be ignored or overlooked — perpetuating poverty for millions of persons in affected countries, many of them women and children, and driving greater global distrust. We need to reflect on the situation on the ground, focusing on the fundamental impact of unilateral coercive measures on peoples.

Secondly, a human rights-based approach is needed to assess the impact of unilateral coercive measures. While such measures are often used to put pressure on

alleged human-rights violators, evidence shows that, more often than not, their use challenges the fulfilment of human rights. People living under unilateral coercive measures are deprived of their rights to basic needs, such as healthcare facilities and humanitarian assistance, prevented from exercising freedom of movement and faced with economic hardship.

Indonesia therefore welcomes the initiative of the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights to develop guiding principles to put the protection of human rights at the heart of the elimination of such measures. We support her efforts to fight overcompliance with such measures, which exacerbates the impact of poverty, disasters, underdevelopment and other crises on ordinary persons. We welcome inclusive engagement aimed at ensuring the participation of stakeholders, partners and other actors in the formulation of these guiding principles, given that many actors are being pushed to implement unilateral coercive measures without knowing their impact on societies. Building awareness is the starting point and will spur greater involvement of actors in eliminating the use of unilateral coercive measures and their impact on human rights.

Thirdly, the elimination of illegal sanctions must be an integral part of the United Nations reform agenda. Despite continuous calls for the United Nations to end this practice, unilateral coercive measures continue to be applied as a means of political and economic compulsion in various parts of the world. This practice undermines the role of the United Nations and sends the message that the Organization cannot effectively perform its mandate of promoting mutual respect among countries based on State sovereignty.

Within the United Nations reform agenda, there is a need to strengthen the Organization's role, relevance and credibility. In that regard, the United Nations must pursue action on matters that put multilateralism at risk. Illegal sanctions challenge the principles of dialogue, diplomacy and unity, upon which multilateralism in the United Nations is built.

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate Indonesia's commitment to continue to support the work of the United Nations, strengthen adherence to international law and ensure a multilateral system that delivers for all.

**Mr. Ndong Mba** (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I align myself with the statement

delivered by His Excellency the Minister of People's Power for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations, and with the statements delivered by the representatives of Nigeria, on behalf of the Group of African States, and of Uganda, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. In addition, I would like to make the following comments in my national capacity.

Even though States, regional organizations and international organizations, particularly the Security Council, are able to adopt sanctions, pursuant to Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, such sanctions must be adopted in strict conformity with the obligations under the rules of international law. They must also be proportionate and carefully calibrated. Only if they are conceived of and applied in this way can they serve as an important tool for use by the international community to strengthen efforts to prevent, mitigate and resolve long-standing and emerging global challenges.

Nevertheless, extraterritorial unilateral coercive measures, which we are discussing in this debate, fail to observe even the basic requirements of international law and do not respect our promise and common goal of leaving no one behind. We therefore reiterate our wholehearted condemnation of the adoption, use and recognition of unilateral coercive measures by any State or group of States as a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations, international humanitarian law, international human rights law and the norms and principles governing friendly relations between countries.

Such measures contravene the principles of sovereign equality between States and of non-interference in the internal affairs of States. They stand in the way of the full enjoyment of human rights, such as the right to an adequate standard of living. They worsen the situation for the most vulnerable groups in society, especially women, children and persons with disabilities. They distort trade and investment flows and have a generally negative impact on international economic cooperation and global efforts to move towards an open, transparent, multilateral and non-discriminatory trade system. They also prevent and limit the resolution of conflicts through peaceful dialogue and mutual understanding.

Unilateral coercive measures are used as an instrument to exert political, judicial, financial,



economic and other kinds of pressure on developing countries, to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights and promote certain international political interests. We suspect, in fact, that the application of extraterritorial coercive measures is being seen as an alternative to military force, just without the massive suffering and sacrifice required by war. That premeditated and absurd practice gives an unfair advantage to developed and economically stable countries and endangers the future of developing and underdeveloped countries.

We therefore need to redouble our efforts to ensure that multilateral processes provide an adequate environment for the continued condemnation of such measures and to identify more efficient mechanisms for prohibiting and/or punishing the use of such measures.

In that context, we call firmly on all States to abstain from adopting and applying unilateral coercive measures that are contrary to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and that prevent the full achievement of economic and social development, in particular in developing and underdeveloped countries. Humanitarian assistance in cases of natural disasters, pandemics and armed conflicts or conflicts of any other kind must not be subject to unilateral coercive measures.

States or groups of States that impose unilateral coercive measures must provide compensation for the damage that such measures cause. We call for the complete elimination and lifting of coercive extraterritorial economic measures and all such measures imposed unilaterally on developing and underdeveloped countries, especially in Africa.

We express our concern at the precarious economic, social and humanitarian situation experienced by the people of Cuba as a consequence of the extension of the illegal embargo against the country by the United States and the application of economic sanctions pursuant to the Helms-Burton Act. In line with our solidarity with this brotherly and friendly country, we reiterate our request to the United States — a country with which we have good relations — to lift its long-standing and harmful sanctions against Cuba. We also call upon the Security Council to pay greater attention to and to increase its monitoring of the application of such measures, given that they threaten the very basis of international peace, security and stability.

I conclude by reaffirming our commitment to enhancing peaceful diplomacy and preserving and

strengthening the multilateral decision-making process through the United Nations in the face of protectionist and unilateralist policies. We advocate promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes and abstaining under all circumstances from participating in coalitions, agreements or any other kind of unilateral coercive initiative that violates the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

**Mr. Chimbindi (Zimbabwe):** I wish to extend my gratitude to the President of the Assembly for convening this important meeting on eliminating unilateral extraterritorial coercive economic measures. Bringing this matter to the fore underscores the urgency and significance of upholding international law and ensuring the protection of human rights and State sovereignty.

Zimbabwe aligns itself with the statements made by Uganda on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and of the Group of 77 and China, by Nigeria on behalf of the Group of African States, by Venezuela on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations and by Angola on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (see A/78/PV.89). I will now proceed to make additional remarks in my national capacity.

The illegality of the unilateral coercive measures imposed by certain countries against other States, businesses and individuals has been well documented in numerous United Nations studies. Multiple General Assembly resolutions, including that adopted on 19 December 2023 (resolution 78/135), and Human Rights Council resolutions highlight the specific violations of international law inherent in those measures and the threats that they pose to international peace and security. Those resolutions call on all Member States to lift such measures. In addition, over 30 General Assembly resolutions condemn the United States embargo against Cuba.

Despite the clear will of the global majority for the total elimination of such illegal measures, several Western countries continue to impose them with impunity, extending their unlawful effects both domestically and extraterritorially. As a result, that coercive international order is undermining the functions, authority and credibility of the United Nations. Evidence shows that those measures cause gross violations of human rights, including the rights to life, food, health, water and sanitation. They

hinder the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in addition to the response to pandemics such as the coronavirus disease pandemic and the provision of humanitarian assistance in affected countries.

It is a fallacy that such measures are targeted in nature. The reality is that they have a spillover contagion effect on other countries, in particular by imposing a blanket negative perception about countries such as my own across the world, especially in sensitive global financial markets, where there is always overcompliance.

Zimbabwe recalls that the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights, Alena Douhan, issued a report on her mission to Zimbabwe, in which she recommended the lifting of unilateral coercive measures, in line with the principles of international law. We call for the immediate and unconditional lifting of unilateral coercive measures for all countries affected, including Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe urges Member States to ensure that the authority and credibility of the United Nations are strengthened by adhering to United Nations resolutions rather than subverting them. The clear call in this Hall for the removal of heinous unilateral coercive measures must be upheld.

**Mr. Abuzied Shamseldin Ahmed Mohamed** (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank the President of the Assembly for convening and organizing this important meeting. We welcome this debate on the elimination of unilateral coercive economic measures.

The Sudan aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Uganda, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Group of 77 and China, and of Nigeria, on behalf of the Group of African States. In our national capacity, we would like to share the following points related to agenda item 28, "Elimination of unilateral extraterritorial coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion".

First, the application of unilateral coercive economic measures and sanctions is contrary to the principles of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the principles governing friendly relations among countries. They undermine the opportunities to participate in and benefit from the international

financial system and international trade. Furthermore, the Human Rights Council has issued resolution 54/15, urging all States to lift all coercive measures and sanctions that do not comply with international law.

Secondly, while it is more important than ever that we strengthen multilateralism and the means of international cooperation, respect the rule of law and ensure security and stability so that no one is left behind, the application of unilateral coercive measures and sanctions is being used to undermine those noble objectives.

Thirdly, peace and development are naturally interlinked. However, the application of sanctions has led to the failure to meet the needs of developing countries, especially with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals, and has deprived them of the ability to benefit from international financial institutions, international trade and inclusion in the international banking system. The international community therefore faces enormous challenges and major tests; in order to make development a reality, lifting unilateral coercive measures must be an international priority.

Fourthly, it is becoming increasingly urgent to reform international financial institutions so that they can provide the necessary assistance and remove restrictions and conditions or link them to political circumstances.

Fifthly, the sanctions imposed on my country, the Sudan, have had a serious impact on healthcare, agriculture, aviation, education, banking and other sectors. They have prevented us from attaining the Sustainable Development Goals, accessing assistance and meeting some of our international commitments, which is having a negative impact on economic, social and humanitarian conditions. A large proportion of the Sudanese people — especially vulnerable groups, such as women, children, the elderly and even young persons — are suffering gravely as a result, especially with regard to healthcare, education and transportation.

Lastly, rebel militias are at war with the Sudanese people, committing abhorrent crimes against them, including murder, pillage, rape, torture and destruction. These crimes have been documented by international media platforms, international organizations, the national authorities and even the militias themselves, who have posted videos of their crimes on social media. It was expected that they would be condemned. It is unfortunate that some parties tend to equate those

militias with the Sudanese army, which is an esteemed national institution, and have imposed sanctions and other measures on Sudanese businesses and national entities that contribute to the national economy and help build national capabilities.

**Mr. Flores** (Honduras) (*spoke in Spanish*): We developing countries are facing great challenges, including unilateral economic and trade measures and weakening multilateralism, which are undermining the principles established in the Charter of the United Nations and international law. In line with its foreign policy principles, the Government of President Xiomara Castro Sarmiento regrets the application of unilateral coercive measures, which have a negative effect on the human rights of people living under such measures, thereby widening the development gap. Such measures weaken social and economic development in the countries to which they are applied, preventing the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

As expressed by President Castro Sarmiento, Honduras reiterates that the application of unilateral measures, including tariff and non-tariff barriers, also undermines the multilateral trading system and restricts free trade and investment and, in turn, sustainable development, which would be of benefit to all. Such measures are therefore contrary to global trading rules and to universally recognized instruments for development. The impact of such measures also weakens mechanisms for cooperation and limits access to financing, technology and various essential products, thereby compromising our fundamental commitment to leaving no one behind.

As President Castro Sarmiento has reiterated in the General Assembly, Honduras regrets the blockades imposed against Cuba and Venezuela, as such measures violate international law and do not respect the right of peoples to self-determination.

Honduras welcomed the adoption of resolution 78/135, on unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion against developing countries, which, among other things, requests the Secretary-General to study the impact of such measures on trade and development. We also recall the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, which establishes, among other things, that States must not encourage the use of unilateral

measures to coerce another State in the exercise of its sovereign rights.

Honduras therefore maintains its principled position not to promote or apply any unilateral economic or trade measures or laws against other States that would affect the free conduct of international trade, in compliance with our obligations under the United Nations Charter and international law.

In that regard, my country calls on the international community to show greater solidarity and cooperation so that together we can overcome the daunting challenges and vulnerabilities faced in various parts of the world, and so that we can implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**Mr. Babo Soares** (Timor-Leste): I thank the President of the Assembly for convening this debate.

Timor-Leste aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The use of unilateral extraterritorial coercive measures is a controversial topic, with advocates and critics both presenting valid arguments. However, amid that debate, over 30 countries are being denied access to fundamental rights as a result of those measures, which violates the Charter of the United Nations, various United Nations resolutions and the principle of multilateralism. That situation highlights the urgent need for a re-evaluation of unilateral coercive measures, as they contradict the principles of international cooperation and respect for sovereignty, causing harm to innocent populations and undermining global stability. It is essential to explore alternative solutions that prioritize dialogue, diplomacy and human rights, ensuring that all nations can access basic rights and participate equally in the global community.

The removal of economic sanctions, trade restrictions and other measures imposed by one country on another without the consent of the targeted country is a must. As we have heard from previous speakers, while such measures are often used as a means of political and economic pressure, they can have devastating consequences for the targeted countries, including economic hardship and instability, disruption of global supply chains, violations of sovereignty and international law, discrimination against certain countries or industries, and the creation of obstacles to economic development and cooperation.

As we all know, the practice of coercive measures was introduced and imposed primarily by large and powerful nations against smaller, economically weaker States. They can take many forms, including economic sanctions, trade embargoes, asset freezes, investment restrictions, travel bans and other forms of coercive measures used against targeted nations, such as in the case of Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela. Those countries, along with other targeted countries, have seen the worst of economic hardship and political instability. Worse still, innocent populations, primarily vulnerable groups such as the elderly, women and youth, bear the brunt of such measures.

Unilateral extraterritorial coercive economic measures should find no place in our world today. They violate State sovereignty and international law, undermining the principles of equality and non-interference. They violate the Charter of the United Nations, human rights principles, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Their humanitarian impact is significant, with innocent civilians bearing the brunt. They hinder economic development and cooperation, restrict access to markets, technology and resources and limit the potential for economic growth and diversification, thereby perpetuating economic inequality and dependence and undermining the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

As we have seen thus far, coercive measures are employed as a means of political coercion, rather than as a legitimate response to political or economic concerns. That undermines the rule of law and perpetuates a culture of “might makes right”, rather than encouraging diplomacy, solutions and dialogue. Coercive measures can also lead to retaliation from affected parties, escalate tensions and potentially spark trade wars.

Timor-Leste therefore calls for the full implementation of United Nations resolutions on the elimination of unilateral economic coercive measures for all targeted countries, including Cuba and Venezuela. That would foster a more just and equitable economic system, promoting multilateralism and cooperation.

Timor-Leste believes that the abolishment of such sanctions would encourage economic diplomacy, negotiation and the development of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, thereby avoiding trade wars and ultimately leading to a more peaceful and prosperous

world. It would therefore help countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and ensure that no one is left behind.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the observer of the Observer State of Palestine.

**Ms. Abdelhady (Palestine):** The State of Palestine welcomes the statements delivered by the Republic of Uganda on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the statement delivered by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations (see A/78/PV.89) on this matter of critical importance.

Our world today is deeply interconnected and intertwined, both economically and politically — a world defined by globalization and interdependence for socioeconomic progress and stability. As a result, our world is more than ever in need of peace, security and solidarity. If the international community truly aspires to cooperation and unity to bring about progress, then the elimination of unilateral coercive measures not only demands our urgent attention but also our collective action to uphold the principles of justice and equality that are the cornerstone of this esteemed institution and the post-Second World War international legal order.

Unilateral coercive measures, including blockades, undermine the principles of sovereignty, self-determination and international cooperation enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Those measures inflict severe harm on the most vulnerable populations, exacerbate poverty and impede the development of the nations that they target, particularly developing countries. In doing so, they obstruct our collective efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those related to ending poverty and hunger, ensuring good health and well-being and fostering inclusive economic growth.

In developing countries, the human cost of unilateral coercive measures is stark: they are not just an abstract concept, but rather a painful reality for hundreds of millions of persons around the world. It is estimated that well over one third of the world’s population is affected by unilateral coercive measures. Families are pushed deeper into poverty, healthcare systems are strained beyond capacity, opportunities for education and employment are severely hindered, and access to technology is either limited or restricted. Unilateral coercive measures therefore contravene the



principles of multilateralism as they erode the spirit of international cooperation that the United Nations embodies, in addition to the rules and principles of international law.

In that regard, Human Rights Council resolution 54/15 clearly states that unilateral coercive measures “are contrary to international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States” and that they “impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries” (resolution 54/15, *fourth and fifth preambular paras.*).

While we reaffirm our commitment to international law and the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, our collective action must focus, *inter alia*, on the following two priorities in order to effectively confront unilateral coercive measures and their harm to developing countries. First, we must strengthen the role of multilateral institutions, particularly the United Nations, in ensuring that any economic measures comply with international law. Secondly, we must support developing countries, including by providing economic, technical, health and humanitarian assistance to countries adversely impacted by unilateral coercive measures in order to enable their peoples to recover and to rebuild their futures.

The world today is undergoing rapid changes amid ever-growing crises and challenges that demand international cooperation and solidarity to overcome them and to ensure that no country and no person is left behind. The global community must urgently end unjust measures that hamper any and all such efforts. This is not solely a matter of socioeconomic and political concern, but, more importantly, a fundamental matter of human dignity and the right to life, liberty and development for all.

It is a testament to our shared humanity and our collective resolve to create a world in which every nation can pursue its potential and can thrive in peace and stability, free from external coercion and oppression, including foreign occupation and colonial domination. The path forward lies in our unity and mutual solidarity, which is critical for our success to ensure a more just, peaceful future and a fairer and more equitable world for all.

**The Acting President:** We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

The exercise of the right of reply has been requested.

May I remind members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

**Mr. Ron Martínez** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela feels obliged to take the floor to exercise our right of reply to the cynical comments made by the representative of the United States regime.

The principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States, as contained in the Charter of the United Nations, is the cornerstone of the system of international relations. The statement made by the representative of the United States once again confirms that country’s contempt for international law, multilateralism, the Organization and everyone present here today to debate such an important matter, in which the United States is undoubtedly the main aggressor. It is no coincidence that the United States has been mentioned in so many statements delivered today.

We remind the United States that it is not the world’s police force. It does not have the moral authority or legitimacy to give opinions on or promote measures that are designed solely to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign States. Any other interpretation simply has no place in international law.

In the case of Venezuela, the United States regime, through the illegal application of unilateral coercive measures, has directly attacked the independent electoral body of my country. It has threatened to impose its so-called sanctions against anyone who thinks about presenting a candidacy that does not agree with Washington’s policies. It also continues to extend its collective punishment against the entire Venezuelan population for taking sovereign decisions that do not align with its own imperial interests. Its model of democracy is clearly not an example to be followed.

Lastly, in his statement, the representative of the United States regime confirmed what we have been saying for years: that the aim of its illegal unilateral coercive measures is to advance regime change policies by threatening the upcoming Venezuelan electoral process. His statement today confirms, in turn, his

predicted defeat, which is why he has already chosen to refuse to recognize the electoral results. The Venezuelan people will continue to be owners of their own destiny and to exercise their democratic will and sovereignty without interventions to steer us from our path or to prevent us from reaching new victories.

**The Acting President:** The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 28.

#### **Agenda item 17 (continued)**

#### **Follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conferences on Financing for Development**

##### **Draft decision (A/78/L.76)**

##### **Draft amendment (A/78/L.79)**

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom to introduce draft amendment A/78/L.79.

**Ms. Boyd-Lee** (United Kingdom): I take the floor to make an oral amendment.

Before I begin, the Secretariat has informed us that the non-governmental organization (NGO) Weltwirtschaft, Ökologie & Entwicklung submitted its documentation in both English and German; we have therefore removed the mention of this organization from our amendment. It does not to be listed here, as it is already accredited.

We are glad to see that the language on civil society participation was included in resolution 78/271 — the modality resolution — on the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, thereby allowing for meaningful civil society participation in this important Conference. These modalities allow us to see the rationale for objections to the participation of all NGOs. Such transparency is essential to ensure that the Conference includes voices from a range of experts in the field of financing for development. We are grateful that the language has given the decision-making power back to the Assembly rather than allowing it to be held by any single Member State.

We do regret, however, that Member States continue to use the non-objection basis to attempt to block NGOs from other countries on political grounds. The

non-objection basis does not have to be the norm of the General Assembly and, indeed, is no longer the norm.

For those reasons, and to ensure that the Conference hears from the full range of actors, the United Kingdom wishes to introduce an amendment to reinstate the following five non-governmental organizations to the annex of draft decision A/78/L.76: the German Institute of Development and Sustainability, the Global Poverty Project/Global Citizen, the International Institute for Nonviolent Action, Rural Aid Pakistan and the Centre for Sustainable Finance of the SOAS University of London.

The financing for development process has a long history of strong civil society participation. We therefore believe that it is crucial that civil society organizations are granted wide participation in the Conference. Their input is critical. It would be a disservice not to take advantage of all the tools available to us ahead of this Conference. That includes a deep partnership with civil society.

**The Acting President:** We shall now proceed to consider draft decision A/78/L.76 and draft amendment A/78/L.79, as orally revised. For the information of the Assembly, draft amendment A/78/L.79 has closed for e-sponsorship.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

**Mr. Nakano** (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft amendment, and in addition to the delegations listed in document A/78/L.79, the following countries have also become co-sponsors of the draft amendment, as orally revised: Albania, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States of America.

**The Acting President:** Delegations wishing to make a statement in explanation of vote before the voting on any proposal under this agenda item are invited to do so now, in one intervention. After action on all of them, there will be an opportunity for statements in explanation of vote after the voting on any or all of the proposals.

Before giving the floor for explanation of vote before the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations

of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Mr. Fondukov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We have repeatedly pointed out the contradictory nature of the wording related to the participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in United Nations international conferences. Today we have before us further evidence of that ineffective approach, which is rubber-stamped for an ever-growing number of events. Instead of trying to resolve this issue, we are continuing to follow this ineffective practice.

The fourth International Conference on Financing for Development is an international forum, the aim of which is to come up with consensus solutions in the sphere of global development. The financing for development track has proven itself to be a depoliticized platform where country representatives, together with other interested parties, can openly discuss pressing global problems and find ways to resolve them. In practice, however, the presence of certain organizations often leads to an unnecessary politicization of the discussions, which makes it harder to achieve constructive dialogue and consensus.

We thank the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Dennis Francis, for taking into account the opinions of Member States and for preparing, following a non-objection procedure, a list of NGOs that have expressed a desire to participate in the Conference.

Unfortunately, a number of States believe that those issues should be resolved through a vote and have placed their opinion above that of others. That gives rise to a question: why were those organizations which we do not wish to invite to our discussions because of their destructive agendas created, and to what end are they being financed? We know that we will be told now about freedom of speech, but the political instructions provided by the backers of those NGOs that those organizations are carrying out have nothing to do with freedom of expression.

We ask all Member States that support the principles of the Charter of the United Nations to vote against the proposed draft amendment A/78/L.79, which aims to force through the participation of NGOs that promote the political order of their Western sponsors. The list proposed on behalf of the United Kingdom includes organizations that have repeatedly demonstrated an inclination for politicizing discussions.

Our decision is driven by the desire to maintain the neutral and constructive nature of the Conference. We believe that such action will create a more suitable set of conditions for the comprehensive discussion of global problems of financing for development and will help us reach balanced decisions that take into account the interests of all participants. We hope for members' support.

**Ms. Ong** (Canada): I have the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Civil society is our eyes and ears on the ground and provides critical information and perspectives on a number of issues. Its representatives should therefore be at the table during United Nations meetings, including the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development. Resolution 78/271 stresses the importance of the effective participation of all relevant stakeholders, including civil society, in the Conference and its preparatory process.

The active engagement of civil society in the Conference enhances the quality, inclusiveness and effectiveness of the discussions and outcomes. Its involvement is essential for fostering accountability, innovation and partnerships critical for sustainable development.

We would also like to reiterate that the requirement that objections be brought for decision by the General Assembly increases transparency and accountability and enables the whole General Assembly membership — rather than just one Member State — to decide on the participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) .

We are also particularly concerned by the increasing trend of Member States objecting to NGOs from other countries. The fate of reputable and credible NGOs should not be determined behind closed doors and through the objections of one or a few Member States. The General Assembly must consider the criteria set forth by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations when determining eligibility for participation in a meeting and must push back against the politicization of the work of civil society.

Civil society's greatest value added is that it works across countries, regions and issues, pushing each of us to do better as Governments. We therefore urge Member States to support draft amendment A/78/L.79,

which aims to increase transparency and accountability for civil society participation across the United Nations.

**Ms. Marks** (United States of America): The United States is deeply committed to promoting the meaningful participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the United Nations system, without regard for their political beliefs. We will continue to support the accreditation of legitimate NGOs, including those with which we disagree and those that criticize the United States or our partners.

Our rationale for that position is simple: providing diverse NGOs with a platform to participate in the United Nations system makes this institution and its Member States stronger and more responsive to our citizens. The open exchange of ideas that NGO observers provide is essential for innovation and creative solutions in multilateral bodies.

As we face global challenges, including humanitarian crises, rising violent extremism and the impacts of climate change, it is critical that we include civil society voices in the work of the United Nations. We must do more to accredit civil society organizations without regard to their political views.

We regret the continued use of the non-objection basis by some Member States to object to participation by legitimate NGOs. We welcome the accountability and the vigorous and balanced debate provided by civil society participation in the halls of the United Nations and at the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development.

**Ms. Mendoza Elguea** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico would like to thank the delegation of the United Kingdom for draft amendment A/78/L.79, presented today, and to explain its decision to support it.

The general financing for development process has always been guided by a spirit of inclusion, enabling multi-actor collaboration on the financing for development agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. That approach has given the United Nations membership the opportunity to hear various perspectives on the best way to implement the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

From our point of view, the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development should allow the participation of all non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that wish to participate and that meet the criteria established in the accreditation process. Resolution

78/271, on modalities of the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, establishes that the list of representatives of such organizations at the Conference should be based on, among other things, the principle of transparency; that has not been respected on this occasion, however, given that the list of NGOs against which objections were made was not circulated to the members of the General Assembly for their consideration. In addition, the reasons for those objections have not been explained. That being the case, Mexico supports the re-inclusion of those NGOs in the original list that was submitted for consideration by the General Assembly.

The principle of inclusion has been a basic pillar of the general process of financing for development since it was launched in Monterrey, Mexico, in 2002. My delegation is of the opinion that the ambition and impact of the fourth Conference in 2025 will benefit from the inclusive participation of NGOs, whether or not my country might agree with the positions expressed; the value added of such participation lies in the exchange of experiences and points of view.

Mexico will continue to advocate the inclusion of any actor that wishes to participate in the Conference, in line with the principles set out in resolution 78/271. We call upon Member States to support those efforts in order to strengthen discussions and ensure that the outcomes of the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in 2025 will be beneficial to all countries, in particular developing countries.

**Ms. Kaiser** (Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States.

The European Union and its member States support draft amendment A/78/L.79 and align themselves with the statement delivered by the representative of the United Kingdom.

We recall the joint priority of ensuring an inclusive and transparent process that is open to stakeholders, including from civil society, academia and the private sector. The active participation of all stakeholders will not only be in the interest of the legitimacy of the process but will also contribute to achieving an ambitious outcome.

In that vein, the EU and its member States call for supporting and facilitating the participation of all



stakeholders, in line with the letter and spirit of the modalities adopted by the General Assembly.

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

Before we proceed to take a decision on draft decision A/78/L.76, in accordance with rule 90 of the rules of procedure, the Assembly shall first take a decision on draft amendment A/78/L.79, as orally revised.

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay

*Against:*

Angola, Belarus, Burundi, Eritrea, India, Morocco, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, Türkiye

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, China, Djibouti, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Guyana, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam, Yemen

*Draft amendment A/78/L.79, as orally revised, was adopted by 59 votes to 10, with 40 abstentions.*

**The Acting President:** Since draft amendment A/78/L.79, as orally revised, was adopted, we shall

proceed to take action on draft decision A/78/L.76, as amended.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft decision A/78/L.76, entitled "Participation of non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions and the private sector in the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development", as amended.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft decision A/78/L.76, as amended?

*Draft decision A/78/L.76, as amended, was adopted (decision 78/551).*

**The Acting President:** Before giving the floor to speakers in explanations of vote or position after the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Mr. Marquardt Bayer** (Brazil): Brazil is a strong advocate of the adequate participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the United Nations, without prejudice to its intergovernmental nature. The contributions of NGOs and civil society, particularly in the financing for development process, have proved truly central to the evolution of discussions and are highly valued by my Government.

Brazil abstained in the voting on the amendment (A/78/L.79) proposed by the United Kingdom owing to the lack of sufficient information to make an informed decision. We believe that the process for accrediting organizations to participate in United Nations meetings, including the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, should be enhanced and refined, with adequate information on the NGOs being provided and the reasons for and against accreditation fully articulated and communicated to all Member States.

Brazil stands ready to contribute to this process in collaboration with other delegations. We remain committed to fostering an environment where the voices of civil society can be fully heard and their valuable contributions can help shape our collective efforts.

**Ms. İstemil Aydil** (Türkiye): I would like to begin by underlining that Türkiye is committed to supporting the active participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the work of the United Nations, as is essential for achieving our common goals. A large number of

NGOs from Türkiye already contribute to all spheres of the work of the United Nations and collaborate with the United Nations all around the globe, in particular in the most vulnerable countries.

We strongly support the participation of NGOs in the work of the United Nations as long as their objectives and activities are in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. In this particular case, we support the participation of NGOs whose activities will contribute to the ongoing preparations for the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development and to the Conference itself.

Yet we cannot underestimate the fact that some NGOs are engaging in activities that run counter to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and engage in politically motivated acts against some Member States. As a long-standing member of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, we have encountered numerous cases in which certain organizations have abused their consultative status and their participation in various United Nations meetings. We believe that the criteria and principles formulated in Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 should apply to all NGOs that seek to participate in the conferences and meetings of the United Nations.

On a separate note, not all Member States, including the proponents and supporters of this amendment (A/78/L.79), possess in-depth information on the objectives, activities and financing of every NGO that seeks to engage with the United Nations, including those to which some Member States have objected in this case. The views and concerns of the relevant Member States should be respected in determining the participation of the NGOs concerned in the work of the United Nations in order to prevent the abuse of United Nations platforms.

We look forward to the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development. Türkiye will continue to promote inclusivity and transparency in line with the United Nations Charter.

**Mr. Hoang Nguyen Nguyen** (Viet Nam): Viet Nam in principle supports the participation of relevant non-governmental organizations (NGOs), among other stakeholders, in the work of the United Nations, especially in important processes and events such as the International Conference on Financing for Development.

At the same time, we are of the view that the United Nations processes must remain Member State-driven. While relevant NGOs can contribute to enriching dialogues and adding value to inclusive decision-making through constructive and non-politicized engagement, their participation should be on the basis of consensus and should avoid creating further division among Member States.

For that reason, and owing to the lack of information on the NGOs concerned as necessary to make a more informed decision, Viet Nam abstained in the voting on the amendment (A/78/L.79).

**Mrs. Mamesah** (Indonesia): Indonesia wishes to deliver and explanation of vote on amendment A/78/L.79.

In times of multidimensional crisis, solidarity, dialogue and partnership involving all stakeholders are vital. Indonesia fully supports inclusivity and acknowledges the important contribution of non-governmental organizations in the United Nations processes. Civil society can provide critical insights and inputs on key issues under discussion, especially the financing for development process. The time when Governments could monopolize discussions, ideas and information has long passed.

We therefore believe that active and constructive engagement with civil society can yield much-needed creative solutions to the complex challenges that we are facing today. We also believe that our endeavours to promote inclusivity in the multilateral process should go hand in hand with our continuous efforts to safeguard multilateralism by respecting the established mechanisms upon which we have all agreed. That is important to ensure the credibility and effective functioning of relevant mechanisms and the overall multilateral system.

Indonesia is therefore deeply concerned at the increasing action taken to undermine the outcomes of intergovernmental consultations and bypass agreed procedures and modalities. Such action fuels the growing trust deficit among Member States, which is eroding faith in the multilateral system. That is alarming and threatens the integrity of our collective framework. For that reason, Indonesia abstained in the voting on the amendment.

In conclusion, Indonesia calls on all Member States to respect agreed mechanisms and work together to

strengthen our multilateral system. At the same time, Indonesia reiterates its commitment to work together with all Member States to promote a United Nations that is inclusive and accountable.

**Mr. Babo Soares** (Timor-Leste): Timor-Leste appreciates the importance of civil society participation in the work of the United Nations, particularly on financing for development. However, we felt obliged to abstain in the voting on the amendment (A/78/L.79) owing to the lack of sufficient information on the specific roles and responsibilities of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in this context.

While we recognize the valuable contributions of NGOs, and civil society in general, in promoting human rights, sustainable development and peace, we need more clarity on their specific tasks and how they will complement the work of the United Nations. We look forward to receiving more information and

assurances on the matter. We reaffirm our commitment to the principles of transparency, accountability and inclusivity in the work of the United Nations.

**Mr. Fondukov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation supports the participation of a large number of interested parties the work of the International Conference on Financing for Development. However, in our view, the participation of politicized non-governmental organizations is destructive. In that regard, we would like to place on record that the Russian Federation disassociates itself from the list of organizations that were not subjected to the non-objection procedure.

**The Acting President:** The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 17.

*The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.*