

The following is an excerpt from the official meeting records of the General Assembly on March 15, 2006.

The complete transcript is available at
http://www.hrw.org/un/elections/pdfs/ga_mtg_en.pdf (English)
http://www.hrw.org/un/elections/pdfs/ga_mtg_fr.pdf (French)
http://www.hrw.org/un/elections/pdfs/ga_mtg_ar.pdf (Arabic)

Mr. Toro Jiménez (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): Our Republic, through our delegation, wishes to place our position on record before the vote.

First, we wish to note that we have serious doubts about the interest that the United States allegedly has in not having this draft resolution adopted. Secondly, we would like to announce that we are not going to vote against the draft, because we do not wish to be part of the United States group on this. Thirdly, we shall not be voting in favour, either, because we have grave objections to endorsing various preambular and operative paragraphs. Therefore, we are going to abstain in the vote.

As we have said, there are certain paragraphs that we find objectionable, and we have maintained that position unscathed throughout the negotiations.

We have express reservation with regard to the first preambular paragraph, where the expression “humanitarian character” remains, which implicitly makes it possible to find pretexts to intervene in the internal affairs of States.

Secondly, we have express reservations on the eleventh preambular paragraph, which refers to the activities of non-governmental organizations, and accordingly we express reservation on this issue as a whole.

Thirdly, we have reservations on operative paragraphs 1 and 2, and on paragraphs 3, 4, and subparagraphs (e) and (f) of paragraph 5. With regard to paragraph 6, we believe that implicit therein — this is how we interpret it — is the prerequisite that those interested should exhaust the internal resources anticipated in the legislation of the respective States. We have this same reservation concerning paragraph 7, and on paragraph 8, which retains the use of criteria to limit States’ participation on an equal footing. We also have reservations on paragraphs 9 and 10.

I return to the preambular paragraphs. Regarding the second preambular paragraph, we interpret this as meaning that necessarily implicit in the draft resolution is a specific reference to the right to development.

Lastly, I wish to make a statement — not a reservation — concerning operative paragraph 14. Here we would reaffirm our position that those States that have not yet completed their term in the Commission on Human Rights should continue as the first members of the new body that has been created.

In short, this is our position. However, we wish to place on record what our delegation means by “reservation”. We have already set out the paragraphs, one by one, about which we have reservations. We do not understand “reservation” as criticism; by “reservation” we mean that these paragraphs are not obligatory, they are not binding on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. In other words, they have no political or legal effect as far as we are concerned.