

Statement by Ambassador Sophia Tesfamariam

at the Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly at the Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on Agenda Item 28, Entitled: “Elimination of Unilateral Extraterritorial Coercive Economic Measures as a means of Political and Economic Compulsion”



New York, 13 June 2024

Mr. President,

Let me first thank you for convening this plenary meeting of the General Assembly on a subject of serious concern, with detrimental ramifications to many member states and millions of people across the Global South.

I associate my remarks with the statements delivered by the distinguished Delegations of Uganda, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the G77 and China, as well as Nigeria and Venezuela on behalf of the African Group and the Group of Friends in Defence of the United Nations Charter respectively. Let me briefly state the following in my national capacity.

Mr. President,

The application of unilateral extraterritorial coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion don't only contravene the fundamentals of the UN Charter and the general principles of international law, but they are inhumane and immoral policy malpractices of its architects, aimed at impoverishing and depriving nations. Neither the norms of international relations nor the rules of international trading system justify the application of such egregious policies dictated at the whim of the proponents of global hegemony. These powers have been unapologetic with their intentions and deeds, as this is expressly stated in their foreign policy toolbox, to compel those who don't conform with their self-professed ideals.

Mr. President,

My country, Eritrea, has been a victim of illegal and unjust sanctions and it continues to endure unilateral coercive measures targeting its most critical sectors, including the economic and national security ones. The ulterior political motives are too evident to merit explanation. Among the bundles of the illicit measures, in 2021, Eritrea was excluded from the SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Transactions), a system used to conduct international financial transactions. The country is further sustaining illegal unilateral sanctions imposed by the US Administration. Only few weeks ago, the European Union renewed the imposition of such measures against Eritrea in its pursuit of advancing perceived geopolitical objectives which have been proved to not only be flawed, but are contributing to regional destabilization. The crippling socio-economic effects of these illegal sanctions to the country's developmental programs are indeed colossal.

Mr. President,

All forms of unilateral coercive measures must be immediately lifted and the injustices and damages endured by the affected nations need to be rectified. Against the globally agreed development goals underpinned by the motto of “leaving no one behind”, unilateral coercive measures attest to the contrary as they are impoverishing those in the Global South and widening the development gap. Sovereign equality of all nations and their right to development as enshrined in the UN Charter must be fully respected. Any unilateral resort outside of the cardinal principles of the UN Charter need be rejected and repealed in totality.

Mr. President,

In closing, Eritrea expresses its strong solidarity with all those unjustly affected nations and peoples, and calls for the categorical lifting of the unlawful embargos imposed on the brotherly people of Cuba for over 60 years, and delist the country from the so-called ‘state sponsors of terrorism.’

I Thank You!