



**CHAIR OF
THE COORDINATING BUREAU
OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT**



**STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY THE DELEGATION OF THE
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA, ON BEHALF OF THE NON-
ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM), DURING THE PLENARY MEETING OF
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS TO CONSIDER
AGENDA ITEM 43, ENTITLED “NECESSITY OF ENDING THE
ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL EMBARGO IMPOSED
BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AGAINST CUBA”**

New York, 31 October 2018

Madam President,

1. It is an honor for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to take the floor on behalf of the 120 Member States comprising the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).
2. At the outset, we would like to transmit our respects and extend our warmest welcome to H.E. Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba.
3. Similarly, we would like to express our appreciation for the report presented by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on this important issue in today's plenary meeting.

Madam President,

4. For the last twenty-seven years, and in a consecutive manner, this General Assembly has expressed its overwhelming support and solidarity with the People and Government of Cuba through its decisive support in favor of the resolution calling for the lifting of the embargo imposed against this sovereign country by the United States of America.
5. Last year, 191 Member States of this Organization voted in favor of resolution A/RES/72/4. In this regard, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) seizes this opportunity to reiterate once again its strongest opposition to the promulgation and imposition of unilateral coercive measures, given their extraterritorial implications and their illegal character.
6. Moreover, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) has repeatedly reiterated its call to the Government of the United States of America to put an end to the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo that it has illegally imposed against Cuba for almost six decades now. The embargo, on top of breaching international law, the Charter of the



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United Nations, and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States, constitutes a violation of Cuba's right to fully interact with the international community.

Madam President,

7. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) has historically maintained a principled position in rejecting unilateral coercive measures, particularly those used as tools for political or economic and financial pressure against States, in particular against developing countries. These positions have been reaffirmed as recent as on 26 September 2018, when the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Movement unanimously adopted a Political Declaration, while meeting under the theme "Upholding the UN Charter and the Purposes and Principles of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM): Towards a Culture of Peace".
8. And it is that, precisely, the embargo on Cuba is an example of the adverse effects of unilateral coercive measures on the wellbeing of the peoples, preventing them, among other, from fully enjoying and realizing their human rights, including their right to development. The direct and indirect damage inflicted by this undeserved embargo against Cuba is enormous. It affects all crucial sectors of the Cuban economy, including public health, nutrition, and agriculture, as well as trade, investment, tourism and banking, a sector that has been particularly hit in 2018, taking into account the fact that dozens of financial institutions have decided to close bank accounts that may be in any way linked to Cuban citizens. It also denies Cuba from access to markets, international aid from international financial institutions and technology transfers, and creates obstacles to the socioeconomic development of the country. In addition, the embargo is the main obstacle to broader access to the internet, the exchange of ideas and the development of cultural, sport and scientific relations. Therefore, without any doubt, we reaffirm that the continuation of the embargo is totally unjustifiable, and that it does not correspond with our historical time. It also runs counter to Cuba's continued efforts to realize sustainable development, including the achievement of the goals established in the 2030 Development Agenda.
9. Furthermore, the economic damage on the Cuban people due to the application of the economic, financial and commercial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, amounts to US \$933.6 billion, taking into account the depreciation of the dollar in regards to the price of gold in the international market. At current prices, during all these years, the blockade has caused damages for over US \$134 billion. To put this into context, it is worth highlighting that, since the last time we discussed this agenda item a year ago, the blockade has caused losses of over \$4 billion.

Madam President,



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10. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) considers the establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States of America as an initial positive step in the process towards the normalization of bilateral relations. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the implementation of the blockade against Cuba has remained unchanged, which entails a setback in the process of normalization of the bilateral relations. Likewise, some of the progress in the normalization of the bilateral relations between the two countries is currently threatened, as shown by the policy established in June 2017 by the current President of the United States of America, aimed at strengthening the embargo against Cuba.
11. Moreover, while the regulations issued by the Department of Commerce and the Treasury on 15 January 2015 were steps pointing in the right direction in areas such as travel to Cuba, telecommunications and remittances, these are limited in scope, and only modify some aspects related to the implementation of the blockade. And, despite the historical decision of former U.S. President Barack Obama to notify the Congress of the United States of America of his decision to remove Cuba from the so-called list of States sponsors of international terrorism – a unilateral and illegal list in which Cuba should have never been included –, this has not meant an easing of the intricacies of all the prohibitions and restrictions established by the blockade laws and regulations imposed against Cuba. ~~Consequently, we urge the President of the United States administration to use his its broad executive powers to substantially modify the embargo.~~
12. In light of all this, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) reaffirms its call for an end to the unilateral and illegal economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, as it was reiterated by the Ministers of the Movement during its XVIII Mid-Term Ministerial Conference, held in April 2018, in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan.

Madam President,

13. The fact that 191 Member States of the Organization voted in favor of resolution A/RES/72/4 last year constitutes an expression of the unanimity within the international community in demanding an end to the 56-year long embargo and to fully adhere to the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and to the norms of international law, including the principles of mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of the States. Currently, it must be highlighted, over 190 nations engage economically and politically with Cuba, while the United States of America remains alone in pursuing its unjustified and illegal economic sanctions policy.
14. Consequently, the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) urge once again



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the Government of the United States of America to yield to the will of the overwhelming majority of the international community and rectify its failed policies by fully complying with all relevant resolutions of this General Assembly, whereby the immediate and complete end to the embargo imposed on Cuba is called for.

15. To conclude, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), while reiterating its commitment with the promotion, preservation and strengthening of multilateralism, reaffirms that the full respect of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly those referred to sovereign equality, non-interference and non-intervention, is an essential element for the effective maintenance of international peace and security. Therefore, the international community must continue working together in the reversal and elimination of unilateral coercive measures, including the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, given, among others, its illegal character and its extraterritorial implications.

I thank you, Madam President.