

Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights; the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and the Independent expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order

Ref.: AL USA 23/2023
(Please use this reference in your reply)

19 September 2023

Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacities as Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights; Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and Independent expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 49/6, 51/8 and 45/4.

In this connection, we would like to bring to the attention of your Excellency's Government information we have received concerning **the continued detention and prosecution of Mr. Alex Nain Saab Morán, a dual Colombian and Venezuelan national and entrepreneur, appointed as a Special Envoy of Venezuela to negotiate with Iran the procurement of basic goods, including food medicine and gasoline.** Mr. Saab's arrest in Cabo Verde and his subsequent extradition to the United States violate his rights to freedom of movement, freedom from arbitrary detention, right to health, while also harm the rights of the Venezuelan people to food, to health and to a decent standard of living by preventing him from carrying out his official missions to Iran for the procurement of basic goods on behalf of the Government of Venezuela.

According to the information received:

On 9 April 2018, the Government of Venezuela, through a Resolution of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, appointed Mr. Alex Nain Saab Morán, as Special Envoy of Venezuela to facilitate the procurement of humanitarian and other vital goods, including food, medicines, and gasoline to alleviate the impact of the economic crisis in Venezuela, which had been exacerbated by U.S. trade sanctions against the country. For this purpose, he was granted authority to meet with foreign government authorities, representatives of companies and institutions, both public and private.

On 25 July 2019, Mr. Saab was placed under sanctions by the United States for allegedly being among individuals "responsible for or complicit in, or directly or indirectly engaged in, a transaction or series of transactions involving deceptive practices and corruption and the Government of Venezuela or projects or programs administered by the Government of Venezuela (...) or (who) operate in the gold sector of the Venezuelan economy, or are current or former officials of the Government of Venezuela."¹ His property and interests in property in the United States or controlled by U.S. persons were blocked pursuant to Executive Orders issued by the U.S.

¹ U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Treasury Disrupts Corruption Network Stealing from Venezuela's Food Distribution Program, CLAP," press release, 25 July 2019.

President.²

In 2020, as Venezuela's Special Envoy, Mr. Saab carried out missions to Iran; the first from 8 to 15 March and the second from 14 to 21 April.

On 12 June 2020, Mr. Saab was travelling again from Venezuela to Iran on a mission to arrange for the procurement of food, medicine, and medical equipment, and to negotiate future deliveries of gasoline and refinery spare parts, which was prompted by a fuel shortage in Venezuela earlier that year. For this trip, Iranian authorities were informed by Venezuela's Minister of Foreign Affairs, through a note verbale dated 3 June 2020. The note verbale explicitly mentioned that Mr. Saab would undertake that trip in his capacity as Special Envoy of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

On 12 June 2020, whilst on route to Teheran, Mr. Saab was arrested in the Republic of Cabo Verde when his plane stopped there for refueling. The authorities in Cabo Verde claimed that the arrest was made in response to a Red Notice issued by INTERPOL at the request of the United States, but neither a copy of the alleged Red Notice nor an arrest warrant was presented to Mr. Saab. As soon as the Cabo Verdean police boarded his plane, Mr. Saab declared his diplomatic status and had in his possession documents pertaining to his mission, including letters from the President and the Executive Vice-President of Venezuela to the Iranian authorities, but the police refused to look at these documents. The police officers forced Mr. Saab from his aircraft, stamped a visa in his passport (for which he was asked to pay) and then took him from the airport to local police headquarters, where he was subjected to acts amounting to torture, including beating with wet towels and asphyxiation with a plastic bag.³

It is reported that at the moment Mr. Saab's plane was prevented from departing from Cabo Verde, there was no Red Notice by INTERPOL against him, and that it took only 16 minutes for this notice to be issued, only after confirmation of the information that he was on the plane.

On 13 June 2020, the Venezuelan authorities reacted to Mr. Saab's detention by sending letters to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cabo Verde invoking Mr. Saab's immunity as "acting as an agent of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela", highlighting the respect of the principles of immunity and inviolability applicable to his status, and underscoring that the INTERPOL Red Notice was issued only after his arrest, on 13 June. The Cabo Verdean authorities did not respond to these communications.

On 13 and 16 June 2020, the National Central Bureau of Caracas challenged INTERPOL's publication of the Red Notice against Mr. Saab, and on 25 June, the INTERPOL Secretariat General (IPSG) informed NCB Caracas that the Red Notice had been "annulled".

² Executive Order 13850, "Blocking Property of Additional Persons Contributing to the Situation in Venezuela," 1 November 2018, as amended by Executive Order 13857, "Taking Additional Steps To Address the National Emergency With Respect to Venezuela," 25 January 2019.

³ See also joint communication [CVP 2/2021](#) of 19 July 2021

Despite the publication of the Red Notice being cited by Cabo Verde as the justification for arresting Mr. Saab, when the Red Notice was annulled Cabo Verde reportedly still refused to release him.

On 29 and 30 June 2020, an extradition request was transmitted to Cabo Verde by the United States, resulting from a decision of the U.S. District Court for Southern District of Florida, on 25 July 2019, to indict Mr. Saab for financial crimes allegedly committed between November 2011 and September 2015. The indictment included seven counts of money laundering and one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering, with a foreseen cumulative penalty of 160 years of imprisonment. The extradition request reportedly contained an incorrect arrest warrant, and the correct arrest warrant was provided only months later, on 5 April 2021.

On 31 July 2020, the Barlavento Court of Appeal, as a court of first instance, rejected Mr. Saab's arguments against extradition, and it granted his extradition to the United States.

Mr. Saab's lawyers filed an appeal against this judgment on the grounds that a) the Barlavento Court of Appeal did not actually address the issue of Mr. Saab's diplomatic status; b) the extradition could not be accepted because Mr. Saab could face a possible sentence of 160 years, which amounted to a de facto life sentence. In a parallel track, Mr. Saab's defense initiated proceedings against Cabo Verde before the Court of Justice of the Economic Community of West African States, including a request for interim measures, and submitted an individual communication to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

On 16 October 2020, the Cabo Verde Supreme Court of Justice ruled in favour of Mr. Saab and sent the case back to the Barlavento Court of Appeal. However, on 4 January 2021, the Court dismissed the arguments and again ruled in favour of his extradition.

On 15 March 2021 the ECOWAS Court declared Mr. Saab's arrest and extradition unlawful and ordered his immediate release. However, a day later, on 16 March 2021, Cabo Verde's Supreme Court of Justice confirmed Mr. Saab's extradition to the United States (Order No. 134/2021), by dismissing the argument of a risk of a life sentence claiming that US Public Prosecutor's Office sent a document to the Cabo Verdean authorities in which "it commit[ed] itself, if extradition [was] authorized, to criminally prosecute the Extradited by just a single 'count', therefore, if convicted, a penalty of more than 20 years [would] not be imposed". At the same time, on 18 March, the U.S. District Court Southern District of Florida denied Mr. Saab's motion to vacate order conferring to him fugitive status, which was filed on 21 January 2021 (Criminal Case No. 19-20450-CR-Scola).

On 7 September 2021, the Constitutional Court of Cabo Verde, as the court of last instance, granted the extradition of Mr. Saab to the United States on the grounds that i) it is up to the Government of Cabo Verde as an executive body to decide whether Mr. Saab should be recognized as a Special Envoy; ii) prior notification must be addressed to the Transit State for travel of its representative throughout its territory; iii) ECOWAS Court's decisions cannot

be enforced in Cabo Verde considering that the Government did not sign and ratify the 2005 Supplementary Protocol that extends the jurisdiction of the ECOWAS Court in relation to human rights violations.

On 29 September 2021, Mr. Saab's defense submitted a motion of *Ne Bis In Idem* to the court of first instance, the Barlavento Court of Appeal, submitting a new element, which was the acquittal of Mr. Saab by the Public Prosecutor in Geneva, Switzerland, on allegations of money laundering involving the same funds which were at the heart of the U.S. indictment of 25 July 2019. The argument was that under the principle of *Ne bis In Idem*, and in accordance with the laws of Cabo Verde, extradition could not be granted since the proceedings in Cabo Verde, where similar proceedings to those initiated and concluded in another country. The *Ne Bis In Idem* motion was not examined by the Cabo Verde's courts and is still pending.

On 13 October 2021, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights granted provisional measures instructing Cabo Verde to halt extradition proceedings.

However, on that same day (13 October) Cabo Verde's Constitutional Court signed the certificate authorising Mr. Saab's extradition to the United States.

On 16 October 2021, Mr. Saab was transferred to the United States, where he was subsequently detained pending trial. Two weeks later, on 1 November 2021, U.S. prosecutors dismissed all charges of money laundering, thus eliminating seven of the eight counts in the indictment that was used to justify Mr. Saab's extradition. This reduced the scope of the indictment to the single charge of conspiracy to commit money laundering.

On 23 December 2022, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida ruled that Mr. Saab was not entitled to diplomatic immunity and rejected a motion to dismiss the indictment's remaining charge against him. According to the judgment, "It is clear that the United States does not recognize the Maduro regime to represent the official government of Venezuela. In fact, Maduro's regime has been deemed 'illegitimate'. Accordingly, any claim to diplomatic immunity asserted by a representative of the Maduro regime must also be considered illegitimate." (Criminal Case No. 19-20450-CR-Scola)

On 15 March 2023, an Appellate Opening Brief was submitted before the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals of Georgia. The Court of Appeals acknowledged receipt of the appeal only on 13 June 2023, and on 26 July 2023 the U.S. Department of Justice requested for a 30-day period to respond to the defense arguments. This period was further extended and 13 September 2023 was set as the new deadline for the Department of Justice's response.

Since his extradition to the United States, Mr. Saab remains detained at the Federal Detention Center in Miami ("FDC"). His health condition has been deteriorating. In particular, for several weeks, Mr. Saab has been vomiting blood, but detention center authorities have not provided him with the necessary medical treatment.

It is reported that the only window in his cell is minuscule and permanently shut, leaving him without any access to natural light. Furthermore, the temperature inside his cell is kept at a low level, fluctuating between 5-8 degrees Celsius. His cell is excessively damp, with moisture seeping into the walls and floors.

The FDC is a transit or holding center rather than a prison, and thus there is no segregation of inmates based on their offenses. Mr. Saab is currently confined to a cell with someone accused of drug trafficking, while the communal spaces are shared by a cross-section of individuals accused of crimes including homicide, sexual assault and abuse, drug trafficking and others. Substandard detention conditions in the FDC are compounded by low quality of food, including reportedly expired and spoiled food being served to inmates.

While we do not wish to prejudge the accuracy of the information received, we express our serious concern about the arrest and prolonged detention pending trial of Mr. Saab, in reportedly substandard detention conditions at the Federal Detention Center in Miami, in violation of his rights, including access to prompt and adequate medical treatment in view of his reported deteriorating health condition.

We note that his arrest, extradition, detention and prosecution have occurred in the context of efforts by your Excellency's Government to enforce U.S. unilateral sanctions against Iran and Venezuela, with serious adverse effects on the lives of peoples in these countries, by preventing him from facilitating trade of basic goods, including food and medicine between these two countries.

Previous communications addressed to your Excellency's Government have laid down our concerns about the general trends of extraterritorial enforcement of the United States jurisdiction in matters relevant to U.S. unilateral sanctions regimes and highlighted in particular violations of the rights of targeted individuals or entities, without any determination of their guilt or innocence, for presumed activities which are not considered international crimes and which are lawful in the states with recognized jurisdiction over these individuals and entities, as well as over the concerned activities. We refer in particular to the letters addressed to your Excellency's Government in 2020 and 2021 respectively (cases nos. [USA 24/2020](#) and [USA 18/2021](#)) regarding the designation of captains of five tankers delivering gasoline from Iran to Venezuela as a result of negotiations led by Mr. Saab, in his capacity as Venezuela's Special Envoy, in April 2020. For this activity, these captains have been designated by Your Excellency's Government and they were placed under the public U.S. Government's Reward for Justice program with millions of U.S. dollars as a reward. Regrettably, we have not received any response to any of these letters. These attempts to apply coercion through extraterritorial assertion of U.S. jurisdiction also contravene fundamental principles of international law pertaining to sovereignty, sovereign equality of states and non-intervention in the internal or external affairs of other states, not mentioning principles of due process and fair trial guarantees.

The actions against Mr. Saab are equally questionable in relation to the rule of law in multiple ways with cascading effects. Besides breaching your Excellency's Government's international law obligations to protect his human rights as well as those of his family (including freedom from arbitrary detention, fair trial standards, presumption of innocence, freedom from torture, right to health, right to protection of

family life), they deny potentially large numbers of Venezuelans their rights to adequate standard of living, including adequate food and healthcare, by preventing Mr. Saab from undertaking official missions to Iran for the procurement of foodstuffs, medicines and gasoline.

We wish to underline that the designation by U.S. Treasury Department's OFAC of Mr. Saab on 25 July 2019 with references to corruption in Venezuela has no grounds in contemporary international law. Information made available to us does not provide for any grounds for the use of universal and extraterritorial jurisdiction. Any cooperation in corruption cases can only take place through "cooperation between States", in accordance with the UN Convention Against Corruption of 2003 to which both United States of America and Venezuela are parties.

We also wish to highlight to your Excellency's Government that the judicial pursuit of Mr. Saab also runs counter to the law of diplomatic immunity⁴ as it pertains to him in several capacities: (1) as an *ad hoc* diplomat on a special mission, and (2) as a diplomat in transit.

Regarding Mr. Saab's legitimacy as an *ad hoc* diplomat, the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela had reportedly appointed him as a Special Envoy in 2018 to procure from Iran essential goods for the Venezuelan population that could not be otherwise obtained because of the U.S. sanctions and over-compliance with them. Although Mr. Saab's missions may be limited to this task, they nonetheless entail work that places him in the same legal position as a permanent diplomat. We acknowledge that the United States is not a party to the Convention on Special Missions of 1969 and is not bound by its rules pertaining to immunity for *ad hoc* diplomats who are charged with carrying out such missions. At the same time, provisions of this convention are recognized as the established customary international law⁵ and are incorporated in English common law⁶.

As for the fact that Mr. Saab was in transit at the time of his arrest in Cabo Verde, a third country, we wish to highlight that such a situation does not nullify his immunity. This, too, is established through customary international law. We note that the Havana Convention on Diplomatic Officers (1928), signed by the United States, does not distinguish between diplomats who are physically present where they are assigned to work and those traveling to or from those locations, a point observed by a U.S. court's determination that "a diplomat *in transitu* would be entitled to the same immunity as a diplomat *in situ*."⁷ Similar provisions are reflected in article 42(1) of the Convention on Special Missions of 1969 and article 40 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic relations 1961.

With respect to the lack of U.S. recognition of the Government that appointed Mr. Saab to his position as a Special Envoy of Venezuela, we wish to point out that for the last century it has increasingly become the practice of states, including the United States, to affirm through national jurisprudence the sovereign immunity of

⁴ Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961), Articles 29-41.

⁵ Michael Wood, The Immunity of Official Visitors // Max Planck UNYB 16 (2012), 35

⁶ *Freedom and Justice Party and others* v *Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and others* [2018] EWCA Civ 1719.

⁷ *Bergman v. De Sieyes*. 170 F. 2d 360 (2d Cir. 1948), quoted in William W. Bishop Jr., "Judicial Decisions," *American Journal of International Law* 42 (2), 1949, p. 373.

unrecognized but *de facto* governments at the state level.⁸ From the customary international law emerging from this practice, it logically follows that diplomatic agents of said governments also enjoy immunity.

We raise the matter of Mr. Saab's diplomatic immunity because its denial opened the way for the ongoing events that have violated his human rights and has undermined the implementation of bilateral agreements between Iran and Venezuela for the delivery to Venezuela of basic goods, despite the reported explicit agreement by these two countries on Mr. Saab's status as a Special Envoy.

The fact that your Excellency's Government achieved this result through an INTERPOL Red Notice on the basis of criminal charges that were mostly dropped shortly after his extradition to the United States creates the appearance that the charges, far from being a serious effort to pursue criminal action, had the sole purpose of justifying an indictment that could be used as the basis for acting through INTERPOL to neutralize Mr. Saab's ability to obtain Iranian goods for Venezuela; and that the remaining charge, being sufficient to allow his detention in the United States pending a trial, prevents his early return to such activity.

In connection with the above alleged facts and concerns, please refer to the **Annex on Reference to international human rights law** attached to this letter which cites international human rights instruments and standards relevant to these allegations.

As it is our responsibility, under the mandates provided to us by the Human Rights Council, to seek to clarify all cases brought to our attention, we would be grateful for your observations on the following matters:

1. Please explain how the actions taken by your Excellency's Government against Mr. Saab, from the time it sought INTERPOL's assistance for his arrest until the present, are aligned with its obligations under international law to protect his human rights, and those of the Venezuelan people.
2. Please explain the scope and legal justifications for the measures taken by your Excellency's Government to impede trade between Iran and Venezuela in connection with the U.S. sanctions against either or both countries. Please also address the legal justifications for the extraterritorial jurisdiction that such efforts represent, and whether and how human rights are taken into account.
3. Please provide information about any limits that the United States imposes on the immunity of foreign diplomats, whether such limits are the same for diplomats from unsanctioned and sanctioned states, and how U.S. policy pertaining to diplomatic immunity complies with its international obligations.

⁸ Internationally influential rulings include those in the U.S. cases *Max Wulfsohn et al. v. Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic* (234 N.Y. 372, 138 N.E. 24, 1923) and *United States v. New York Trust Co.* (75 F. Supp. 583 (S.D.N.Y. 1946)); and the French case *Dame Clerget v. la Représentation commerciale de la République démocratique du Viet-Nam et autres* (Cass. civ., 2 novembre 1971).

4. Please provide information with regards to the U.S. Government's coordination with INTERPOL and in particular concerning the timing of the issuance of the Red Notice against Mr. Saab. Please indicate how this coordination has been undertaken in accordance with international human rights standards and in compliance with the INTERPOL's Constitution and procedures.
5. Please provide updated information on the detention conditions of Mr. Saab and whether they are compatible with your Excellency's Government's international human rights obligations, the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment.
6. Please explain the reasons for the alleged failure to provide adequate medical treatment to Mr. Saab, and whether any inquiry or investigation of such allegation has taken place. If yes, please provide information about the outcome of such inquiry or investigation, including identification and sanctioning of those responsible.

We would appreciate receiving a response within 60 days. Past this delay, this communication and any response received from your Excellency's Government will be made public via the communications reporting [website](#). They will also subsequently be made available in the usual report to be presented to the Human Rights Council.

While awaiting a reply, we urge your Excellency's Government to recognize the diplomatic immunities of Mr. Saab in accordance with the norms of international law, and to release him from custody. Pending this outcome, we urge that all necessary interim measures be undertaken to ensure the full protection of the rights of Mr. Saab and to refrain from unilateral actions, including those hindering Venezuela's international and bilateral economic cooperation, which would negatively affect the rights of Venezuelan people.

We may publicly express our concerns about this issue in the future as it is a matter that should warrant careful attention. We also deem that the wider public should be informed about the human rights implications of these allegations. Any press release or public expression of concern on our part on this issue will indicate that we have been in contact with your Excellency's Government to bring it to your attention and seek clarification.

Finally, we would like to inform your Excellency's Government that after having transmitted the information contained in the present communication to the Government, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention may also transmit the case through its regular procedure in order to render an opinion on whether the deprivation of liberty was arbitrary or not. The present communication in no way prejudices any opinion the Working Group may render. The Government is required to respond separately to the allegation letter and the regular procedure.

Please be informed that a copy of this letter has also been sent to the Government of Cabo Verde.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

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Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the
enjoyment of human rights

Matthew Gillett
Vice-Chair of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention

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Annex

Reference to international human rights law

In connection with above alleged facts and concerns, we would like to refer your Excellency's Government to the relevant international norms and standards that are applicable to the issues brought forth by the situation described.

We wish to recall the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, which the United States has ratified. Article 29 states in part that "The person of a diplomatic agent shall be inviolable. He shall not be liable to any form of arrest or detention," while article 40 (1) stipulates that "If a diplomatic agent passes through or is in the territory of a third State, which has granted him a passport visa if such visa was necessary, while proceeding to take up or to return to his post, or when returning to his own country, the third State shall accord him inviolability and such other immunities as may be required to ensure his transit or return."

The Convention on Special Missions extended the immunity of diplomats, including while in transit (art. 42), to cover those assigned to engage in special missions, including *ad hoc* diplomats. Although the United States is not a party to this Convention, we note that the UN International Law Commission, referring to art. 31 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, "considers that the rules of immunity from jurisdiction which apply to members of permanent missions are applicable in every respect to *ad hoc* missions and itinerant envoys."⁹

We also refer to the Havana Convention on Diplomatic Officers, which the United States has signed, and which stipulates in article 9 that "Extraordinary diplomatic officers enjoy the same prerogatives and immunities as ordinary ones."

We make reference to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), in which article 9(1) stipulates that "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. No one shall be deprived of his liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedure as are established by law." The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has established that any immunity that exists must be waived prior to any arrest, and thus the arrest of a person covered by immunity is illegal.

With regards to article 9, we draw your attention to the Human Rights Committee's General Comment 35 (2014) on Liberty and Security of the Person, in which paragraph 22 states that all grounds on which an individual may be arrested or detained must be established by law and should be defined with sufficient precision to avoid an overly broad or arbitrary interpretation or application. Deprivation of liberty that is not authorized by law is illegal.

With regards to due process and fair trial guarantees we wish to refer to article 14 of the ICCPR. This article addresses the procedures that constitute due process. In particular, article 14(2) establishes that all persons charged with crimes are to be presumed innocent until their guilt is established through legal procedures. As for determining whether a crime has been committed, article 14(1) holds that everyone charged with a crime "shall be entitled to a fair and public hearing by a

⁹ UN Yearbook of the International Law Commission, 1964, Vol. 2, "Special Missions," p. 111.

competent, independent and impartial tribunal established by law,” during which the accused person has the right to defend himself (art. 14(3)(d)). This allows the presumption that if no charge is brought, or if a charge that had been brought is dismissed, the act in question does not rise to the level of a crime for which a fair hearing shall be held.

We further note that article 15(1) of the ICCPR states that “No one shall be held guilty of any criminal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a criminal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed.”

We additionally refer also to ICCPR article 17, which is relevant insofar as it prohibits “arbitrary or unlawful interference with [a person’s] privacy, family, home or correspondence” as well as “unlawful attacks on his honour and reputation.”

Regarding the right to health as it pertains to individuals as well as populations, we refer to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which enshrines in article 12(1) “the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.” We also call your attention to General Comment No. 14 (2000) of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which states that the agreed interpretation of the right to health includes, *inter alia*, the availability and the physical accessibility of goods necessary to ensure this right (paragraph 12(a,b)).

With respect to the right to food, and to a decent standard of living in which food plays a vital role, we recall article 11 of ICESCR which recognizes “the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food (...).”

Finally, we refer to the basic principles of international law pertaining to sovereignty and to non-interference in the internal or external affairs of other states. Under these principles, every sovereign state has the right to choose its trade partners, to make trading arrangements with them and to conduct this trade, while other states are enjoined from interfering with these activities except when legally permitted or required, such as through decisions of the UN Security Council.

As embodied in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in Accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, contained in UN General Assembly Resolution 2625 (XXV) of 24 October 1970, this principle affirms that “No State or group of States has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatsoever, in the internal or external affairs of any other State. (...) No State may encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights.”