

**STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED DURING THE CONSIDERATION OF
AGENDA ITEM 168, ENTITLED “REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
RELATIONS WITH THE HOST COUNTRY”, WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK
OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

New York, 04 November 2024

Mr. President,

1. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has the honor to take the floor on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations.
2. We associate ourselves with the statement delivered by the honorable Delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), while taking note of the report presented by the Secretary-General in connection with this agenda item, as contained in document A/79/100.

Mr. President,

3. Our Group of Friends was established in response to the growing threats to the UN Charter; namely, the indiscriminate resort to unilateralism; the persistent attacks against multilateralism; the continued claiming of non-existent exceptionalism; the reiterated attempts to ignore and even replace the purposes and principles contained in the UN Charter, which remain as relevant today as they were in 1945, with a new set of so-called “rules” that have never been discussed in an inclusive or transparent manner; and the continued resort to selective approaches or accommodating interpretations of the provisions of the UN Charter.
4. In this context, we believe that ensuring compliance with and strict adherence to both the letter and the spirit of the UN Charter is critical, on the one hand, for addressing the complex, emerging and common challenges facing humanity today, and, on the other hand, for ensuring the realization of the three pillars of our Organization, as foreseen in its founding Charter.

Mr. President,

5. The Committee on Relations with the Host Country was established for the purpose of addressing, among others, “questions arising in connection with the implementation of the Headquarters Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America”, as defined in resolution 2819 (XXVI), adopted by the General Assembly on 15 December 1971.
6. While this Committee has proven its effectiveness in addressing certain issues, particularly those related to ensuring the safety and security of the United Nations Headquarters, many other issues remain unresolved and, in certain cases, have

even been aggravated. These include, among others, visa issues and their timely issuance or renewals, including the limitations posed by those of a single-entry nature; the discriminatory secondary screening processes enforced on selected diplomatic agents and their belongings, which in some cases also included affront to the dignity and honor of representatives; the issues related to travel and movement restrictions, including on senior heads of delegations during their official visits to the United Nations Headquarters; the issues of banking; and the issues referred to the inviolability of diplomatic properties; as well as, in certain cases, incitement to violence, harassment and severe insult to representatives by individuals and groups of individuals.

7. In this regard, it is important to recall that, for more than five years now, the General Assembly has been emphatic in demanding that, if the above issues – all of which have for years been part of its agenda and for long have been routinely included in the annual reports of this Committee – are not resolved “within a reasonable and finite period of time, serious consideration be given to taking action under Section 21 of the Headquarters Agreement”. It has even been very explicitly recommended to the Secretary-General to “seriously consider and take appropriate action under Section 21 of the Headquarters Agreement”.
8. Having said that, and before moving any further, let us briefly touch on a procedural matter regarding the dynamics of the consultations and negotiations of both the report of the Host Country Committee and the draft resolution submitted annually to the General Assembly on the same subject. We take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of the Chair of the HCC to further increase transparency and inclusiveness in said process, including by extending an invitation to non-members of the Committee, in particular to those facing issues on the agenda of this Committee, to participate in the consultations on its annual report and its associated draft resolution.

Mr. President,

9. Despite our efforts and our continued commitment to engage in good faith, including through the Host Country Committee, it has not been possible to move forward and resolve these outstanding issues, which are **all** equally important. Indeed, the continuing challenges in relation to the implementation of the Headquarters Agreement have resulted in recurrent and even systematic episodes that have, at the same time, become deliberate obstacles that continue to limit the ability of certain Member States to effectively discharge their responsibilities and thereby achieve the purposes of our Organization.
10. This, we have to say it clearly, is not only an abuse by the Host Country of its role, but also a flagrant violation of the UN Charter, in particular the principle of sovereign equality of States, bearing in mind that such a situation is **not** affecting the wide membership of the United Nations, but **only** a limited number of Member States, including several of our Group of Friends, with whom, not by mere

coincidence, the government of the Host Country has well-known political differences at the bilateral level. Therefore, we insist that the privilege of hosting the United Nations Headquarters should **not** be misused for taking advantages or advancing political agendas against a particular group of countries. Any bilateral difference that there may exist between the Host Country and other States of our Organization should in **no** way lead to selectivity or interference in the manner in which the Headquarters Agreement is applied.

11. Therefore, while expressing our appreciation for the efforts of the Secretary-General to bring these issues to the attention of the competent authorities of the Host Country, we consider, regrettably, that these efforts have **not** yielded the result we all would have wished, which is why, in the absence of concrete, practical, meaningful, real or tangible solutions to **all** issues pending before the Committee on Relations with the Host Country, after what has been a more than reasonable period of time, we consider that the activation of the arbitration procedure provided for in Section 21 of the Headquarters Agreement appears to be the only way to ensure both its integrity and the end of selective policies, while allowing us all, without exclusion or discrimination of any sort, and in line with the provisions of Section 27 of the same Agreement, to fully and effectively discharge our responsibilities, without discrimination or limitation of any kind.

Mr. President,

12. This is an issue with multiple tracks and we ought to be clear about this. The question of visas is undoubtedly a very important component of the whole issue, but there are other equally important issues. Therefore, this issue must be addressed in a comprehensive, balanced and equitable manner, without selectivity or cherry-picking, in order to avoid drawing wrong conclusions from the presentation of figures that may give the impression of a relatively positive performance, in general terms, on issues related to the implementation of the Headquarters Agreement and other relevant international legal instruments.
13. Now, it is in light of this cumulative situation, which threatens the integrity of the Headquarters Agreement itself, we respectfully urge the Secretary-General, one more time, to proceed accordingly, without further delay, and in the interest of the United Nations and all that it encompasses, in accordance with the mandate already given to him in General Assembly resolutions 74/195, 75/146, 76/122, 77/114 and 78/116. To proceed otherwise would only encourage the Host Country to continue to violate the Headquarters Agreement, as we have seen over the past years due to the inaction on the activation of Section 21 of the Host Country Agreement.
14. In conclusion, as we renew our commitment to spare no effort to preserve, promote and defend the prevalence and validity of the Charter of the United Nations, we take this opportunity to underline that our request today, as in the past, remains the same: we demand that the Host Country not only respects diplomatic customs,

the rules of international law and the principles enshrined in the founding Charter of our Organization, regardless of any bilateral differences that may exist, but also that it fully complies and abides by its international obligations, including those arising from the Headquarters Agreement and the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. This, in turn, would ensure the integrity of these instruments, both in their letter and in spirit, while allowing us all to fully and effectively fulfill on the promise contained in the UN Charter.

I thank you, Mr. President.