



STATEMENT BY MR. A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 18: NECESSITY OF ENDING THE ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL EMBARGO IMPOSED BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AGAINST CUBA AT THE 61ST SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON NOVEMBER 08, 2006

Madam President,

We associate ourselves with the statement made by South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77. The embargo and sanctions imposed by the United States against Cuba has been in place for over four decades and has been a subject of discussion in the General Assembly for the fifteenth time in succession.

The embargo has had an impact on the Cuban efforts towards the eradication of poverty, improving livelihoods and promoting socio-economic development. They also hinder the full enjoyment of human rights, such as the right to development, right to food, medical care and social services which, despite these constraints, are of a high order. The American Association for the World Health concluded that in the case of the impact on the Cuban health system, the embargo "caused a significant rise in suffering with patients going without essential drugs or doctors performing medical procedures without adequate equipment". The embargo also continued to have an impact on food aid deliveries. The negative impact of the embargo in the educational sector is linked to trade restrictions that prevent the purchase of needed inputs at more competitive prices.

They have limited Cuba's access to markets, capital, technology and investment and are not in conformity with multilateral trading regimes and cannot be justified even under the GATT exception clause of "essential security interests". In a normal situation, Cuba and the United States would be natural economic partners, benefiting mutually from trade. It is our understanding that a considerable part of US businesses would like to take advantage of the Cuban market. The imports of "food and agriculture" from United States, which account for 13% of total Cuban imports of Cuban "food and agriculture", reflected the

impact of the US legislation enacted in 2000 that eased food and medicine sanctions against Cuba. According to some estimates, the potential loss to US business ranges between dollars one billion to fifteen billion.

This Assembly has pronounced its rejection of the imposition of the laws and regulations with extra territorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures. The Assembly had adopted resolutions urging all countries to comply with the Charter and principles enshrined in the legal instruments and to repeal or invalidate all laws and measures that carry "extraterritorial effect", bearing on the sovereignty of other States, the legitimate rights and interest of peoples or entities under their jurisdiction, and the freedom of trade and navigation. Sanctions, irrespective of their purpose, have to comply with the customary international law principle of non-intervention and proportionality.

We share the views expressed by the countries which have reiterated their opposition to the extra-territorial aspect of the economic embargo that had been implemented in accordance with the 1992 Cuban Democracy Act (the so-called Torricelli Law), and the 1996 Helms Burton Act, through which the extra-territorial reach of the embargo encompasses foreign companies as well as foreign subsidiaries of US companies doing business with Cuba.

Madam President,

India has consistently opposed any unilateral measures by countries, which impinge on the sovereignty of another country. These include any attempt to extend the application of a country's laws extraterritorially to other sovereign nations. India believes that efforts to consolidate endeavours toward the creation and strengthening of conducive economic environment capable of providing equal opportunities to all countries are required and that the international community also needs to redouble its efforts to have an environment free from sanctions and embargoes.

Thank you, Madam President.

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