



Security Council

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Letter dated 27 April 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to bring to your attention our denunciation of the policy of calculated cruelty of the government of the United States of America against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, which, in the midst of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, when the international community is called upon to redouble international solidarity and multilateral cooperation in the interest of the whole of humanity, seeks to violate the human rights of our people, while putting the life of 30 million Venezuelans at risk, in a monstrous and criminal violation of all relevant norms of international law and the Charter of the United Nations itself.

In this context, allow me from the very outset to stress three key points:

(a) There is currently a worldwide complex humanitarian emergency – certainly affecting Venezuela – as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, an emergency that, in our case, is aggravated by the illegal application of a criminal policy of unilateral coercive measures;

(b) There is no armed conflict currently going on in Venezuela, and it cannot therefore be said, for example, that the Venezuelans who have voluntarily crossed our national borders are fleeing from violence or persecution of any kind. As a matter of fact, the opposite phenomenon is currently taking place. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting worldwide complex humanitarian emergency, there is a massive influx of Venezuelans voluntarily returning to their homes, despite the multiple obstacles they face in doing so, owing to a clear lack of collaboration at the borders of countries of Latin America;

(c) Venezuela currently enjoys a state of social peace and stability, which is guaranteed by the government of President Nicolás Maduro and his effective control of the country and the State's institutions. In addition, the government of Venezuela is currently deploying to the maximum all its capacity to protect our people from the existential threats that our nation is confronting today, as, for the first time in our history, we face a pandemic in the midst of a foreign power's economic and military aggression against our country.

That being said, in order to speak in a frank and fair manner about the humanitarian situation in Venezuela and attempt to understand the reality of what is currently happening in our nation at this difficult time for the whole of humanity, it must be recalled that, since at least 2015, our country has been subjected de facto to an economic, commercial and financial blockade that has been unilaterally and illegally imposed by the governments of the United States of America, the United



Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the European Union, in an illegal action that repeats, in the twenty-first century, the very same acts of colonialism that characterized the nineteenth century.

It shall be recalled that, given their extraterritoriality and the fact that they are promulgated with the purpose of exerting, directly or indirectly, coercion in relation to the sovereign decisions of the targeted countries, unilateral coercive measures are illegal by virtue of international law. Needless to say, they violate the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter, as well as multiple declarations and resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, and they also have a negative impact, *inter alia*, on the realization of the human rights of the millions of people subjected to such measures, which affect over one third of humanity, according to United Nations independent experts, while also impeding regular access to the international financial system, to free trade and to basic needs for ensuring both the well-being and the right to life, health, food and development of our peoples. On this matter, let me underscore how totally incompatible it is, for example, to either apply, promote or defend the so-called sanctions and then pretend to be a human rights champion.

Allow me now to put all this in context; to that end, I will briefly share with you below some relevant information on how such measures, because of their magnitude and broad scope, make it nearly impossible to purchase, *inter alia*, food, medical equipment and supplies, vaccines, spare parts for our oil industry (which accounts for over 95 per cent of the nation's economy), and diluents needed to thin our heavy oil and turn it into gasoline, thus causing untold suffering for the Venezuelan people, as a result of the systematic implementation of an inhumane and cruel policy of aggression that includes threats of foreign military aggression, measures of economic terrorism and the confiscation of our assets and accounts abroad, all of it with the clear purpose of looting our national resources, rolling back our political independence and denying us our inalienable right to self-determination:

(a) As of May 2017, the British financial institution Barclays Bank PLC has frozen over \$121 million from an account of Venezuela's Central Bank. The bank has indicated that its decision is based on the need to comply with the regulations of the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control, that is, to comply with sanctions imposed by the United States against Venezuela;

(b) As of February 2019, the government of the United States of America, pursuant to its unilateral coercive measures, seized CITGO Petroleum Corporation, a Houston-based oil company that is owned by Petróleos de Venezuela, Venezuela's national, State-owned oil company, and that is worth over \$5.2 billion in net assets;

(c) As of February 2019, the Portuguese financial institution Novo Banco has frozen over \$1.7 billion from an account of Venezuela's Bank for Economic and Social Development. The bank has indicated that its decision is based on the need to comply with the regulations of the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control, that is, to comply with sanctions imposed by the United States against Venezuela;

(d) As of March 2019, the Belgium-based financial institution Euroclear has frozen over \$34 million in securities from an account of Venezuela's Bank for Economic and Social Development. The bank has indicated that its decision is based on the need to comply with the regulations of the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control, that is, to comply with sanctions imposed by the United States against Venezuela;

(e) As of March 2019, the Bank of England confiscated over \$1.7 billion in gold from the Central Bank of Venezuela. The bank has indicated that its decision was taken, following consultations with the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, as

a result of the decision of the United Kingdom not to recognize Nicolás Maduro as President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela;

(f) As of April 2019, the French financial institution Banque Delubac & Cie has frozen over \$34 million from an account of Venezuela's Bank for Economic and Social Development. The bank has indicated that its decision was taken as a result of the "current state of uncertainty" in Venezuela;

(g) As of April 2019, the Liechtenstein financial institution Union Bank AG has frozen over \$21 million from an account of Venezuela's Bank for Economic and Social Development;

(h) As of April 2020, the New York-based financial institution Citibank has frozen over \$342 million from an account of Venezuela's Central Bank. The bank has indicated that its decision is based on the need to comply with the regulations of the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control, that is, to comply with sanctions imposed by the United States against Venezuela. Citibank was recently ordered and compelled by the Office of Foreign Assets Control to transfer the funds to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York ;

(i) German financial institutions, for their part, have confiscated bank accounts owned by various institutions of the Venezuelan State, with deposits of over \$38 million. In all cases, the entities have indicated that their decision is based on the need to comply with the regulations of the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control, that is, to comply with sanctions imposed by the United States against Venezuela.

As can be seen above, the complicity of the governments of Belgium, France, Germany, Liechtenstein, Portugal and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland with the United States of America in applying illegal coercive measures against Venezuela is more than evident. In doing so, they claim to be acting in compliance with the regulations of the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control, namely, with the sanctions imposed by the United States against our country. But let us not forget that no government, including that of the United States of America, has authority of any kind over the sovereignty of other independent States and that, therefore, any pretension to turn its national legislation into universal laws is spurious. For this reason, it is particularly alarming that such governments, which include at least five members of the Security Council, have decided to subordinate themselves to the will of the United States of America, despite the lack of any international legally binding obligation to do so.

The information previously provided, which relates to amounts totalling over \$9 billion, represents just a fraction of all the accounts that Venezuela holds abroad, and from which assets have also been stolen, including those that remain frozen with billions of dollars in dividends from accounts of Venezuela's State-owned oil company, Petróleos de Venezuela, which have not been able to be repatriated since at least 2017. It excludes, for example, other Venezuelan-owned assets that have been seized overseas, including a petrochemical enterprise based in Colombia (Monómeros Colombo Venezolanos, S.A.) with average yearly earnings of over \$1 billion, and the headquarters of both the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington, D.C., and of the Consulate-General of Venezuela in New York, as well as other properties that have been illegally taken over abroad for fear of being exposed to United States sanctions, as was the case, for instance, of an oil refinery in Jamaica (Petrojam Limited, in which Venezuela owns 49 per cent of shares), which are worth over \$250 million.

Nonetheless, the list shared above provides an important picture of the large volume of resources of which our nation has been deprived as a result of the illegal and unilateral blockade imposed by the United States, amounting, as of February

2020, to losses of over \$116 billion. In addition, Venezuela's oil revenues have been reduced by over 90 per cent, from about \$42 billion in 2013 to nearly \$4 billion in 2018, largely as a result of the criminal sanctions unilaterally imposed by the United States of America. Those are all resources that could have been used to alleviate the current crisis in the country – a crisis largely resulting, precisely, from the very application of such illegal coercive measures – and to ensure the provision of basic goods and services, including food and medicines.

Yet the impact of the blockade against Venezuela is not limited to accounts frozen, resources confiscated and assets seized. The illegal unilateral sanctions also have an impact on the daily lives of our people and their most basic needs, affecting their well-being and causing untold pain and suffering, which is why we insist that these are policies of calculated cruelty. For example, in the medical and pharmaceutical sector, they have impeded the procurement of the following supplies, as the financial transactions for the procurement are either rejected or the funds are, in the best case, returned:

(a) Supplies for dialysis treatments, which are provided free of charge through the Venezuelan health system. For instance, in May 2018, a transaction that was made in order to procure these supplies, amounting to a total of \$9 million, was blocked, impeding over 15,000 patients from getting treatment at that time;

(b) Human albumin, immunoglobulin, blood reagents, and other blood products used to treat patients with haemophilia or Guillain-Barré syndrome, and in immune system treatments, or to ensure the proper stock of blood banks. For instance, in February 2019, a transaction that was made for the fourth consecutive time in order to procure these supplies, amounting to a total of \$2.1 million, was blocked;

(c) Vaccines for meningitis, rotavirus and influenza, inter alia, as well as treatments for malaria. For instance, in February 2019, a transaction that was made for the second consecutive time in order to procure these supplies, amounting to a total of \$2.5 million, was blocked;

(d) Medicines for chronic diseases, including antibiotics, anaesthetics, anti-tuberculosis drugs, antiretroviral drugs for HIV patients, insulin for diabetic patients, immunosuppressants for patients with transplants and drugs for patients with Parkinson's disease. For instance, a transaction that was made in February 2019 to procure these supplies, in a total amount of \$13.3 million, was blocked;

(e) In January 2019, multiple financial transactions aimed at covering treatment related to bone marrow transplants for Venezuelan children, adolescents and adults at Italian medical institutions were blocked. At least three children lost their lives as a result of that unilateral action.

Now, keeping in mind the global number previously pointed out, \$116 billion, which corresponds to only a fraction of the amount of total resources that have been stolen by the United States of America, Belgium, France, Germany, Liechtenstein, Portugal and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, among others, from the national coffers of Venezuela, it is absolutely outrageous to see the United States administration – the very same one responsible for the greatest looting of modern times – pretending to portray itself before the international community as a saviour and claiming to be the “major donor” of humanitarian assistance to Venezuela. The United States government has even recently affirmed that it has allegedly provided over \$9 million in assistance for our nation; something that is completely false, but, even if it were true, that amount would only be crumbs in comparison to what it has stolen from us for at least the past five years.

In this context, let me bring to your attention a report¹ from the Center for Economic and Policy Research which, although possibly outdated, still remains very relevant. In the report, entitled “Economic Sanctions as Collective Punishment: The Case of Venezuela”, released in April 2019, Jeffrey Sachs and Mark Weisbrot conclude that a stabilization or recovery programme for the economy that would ensure the well-being of the entire nation and its people is practically impossible in Venezuela without the lifting of the unilateral coercive measures imposed by the government of the United States of America.

This is all part of what the United States government declared in the early days of March 2020 to be a campaign of “maximum pressure” against Venezuela,² even as the entire world was already grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic and its devastating impacts – an ever-increasing campaign that still continues today,³ as confirmed by the United States Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, Michael Kozak, on 24 April 2020 – the ultimate goal of which, as they themselves have publicly admitted, is to topple the legitimate, constitutional and democratically elected government of President Nicolás Maduro. As recently as 22 April 2020, when the crisis resulting from the coronavirus disease was peaking all around the world, most notably in the United States of America, the United States administration warned that even accepting Venezuelan oil or gas as a form of payment for the provision of goods and services was considered to be “sanctionable”⁴ and that there would be no exceptions, which was in line with the remarks of United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who said on 14 April 2020 that his government was not contemplating the lifting or easing of its sanctions on Venezuela,⁵ despite the challenges posed by and the impact of the pandemic.

In spite of all of the above, we have been making great efforts to overcome these difficult circumstances, while still guaranteeing what is fundamental: the social, humanistic, inclusive, democratic and peaceful vision of our government’s policies, aimed at ensuring the well-being of our people and at guaranteeing their very existence and the realization of their human right to life. It is within the framework of our model of social protection and social justice that we have been implementing programmes aimed at providing, inter alia, regular access to food, health care and housing to the Venezuelan people, especially to those in more vulnerable situations. To this end, we have strengthened our cooperation with the United Nations system and the specialized agencies, programmes and funds, including in relation to the provision of technical humanitarian assistance.

As you are well aware, since at least December 2019, the world has been struggling with the COVID-19 disease, which was later declared, by the World Health Organization (WHO), in March 2020, to be a pandemic. As a result of its multiple and devastating effects, this is, without a doubt, the greatest crisis that the international community and humanity as a whole have faced since World War Two, thus requiring collective, coordinated and decisive action from all to effectively fight the novel coronavirus, on the basis of international solidarity and multilateral cooperation.

It is precisely in that regard and for those reasons that many high-level officials from around the world, particularly from multilateral organizations, have joined the

¹ Available at cepr.net/images/stories/reports/venezuela-sanctions-2019-04.pdf.

² See publicpool.kinja.com/subject-background-press-call-by-senior-administration-1842181821/amp?__twitter_impression=true.

³ See www.state.gov/briefing-with-acting-assistant-secretary-michael-kozak-bureau-of-western-hemisphere-affairs-on-developments-in-the-western-hemisphere/.

⁴ See www.reuters.com/article/us-venezuela-politics-chevron-usa/chevron-barred-from-drilling-transporting-oil-in-venezuela-us-official-idUSKCN2242JY.

⁵ See www.voanoticias.com/a/mike-pompeo-covid19-venezuela-salud-emerencia/5371300.html?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=dlvr.it.

global cry for lifting unilateral coercive measures, conscious of at least two things: (a) the fact that, in the midst of a pandemic and because of the interconnectedness of our world, impeding medical efforts in one country heightens the risk for all of us; and (b) the fact that sanctions undermine ongoing national efforts to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in relation to the effective and timely procurement of medical equipment and supplies, including testing kits and medications, which are vital for attending to and treating patients.

Such a call has thus far been joined, among others, by the Secretary-General, the Director General of WHO, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the President of the General Assembly, the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights, the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, the Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights, the Group of 77 and China, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, by His Holiness Pope Francis, and by the International Committee of the Red Cross, as well as many other top-ranking representatives of multiple governments and members of civil society, including social movements and academia.

Nonetheless, it must be stressed that the only real solution, at the current juncture, would be the complete and immediate lifting of all unilateral coercive measures, rather than the easing of the sanctions or the provision of waivers, licences and/or exemptions that, in practice, do not work, as a result of an ever-increasing phenomenon of overcompliance, which is aggravated by the fear of possible secondary sanctions for engaging in legal trade and other transactions with Venezuela, something that is used by the United States administration to threaten, for example, international companies in the oil sector with a presence in Venezuela, including, among others, India's Reliance Industries Limited and Spain's Repsol.⁶

This is something that, for instance, was recently recognized by United States senators in a letter⁷ addressed to the United States Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, on 26 March 2020, in which they said the following:

We understand that the administration has stated that humanitarian and medical needs are exempt from U.S. sanctions, but our sanctions regime is so broad that medical suppliers and relief organizations simply steer clear of doing business in Iran and Venezuela in fear of accidentally getting caught up in the U.S. sanctions web. Moreover, the administration's decision to impose additional new sanctions in the midst of the coronavirus outbreak has only contributed to the sense among companies that they should avoid doing any business involving these countries, even if their work is humanitarian in nature.

In that very same letter, the members of the United States Congress also admit that they are particularly concerned about the impact of sanctions on the COVID-19 response in Venezuela, as "U.S. sanctions are hindering the free flow of desperately needed medical and humanitarian supplies due to the broad chilling effect of sanctions on such transactions, even when there are technical exemptions".

It is for this reason that we firmly consider that not yielding to the will and calls of the overwhelming majority of the international community for lifting the embargo

⁶ See www.reuters.com/article/us-venezuela-politics-usa-warning/u-s-warns-energy-cos-like-rosneft-chevron-over-ties-to-venezuelas-maduro-idUSKBN1ZZ2KP.

⁷ See www.huffpost.com/entry/venezuela-sanctions-coronavirus-trump-maduro_n_5e7ce1bec5b6256a7a26a5eb.

against Venezuela would only aggravate the current situation and, in the midst of a pandemic, can only be interpreted as a deliberate policy of the United States government to economically asphyxiate our people and deny them their inherent human rights, particularly the rights to health, food and life. This can therefore be characterized as a policy that, according to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, amounts to a crime against humanity, as it entails an act of extermination, which is defined in article 7 (2) (b) as “the intentional infliction of conditions of life, inter alia the deprivation of access to food and medicine, calculated to bring about the destruction of part of a population”. This is, as a matter of fact, the basis for the submission made on 13 February 2020 by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, pursuant to article 14 (1) of the Rome Statute, in an effort to seek justice for the commission of such crimes.

One of the many examples supporting our submission before the International Criminal Court includes the following public remarks made on 12 October 2018 by William Brownfield, former United States Ambassador to Venezuela:

We must treat this as an agony, a tragedy that will continue until it finally reaches an end, and if we can do something to accelerate it, we must do it, but we must do it understanding that this is going to have an impact on millions of people who are already having difficulties in finding food and medicines.... We cannot do this and pretend that it will not have an impact, we have to make a hard decision, the desired end justifies this severe punishment.

Similarly, on 7 March 2019, United States Senator Marco Rubio (Florida, Republican), during a hearing at the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, affirmed that, “over the next few weeks, Venezuela is going to enter a period of suffering no nation in our hemisphere has ever confronted in modern history.... Millions of Venezuelans are going to continue to go hungry and [it will be] exacerbated in a way we have not seen.... The suffering people of Venezuela are about to experience the most dramatic shortages they have ever faced, the implications of which we cannot fully predict”.⁸

As you may recall, throughout 2019, the government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela was accused of and made responsible for an increased outbound flow of Venezuelans voluntarily crossing our borders for economic reasons. Today, we are seeing exactly the opposite and, instead, tens of thousands of Venezuelans are now returning to their homeland, seeking shelter and protection from the State. These are Venezuelans who are fleeing from discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in neighbouring countries of our region, and who had migrated to countries that had desperately asked, in the recent past, for financial resources allegedly aimed at supporting our compatriots in their nations, and which, even at this critical stage, still provide no cooperation for coordinating their return home. Needless to say, all of them have been received and welcomed back to their homeland with open arms and, given the current circumstances, upon arrival, they are subjected to a mandatory quarantine at the point of entry before being released and sent to their respective home towns, as per the medical procedures that have been designed and put in place with the support of the Pan American Health Organization and other relevant entities and organizations.

In this regard, let me add that, although our national government has organized multiple humanitarian flights to bring many of these Venezuelans home in our national aircraft, tens of thousands have had to return on foot, given the inability to

⁸ See www.foreign.senate.gov/hearings/us-venezuela-relations-and-the-path-to-a-democratic-transition.

arrange international flights with Venezuela's State-owned airline, the Consorcio Venezolano de Industrias Aeronáuticas y Servicios Aéreos (Conviasa), as a result of the United States sanctions to which that company has been subjected since early February 2020. It is worth noting that the airline had previously brought home, since 2018, free of charge, tens of thousands of compatriots who had crossed our borders for economic reasons.

Today, Venezuela is in the middle of a struggle against two crises: the global one, caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the one made by the United States as a result of the application of sanctions, of a siege, of threats of the use of force, of persecution of crude tankers involved in the shipment of our oil for export,⁹ of the International Monetary Fund denying an emergency aid loan, on the basis purely of spurious political reasons,¹⁰ of the shortage of fuel as a result of openly admitted pressure on companies to refrain from supplying gasoline to Venezuela,¹¹ *inter alia*.

In relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, Venezuela is devoted to protecting its people and containing the spread by fighting and defeating the disease at home. President Nicolás Maduro adopted early precautionary measures in that regard, which included, among others, a social collective quarantine – the first of its kind on the continent – the suspension of all commercial inbound and outbound international flights and massive testing (free of charge) throughout the nation. The government's early understanding of the magnitude of the emergency has yielded positive results, as positive as those in any other country of our region, despite the propaganda campaign that has attempted to conceal the merits of our national strategy, which has been supported by the United Nations system and other partners, most notably China, Russia and the International Committee of the Red Cross, which have provided much valuable assistance at this critical time.

As at 25 April 2020, there had been 323 confirmed cases in Venezuela; in 132 cases, the patient had already recovered (42.2 per cent) and, in a total of 10 cases, the patient had passed away. Today, Venezuela has the lowest contagion rate and the smallest number of confirmed COVID-19 cases per million people in the Latin American and Caribbean region, and it leads in the number of COVID-19 tests per million people in our region (more than 423,000 conducted), according to WHO and the United Nations Development Programme.

In sum, there is indeed a humanitarian emergency, worldwide, including in Venezuela, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, an emergency that, in our case, is aggravated by the illegal application of unilateral coercive measures that, before the pandemic, had already taken a human toll of over 40,000 people, according to Jeffrey Sachs and Mark Weisbrot's report for the Center for Economic and Policy Research.

Venezuela therefore recognizes the need for technical humanitarian assistance, a need that is further multiplied at the current juncture, and it has accordingly been scaling up its cooperation with and working in even closer coordination with the United Nations system, especially in the design and establishment of key priorities for the Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19, in which our country has been included by the Secretary-General, who is conscious of the significant impact that the pandemic is likely to have in a nation that was already torn by the pernicious effect of sanctions, coupled with the fact that the Venezuelan economy had already been experiencing a deep economic recession, with high levels of hyperinflation,

⁹ See www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-venezuela-sanctions/u-s-targets-six-oil-tankers-in-new-venezuela-related-sanctions-website-idUSKBN1Y71W8.

¹⁰ See www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/03/18/imf-denies-venezuela-emergency-aid-help-fight-coronavirus/.

¹¹ See www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-venezuela-gasoline-exclusive/exclusive-venezuela-gasoline-shortages-worsen-as-u-s-tells-firms-to-avoid-supply-sources-idUSKCN21Q29M.

since at least 2014, that is, since even before the imposition of unilateral coercive measures.

The predominant thinking among the promoters of unilateral coercive measures is that their initial purpose is to produce the maximum possible pain, which would in turn result in a behavioural change in the country subjected to such measures: without pain, sanctions are therefore considered meaningless and ineffective. Consequently, it is absurd that the very same countries that impose illegal coercive measures, without any sort of authorization from the Security Council, dare to believe that they have authority of any kind to subject millions of people to untold suffering while, at the same time, denying the negative effects through propaganda. Similarly, according to them themselves, “what the sanctions do is show people there is no hope of anything getting better”.¹²

Hence, the fair, humanitarian and much needed solution would be to lift all sanctions against our nation, immediately and completely, bearing in mind that their true purpose is none other than to produce the largest amount of suffering among our people. Such measures, in plain and simple words, are nothing more than the deliberate decision of foreign powers to systematically apply collective punishments and torture against our people, with the purpose of manipulating and/or coercing our national government.

In the meantime, we stand ready to engage with the international community and all partners that truly want to support our nation and our heroic people at this time of great need, which is already proving to have a tremendous socioeconomic impact, insofar as the assistance is non-politicized and observes the relevant guiding principles, including neutrality and impartiality, while respecting Venezuela’s sovereignty, territorial integrity, national unity and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

Allow me now to reiterate my words before the Security Council on 10 April 2019, which are as relevant as they were a year ago, when we were also discussing the situation in Venezuela:

The diagnosis of the present situation is that it is the result of a campaign of aggression by the United States.... Treating the situation cannot be by way of a new dose of aggressive intervention with a humanitarian mask. The solution does not lie in donations by the criminals who want to paint themselves as saviours. It does not lie in humanitarian channels designed to provoke armed conflicts. It does not lie in holding donors’ conferences that serve to hide the plunder against our nation. Addressing the situation requires returning the money stolen from our people and halting the economic and financial blockade against our nation.¹³

Let me conclude by reporting, with great patriotic pride, that, despite all the criminal aggressions from a group of colonial powers led by the government of the United States of America, and despite their repugnant policy of calculated cruelty that demonstrates nothing more than their moral ruin, our heroic people is currently in the midst of a struggle against two complex emergencies, that caused by the pandemic and that caused by colonial genocides. As time passes, we are becoming increasingly organized and increasingly disciplined, demonstrating to the world, at a historic moment, our ability to defeat the enemies of humanity.

¹² See www.state.gov/briefing-with-acting-assistant-secretary-michael-kozak-bureau-of-western-hemisphere-affairs-on-developments-in-the-western-hemisphere/.

¹³ See S/PV.8506.

I respectfully ask for your good offices in circulating the present letter among the members of the Council for their due information and having it issued as a document of that body.

(Signed) Samuel **Moncada**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations
