



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. MR. MOURAD BENMEHIDI, AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ALGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 41: "NECESSITY OF ENDING THE ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL EMBARGO IMPOSED BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AGAINST CUBA", AT THE 67TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS (New York, 13 November 2012)**

Mr. President,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on the agenda Item 41 - "Necessity of Ending the Economic, Commercial and Financial Embargo Imposed by the United States of America Against Cuba".

I would like to acknowledge the presence of H.E. Mr. Bruno Rodriguez Parilla, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cuba.

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

3- The Group of 77 and China states, as it has done in many opportunities before, that the embargo against Cuba contravenes the fundamental norms of international law, international humanitarian law, the United Nations Charter and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States. Its continued imposition violates the principles of the sovereign equality of States and of non-intervention and non-interference in each other's domestic affairs.

4. The measures announced by the Government of the United States, two years ago, related to a certain relaxation of restrictions on travels and transfer of remittances have had a very limited effect and did not change the framework of laws, regulations and provisions of the embargo which is still in place.

5. In fact, 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, negatively impacting on the welfare and well-being of the people of Cuba, and constitutes a very important hindrance to Cuba's economic and social development.

6. 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 aggravate the hardships for the people of Cuba.

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

Mr. President,

8. The Group of 77 and China has always been firmly against the embargo. At the Second South Summit held in Doha, Qatar, 12-16 June 2005, the Heads of State and Government of the Group of 77 and China rejected firmly 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 which, in addition to being unilateral and contrary to the UN Charter and international law, and to the principle of neighborliness, causes huge material losses and economic damage to the people of Cuba.

9. Today 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-sixth annual meeting of our Ministers for Foreign Affairs held in New York on 27th September 2012, and I quote: "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. They emphasized that such actions not only undermine the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, but also severely threaten the freedom of trade and investment. They, therefore, called on the international community neither to recognize these measures nor apply them."

Mr. President,

10. We recall that last year 186 Member States voted in favor of the Draft Resolution presented by Cuba. This represented a very large majority of the International Community demanding the end to the five-decades-old embargo and to fully adhere to the principles of mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of a Member State of the United Nations.

11. The Group of G77 and China is committed to work for the achievement of peaceful co-existence among nations. Such a goal requires an adherence by all nations to the principles of the United Nations Charter and the peaceful conduct of relations among nations, as well as an adherence by all nations to the rule of law, including international law.

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

I thank you.