The 13th session of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development

Item 3 of the Provisional Agenda

General Debate

Conference Room 6, United Nations Headquarters, New York

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Unofficial transcript of the oral statement by Venezuela

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela aligns itself with the statement delivered by Uganda on behalf of the Non-Alignment Movement. We are grateful for the work of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development. Their work is particularly relevant in the context of the 40th anniversary of the Declaration of the Right to Development, which enshrined the right to development as an inalienable human right focused on human dignity and the effective participation of peoples in development processes. Madame Chair, 40 years on from that historic commitment, we need to frankly recognize that we see persistent, profound divides between the normative proclamation of the right to development and its effective implementation.

This divide is not accidental or circumstantial. It responds to historical inequality, persistent asymmetries in the international economic system, and a continued lack of political will to transform reality, particularly in the Global North. The right to development, we must insist, cannot continue to be interpreted as a mere programmatic aspiration or a symbol. It is a clear and indivisible human right that imposes tangible obligations at both the international and national levels. It means that we must ensure an equitable international context based on cooperation, solidarity, and respect for international law. We therefore believe that international cooperation is not optional. Rather, it is a legal and moral obligation to overcome the obstacles to development, as is established in the declaration that was adopted almost four decades ago.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela would like to underscore that there cannot be a serious analysis of the right of development without addressing one of the main contemporary obstacles to its achievement. We are referring to the cruel application of unilateral coercive measures. These measures are contrary to international law and the principles of the UN Charter. They gravely affect, inter alia, the ability of States to implement public policies to guarantee fundamental rights and to promote the development of our people. These criminal measures restrict access to financing, technology, trade, and essential resources. They worsen health and social protection systems, and they undermine States' ability to respond to global challenges. Consequently, they are a direct, deliberate attack on the right to development, as well as an affront to multilateralism. For this reason, our country reiterates the appeal to the international community to pronounce itself more clearly, more firmly and more staunchly on the impact of these measures and demand their full, immediate, and unconditional lifting.

This session provides us with a historic opportunity to advance towards the consolidation of the right to development through the adoption of a legally binding international instrument. After decades of debate and technical consultations, the draft International Covenant on the Right to Development is now before the General Assembly for its consideration. We believe that the moment has come to conclude this process without further delay. The adoption of a Covenant on this would allow us to establish clear obligations, strengthen international cooperation mechanisms, and grant States and peoples with effective tools to demand the realization of this inalienable human right. In this context, we reiterate once again our firm support for the adoption of this instrument as an essential step to close the gap between political commitment and specific reality.

Madam Chair, the right to development also means that we need to address contemporary challenges disproportionately affecting developing countries. These include profound inequalities in access to technology, including the new dynamics related to the development of artificial intelligence, which run the risk of reproducing patterns of dependence and exclusion if they are not managed under an approach involving shared participation and equity. At the same time, it is essential to guarantee that development processes are inclusive, non-discriminatory and people focused. We should particularly recognize the situation of historically marginalized groups, including migrants. Their exclusion weakens their rights but also social cohesion and sustainable development.

At the same time, we cannot continue to overlook the close links between peace, development and human rights, while armed conflicts and increased military spending continue to divert essential resources that should be used for the well-being of people. All this gravely undermines the achievement of the right to development. Madam Chair, in light of all of this, it is essential and urgent to strengthen multilateralism, to expand and boost international cooperation, and to reaffirm the principles of sovereignty, equality between States and non-interference in domestic affairs. Only through a fairer, truly democratic, and inclusive international order will it be possible to guarantee the full development of all our peoples. Our country reaffirms in this context its steadfast commitment to ensuring that development is a human-based process that is sustainable and equitable, that respects the diversity of economic, social, political, and cultural models, and that promotes social justice at the global level.

To conclude, we reiterate the unwavering commitment of Venezuela to the promotion and achievement of the right to development 40 years after the Declaration. The international community cannot continue to put off its effective implementation. It is time now to act decisively. It is time to overcome structural obstacles, to bring an end to unilateral coercive measures, to strengthen international cooperation and to finally adopt a legally binding instrument that consolidates this inalienable human right. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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