

Statement by the Cuban Delegation at the Third ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development.

Madam President,

We associate ourselves with the statements made by the delegations of Egypt, El Salvador and Maldives on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, CELAC and AOSIS, respectively.

There are many challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. All of these are important. However, some are more serious, immediate and dangerous.

There is no point in adopting declarations of good intentions if there is still a real risk of wiping out all the wealth that took centuries for the people to build, in many cases through international cooperation.

Nearly 39 years ago, in October 1979, the historical leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro, delivered a speech at the 34th session of the United Nations General Assembly as Chair of the Non-Aligned

Movement, which remains fully valid and I quote: "The noise made by arms, by threatening language, by arrogance in the international scene should stop. Enough of the illusion that the world's problems can be solved with nuclear weapons. Bombs may kill the hungry, the sick, the ignorant, but not hunger, disease, ignorance. Nor will they be able to kill the just rebelliousness of peoples, and the rich, who have the most to lose in this world, will also die in the holocaust." End of quote.

The world does not need more cold wars or any other type, including trade wars; much less a nuclear war, with devastating consequences for all humanity.

The world demands a global war against underdevelopment, hunger, growing inequalities, poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and preventable diseases.

The world does not require armies of soldiers spreading destruction and death, but rather armies of doctors,

teachers, builders and engineers bringing health, education, progress and well-being. That is the only possible option.

Without peace there can be no sustainable development and without sustainable development there can be no peace. Nor will there be peace or sustainable development without a reduction in military spending and general and complete disarmament, including all kinds of arsenals of the major powers. There will only be peace when the millionaire resources currently used in the arms race are devoted to global progress, as proposed in the historic 1986 Declaration on the Right to Development.

Madam President,

Despite multiple declarations of international summits and conferences calling to promote a universal, rule-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system within the framework of the World Trade Organization

(WTO), we are still very far from turning this into a reality. New protectionist threats are further emerging, which may bring along a relapse in the global economic crisis, the breakdown of global value chains and a world trade war that threatens the limited progress achieved so far in financing for development.

At the same time, unilateral coercive measures against developing countries persist and proliferate, restricting their sustainable development and funding. The unjust economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States Government against Cuba for more than 55 years, overwhelmingly rejected for 26 consecutive years by the United Nations General Assembly, which is still in force and has been reinforced by the current government of that country, affects the sustainable development of the Cuban people and must be lifted without further delay and unconditionally.

Thank you very much.