



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. MR. PETER THOMSON, AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF 77, ON AGENDA ITEM 40: "NECESSITY OF ENDING THE ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL EMBARGO IMPOSED BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AGAINST CUBA," AT THE PLENARY OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 29 October 2013)

Mr. President,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 40, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". I would like, first of all, to acknowledge the presence of His Excellency Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cuba.

The Group of 77 and China expresses its deep concern at the continuation of the economic, commercial and financial embargo unilaterally imposed for more than half a century by the United States of America against Cuba.

The Group of 77 and China reiterates that the embargo against Cuba contravenes the fundamental norms of international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States. Its continued application violates the principles of the sovereign equality of States and of non-intervention and non-interference in each other's domestic affairs.

Mr. President,

The embargo continues to impose severe economic and financial restrictions on Cuba. The embargo has caused, and continues to cause a high degree of economic and financial damage, has a negative impact on the welfare and well-being of the people of Cuba and constitutes a very significant hindrance to Cuba's economic and social development.

The deepening impact of the ongoing global economic and financial crisis and the continued embargo by the Government of the United States, including by imposing sanctions and applying extraterritorial national laws against third countries' citizens, institutions and companies that establish economic, commercial and financial relations with Cuba, will contribute to further aggravating the hardships for the people of Cuba.

Furthermore, the embargo frustrates efforts towards the achievement of all the internationally agreed developed goals, including the all-important Millennium Development Goals, and negatively affects regional cooperation in the area.

Mr. President,

The Group of 77 and China has always been firmly against the embargo, and this position has been reiterated at its major Summits, in which the Group firmly rejected the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions against developing countries, and called upon the Government of the United States to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

The Group of 77 and China would like to reiterate once again its long-standing and principled position on this important matter, and recalls the ministerial declaration of the thirty-seventh annual meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group, held in New York in September. The Ministers firmly rejected the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions against developing countries, and reiterated the urgent need to eliminate them immediately.

The Group of 77 and China is committed to working for the achievement of peaceful coexistence among nations. Such a goal requires adherence by all nations to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, to the peaceful conduct of relations among nations and to the rule of law, including international law.

Mr. President,

We recall that, last year, 188 Member States voted in favor of the resolution introduced by the representative of Cuba (resolution 67/4). That number represented an overwhelming majority of the international community demanding the end to the five-decades-old embargo and full adherence to the principles of mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of a State Member of the United Nations.

The Group of 77 and China will again fully support the draft resolution against the embargo and urges all Member States to do so.

I thank you.