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**Basic programme of work of  
the Council**

## **Letter dated 28 January 2011 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to refer to the presidential declarations made at the Sixth Extraordinary Summit of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America — Peoples' Trade Agreement (ALBA-TCP), held in the city of Maracay, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on 24 June 2009 (see annex) and at the Seventh Summit of ALBA-TCP, held in the city of Cochabamba, Plurinational State of Bolivia, on 17 October 2009 (see A/C.2/64/8).

In that regard, it should be noted that both declarations, signed by the Heads of State and Government of the countries members of ALBA-TCP, support the proposal made by the Plurinational State of Bolivia to amend article 49, paragraphs 1 (c) and 2 (e), of the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, as amended by the Protocol amending the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (see E/2009/78, annex).

The Heads of State and Government of the countries members of ALBA-TCP reaffirmed that the upholding of historical-cultural values, in particular, the custom of coca leaf chewing, is an inalienable right of peoples with that tradition and that, therefore, the reappraising of the coca leaf for its beneficial properties and ancestral cultural meaning is a sovereign decision of the Bolivian people and Government that deserves the international community's support. In that light, they endorsed the call made by the Plurinational State of Bolivia for the removal of the coca leaf from Schedule I of the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and to do away with any prohibition on coca leaf chewing in that Convention.

In that regard, and considering that the presidential declaration made at the Seventh Summit of ALBA-TCP was submitted earlier by the Permanent Mission of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations by a letter dated 21 October 2009, which was circulated to States Members of the United Nations as



a document of the General Assembly (A/C.2/64/8), the Permanent Mission of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations respectfully requests that the present letter and its annex should be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 24, and as a document of the 2011 organizational session of the Economic and Social Council.

*(Signed)* Ambassador Jorge **Valero Briceño**  
Permanent Representative

**Annex to the letter dated 28 January 2011 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

**Declaration of the Sixth Extraordinary Summit of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America — Peoples' Trade Agreement**

**Maracay, Aragua state, 24 June 2009**

The Heads of State and Government of the countries members of the Alternativa Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América — Tratado de Comercio de los Pueblos (ALBA-TCP) (Bolivarian Alternative for the Peoples of Our America — Peoples' Trade Agreement), on the occasion of the 188th anniversary of the patriots' victory in the Battle of Carabobo and of the ALBA-TCP Sixth Extraordinary Summit, held in the city of Maracay, Aragua state, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on 24 June 2009, reaffirmed their commitment to the principles set out in the joint statement of 14 December 2004, signed by the Presidents of the Republic of Cuba and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

They recognized the strengthening of ALBA-TCP and its consolidation as a political, economic and social alliance to defend the independence, sovereignty, self-determination and identity of its member countries and the interests and aspirations of the peoples of the South in the face of attempts at political and economic domination. They also recognized the notable progress made by ALBA-TCP as a new type of uniting mechanism based on solidarity, cooperation, complementarity and justice. They underlined its vital importance in building a multipolar world that recognizes a number of social and humanist values as passed down from indigenous peoples.

They enthusiastically welcomed the Republic of Ecuador as a new member of ALBA-TCP, following its active participation as an observer State, and in light of its shared identity and historical future. Ecuador's stand against local and global inequalities and its Government's solidarity with Latin American integration processes will undoubtedly contribute significantly to strengthening ALBA.

They likewise welcomed two fellow Caribbean peoples — Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Antigua and Barbuda — as full-fledged members of ALBA-TCP and emphasized the strategic importance of such memberships as well as the fundamental support that these nations of the Caribbean would provide to the project for the multi-country union of the peoples of Our America.

They welcomed the presence of the representatives of the Governments of the Republic of Paraguay and Grenada as guests at the Sixth Extraordinary Summit of ALBA-TCP.

They decided that, as from the Sixth Summit, ALBA-TCP would be known as the "Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America — Peoples' Trade Agreement" (ALBA-TCP), with the understanding that the political growth and strengthening of ALBA-TCP had transformed it into a real and effective influence.

With a view to bolstering the implementation of social programmes in the countries members of ALBA-TCP, they established the ALBA-TCP Social Council,

the mandate of which would be to monitor and implement social programmes for the benefit of their countries' peoples. The Council would be made up of ministers of education, health, housing, labour, social security, grass-roots initiatives and the rights of minorities or specific segments of the population.

They expressed their commitment to establish an economic complementarity zone on the basis of ALBA-TCP principles in order to coordinate economic initiatives. In that regard, they directed ministers of industry, the economy, finance, trade, and planning and development to establish an ALBA-TCP Ministerial Council for Economic Complementarity. They underlined their interest in the areas of planning, exchange and productive investment in order to meet their peoples' needs. The Council, which would be established on 24 July 2009, would meet on a monthly basis and would focus its work on three main areas: economic planning, exchanges and productive investment, and cooperation programmes within ALBA-TCP.

They urged the committees of the Single Regional Payment Clearing System (SUCRE) to continue their work according to the mandate they had received from the presidents at the Fifth Extraordinary Summit, held in Cumaná, Venezuela, through the framework agreement that first established SUCRE, and to set up a monetary council, a clearing house, a common account unit and a reserve and multilateralization fund. These committees were directed to submit periodic reports on the progress of their work to the permanent coordination office. Likewise, they encouraged the SUCRE committee on trade to expand its strategies and initiatives aimed at boosting trade among their countries.

They gave clear instruction to SUCRE working groups to focus their work with a view to the signing of the treaty establishing SUCRE at the next ALBA-TCP summit.

They requested the ALBA-TCP Ministerial Council on food to meet immediately in order to draft the document establishing a multi-country food company and its immediate action plan.

As part of the ALBA multi-country project for education, they agreed to establish the ALBA-TCP Peoples' University (UNIALBA) as a network of universities committed to the inclusion and generation of humanistic, scientific and technological alternatives and solutions, and to the diversity of knowledge that contributes to multi-country development and unity.

They directed the ALBA-TCP Ministerial Council to establish a working group on the accreditation and assessment of higher education systems, with a view to improving the quality of universities in their countries.

They directed the ALBA-TCP Ministerial Council to establish a working group on international law, self-determination, respect for sovereignty and human rights, which would be charged with submitting, within no more than sixty (60) days, a proposal for the establishment of a body within ALBA responsible for the topics referred to in its mandate, to be coordinated by Bolivia. The working group would submit its reports to the political committee through the Executive Secretariat.

They decided to establish an ALBA-TCP Ministerial Council on Women, with a view to creating a proactive forum to increase the profile of their peoples' women in order to ensure the gender mainstreaming of all ALBA-TCP integration initiatives and instruments.

They directed all the ministerial councils established by the present declaration to hold monthly meetings.

They took note of the efforts made by the institutions of Ecuador and Venezuela to further the preliminary study conducted by the ALBA-TCP bank on the ALBA remittances initiative and called for work to continue on establishing a pilot project between Ecuador and Venezuela to promote development in the communities that send and receive remittances.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela expressed its desire to develop joint projects appropriate to the needs of each of the ALBA-TCP member countries, in the areas of telemedicine, tele-education and rural telephony, drawing on the technological benefits of the Simón Bolívar satellite and the pilot projects developed in Venezuela, with the aim of overcoming the obstacles faced by the region's most underserved populations in accessing information, knowledge and technology.

They supported the Paraguayan proposal to take decisive steps towards regional energy integration and the full capacity of States to freely dispose of their energy resources.

They undertook to develop a model for the social appropriation of knowledge that would help overcome the obstacles to the production of goods essential for life and health, such as food. In that regard, they instructed the ALBA Council of Ministers to establish, within 30 days, a working group on the review of industrial property law, coordinated by Venezuela.

They instructed the Permanent Coordination Committee and the Political Commission to meet before the next ALBA-TCP Summit, in order to review pending agreements, the status of work of each of the bodies constituted and the mandates of the Fifth and Sixth Extraordinary Summits.

As part of the substantive progress made towards greater unity among their peoples in the area of education, they signed the Agreement on Recognition of University Qualifications, which will allow young people taking university courses in other ALBA-TCP countries, as part of mutual cooperation programmes, to return to their countries of origin to practise their professions and so help to transform and dignify the living conditions of their peoples.

They welcomed the signature of the Deed of Constitution of the ALBA Commission for the Commemoration of the 200th Anniversary of the beginning of the Revolution for the Independence of Our America.

They also welcomed the Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development, held from 24 to 26 June 2009. In that regard, they supported the development, under the auspices of the United Nations, of a process allowing a correct diagnosis of the crisis, its origins and its impact on developing countries. They also recognized the importance of identifying a set of short-term measures to mitigate the effect of the crisis on developing countries, in addition to more far-reaching measures including the establishment of a new financial architecture.

They stressed that the approach to the crisis must not be purely financial, bearing in mind that it is the result of an accumulation of serious structural and systemic problems that go beyond failures in the conduct of monetary policy and financial sector regulation.

They stated that the developed countries' support for the major banks is increasing the centralization of financial sector capital in small groups, making it difficult for Governments to monitor and regulate the sector. They noted that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) — an instrument serving the interests of the United States of America — and the central banks of developed countries are responsible for the global economic crisis, and highlighted the ineffectiveness of their response to its impact and associated vulnerabilities.

They stated that competition policies and the absence of appropriate mechanisms for supervising the management of major corporations have also contributed to the crisis. They therefore recognized that a more fundamental reorganization of the real economy, and not just the financial economy, is needed.

With regard to the need for a new regional financial architecture, they called for the development of financial instruments that would benefit the real economy, curb speculative practices and create a secure and stable environment for the consolidation of an ALBA-TCP economic complementarity zone.

They emphasized that a sustainable and lasting solution to the current crisis should stem from a recognition of the need for a new paradigm of economic growth that places human beings at the centre of concern.

They condemned all forms of discrimination against migrants. Migration is a human right, not a crime. They therefore called for urgent reform of the United States Government's immigration policies, with a view to halting mass deportations and round-ups, and allowing family reunification, and demanded the removal of the wall that separates and divides peoples instead of bringing them together. In that regard, they called for the repeal of the Cuban Adjustment Act and for an end to the "wet foot, dry foot" policy, both of which are discriminatory, selective and have caused losses of human life. The brain drain is another way in which skilled human resources are plundered by the rich countries.

They reiterated their commitment to combat climate change based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. They also called on the developed countries to meet and scale up their emission reduction commitments, recognizing, based on their historical responsibilities and their duty to support the adaptation efforts of developing countries, their obligation to pay their climate debt, through an adaptation fund, transfer of technology to developing countries, and development of compensation mechanisms for countries that preserve, protect and conserve their forests, making available direct funding resources.

They congratulated the Ecuadorian Government and welcomed its successful efforts to ease its foreign debt burden, which led to a reduction of over US\$ 2.9 billion in its commercial debt (accounting for some 30 per cent of its public external debt), through a sovereign process consisting of a comprehensive debt audit that found the said debt to be illegitimate.

They agreed to disburse 50 per cent of the non-reimbursable funding for the implementation of Petrocaribe ALBA-Alimentos (ALBA-Food) projects benefiting Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Belize, Jamaica, Honduras, Guyana, Suriname and Nicaragua, for a total amount of seven million United States dollars (US\$ 7,000,000), from the previously established ALBA-Alimentos fund.

They welcomed the declaration of Nicaragua's status as an illiteracy-free territory, which represented an extraordinary achievement, and, in that regard, reaffirmed their resolve to intensify efforts to achieve full literacy in the ALBA zone as soon as possible. Furthermore, they expressed their satisfaction at the recent launch of post-literacy programmes in Bolivia and a preliminary study concerning the implementation of a literacy programme in Dominica.

They received a progress report on the Articles of Incorporation of the Multi-country Energy, Oil and Gas Company, S.A. Once established, this company would help to advance energy security in the region. In that respect, they confirmed the allocation of Boyacá 1 Block of the Orinoco Oil Belt to the Multi-country Energy, Oil and Gas Company, S.A., for the purpose of conducting studies to quantify and certify reserves.

They announced that on 24 July 2009, on the occasion of the 229th anniversary of the birth of the Liberator, Simón Bolívar, the Liberty Route would be officially launched in Guayaquil and Quito, Ecuador and in Bailadores and Cumaná, Venezuela. This is a historical-recreational tourism project that will depict the trajectory taken by the Liberator, Simón Bolívar, and the Great Marshal of Ayacucho, Antonio José de Sucre. This inclusive project, which in its pilot stage is being coordinated by Venezuela and Ecuador, aims to incorporate progressively the rest of the ALBA-TCP member countries.

They commended the fact that on Friday, 26 June 2009, Cuba and Venezuela would conduct a visit to Haiti to lay the cornerstone of a rice processing plant, thus marking the beginning of the Project to Increase Rice Cultivation in the Artibonite Valley, in the framework of the Tripartite Commission between Haiti, Cuba and Venezuela.

They welcomed the upcoming visit, on 30 June, of a business delegation from Dominica to Venezuela, with the objective of establishing cooperative mechanisms for the industrial production of cassava bread in that Caribbean nation.

They rejected the use of the mass media as a weapon of disinformation and political destabilization and recalled that the media has the difficult task of fulfilling a public service function in an ethical manner to benefit all citizens, not to satisfy the material interests of a few minorities.

They confirmed their support for Iran's Islamic Revolution, the institutions of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the Government of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and rejected the foreign interference and defamation campaign unleashed against that brother country and friend of ALBA.

They confirmed their absolute condemnation of the United States economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba and reiterated their demand that it be lifted unconditionally and immediately.

They underscored the historic value and vindication represented by the decision adopted by the 39th General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, whereby resolution VI of the eighth OAS meeting of consultation of ministers of foreign affairs in 1962 ceased to have effect. That resolution unjustly and unlawfully excluded Cuba from the inter-American system and stripped that country of its rights within the system. They also recognized the significant role played by ALBA-TCP member countries

and Ecuador in achieving such an important act of justice for the peoples of America.

They expressed their commitment to forming an Organization of Latin American and Caribbean States.

They agreed to introduce into the agenda of OAS the condemnation of the United States economic and commercial embargo against Cuba.

They commended the decision of Bolivia and Ecuador to withdraw from the International Center for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) and instructed the ALBA Council of Ministers to create a working group to draft a proposal establishing a regional agency to resolve disputes, to be presented at the next Summit of ALBA-TCP.

They reaffirmed the right of every culture to exist and to preserve its identity and the millennial and ancestral practices that are intrinsic to its culture. They agreed that the vindication of historic and cultural values, in particular the habit of chewing coca leaves, is an inalienable right of the peoples that maintain that tradition, and in that sense, the reappraisal of the coca leaf, owing to its beneficial properties and cultural and ancestral significance, is the sovereign decision of the Bolivian people and Government, which deserves the support of the international community. In that regard, they supported the call by the Plurinational State of Bolivia to remove the coca leaf from Schedule I of the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and eliminate all prohibitions of coca leaf chewing from the Convention.

They congratulated the Government of the Citizens' Revolution of Ecuador, which will assume the presidency of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) in August 2009.

They reaffirmed the sovereign decision by their Governments to address the production, trafficking and consumption of drugs and related crimes in a framework of international cooperation and regional and bilateral coordination. In that regard, they reiterated their intention of advancing joint regional actions to fight drug trafficking by promoting the adoption of policies, plans and activities on drugs and related crimes within ALBA and other regional and subregional mechanisms, always in accordance with the principles of shared responsibility, respect for State sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-intervention in domestic affairs and respect for human rights. Furthermore, they reiterated their intent to advance the implementation of the South American Council to Combat Drug Trafficking, in the framework of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), as a regional effort that will support bilateral action and facilitate the establishment of a coordination and complementation process to address the world drug problem.

They expressed their support for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in hosting the second South America-Africa (ASA) Summit in September 2009.

One hundred and eighty-eight years after the patriotic victory of the Battle of Carabobo, which sealed Venezuela's first independence, they reiterated their firm commitment to continue to develop the path to independence and union claimed by the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean.



For the Government of Antigua and Barbuda  
Winston **Baldwin Spencer**  
Prime Minister

For the Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia  
(Signed) Evo **Morales**  
President

For the Government of the Republic of Cuba  
(Signed) José Ramón **Machado Ventura**  
First Vice-President of the State Council

For the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica  
(Signed) Roosevelt **Skerrit**  
Prime Minister

For the Government of the Republic of Ecuador  
(Signed) Rafael **Correa**  
President

For the Government of the Republic of Honduras  
(Signed) Patricia **Rodas**  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

For the Government of the Republic of Nicaragua  
(Signed) Daniel **Ortega**  
President

For the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines  
Ralph **Gonsalves**  
Prime Minister

For the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela  
(Signed) Hugo **Chávez Frías**  
President

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