



**CHAIR OF
THE COORDINATING BUREAU
OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT**



**STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY THE DEPUTY FOREIGN AFFAIRS
MINISTER OF THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA FOR
MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS, H.E. MR. RUBEN DARIO MOLINA, ON BEHALF
OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM), DURING THE MINISTERIAL
OPEN DEBATE OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON “THE PROTECTION OF
CIVILIANS AND HEALTHCARE IN ARMED CONFLICT”**

New York, 25 May 2017

Mr. President,

1. It is an honor for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to take the floor on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) during this Open Debate, in which we commemorate the one-year anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 2286 (2016) on the Protection of Medical Facilities and Personnel in Conflict Situations.
2. At the outset, we would like to convey, on behalf of the Member States of the Movement, our respects to H.E. Mr. Rodolfo Nin Novoa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, and to transmit our best wishes to his Delegation for a successful month in conducting the works of the Council, while also acknowledging its efforts in drafting the Concept Note for this session, which would serve as the basis for guiding our discussions today.
3. Likewise, we would like to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing, as well as Mrs. Christine Beerli and Mr. Bruno Stagno for their presentations.

Mr. President,

4. We currently live in a time that faces multiple, complex and newly emerging threats and challenges to international peace and security, including those posed by terrorism and violent extremism, as well as by war and protracted conflicts.
5. In the context of armed conflicts, we have seen how the human suffering of the innocent civilians that are caught up in the middle of armed conflicts can be further exacerbated by deliberate, indiscriminate and, in some cases, systematic attacks against the wounded and sick, medical and humanitarian personnel exclusively engaged in medical duties, their means of transport and equipment, as well as hospitals and other medical facilities, including those perpetrated by non-State actors, in violation of their sanctity under international law.



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6. Consequently, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) strongly condemns these acts of violence, attacks and threats, and deplors the long-term consequences of such attacks for the civilian population and the healthcare systems of the countries concerned. These attacks, which may amount to war crimes, must end, and those responsible must be held accountable, in order to break any impunity cycle, and send a clear and united message of zero-tolerance to these acts.
7. In this regard, during the XVII Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), held in September 2016, in the Island of Margarita, Venezuela, the Heads of State or Government condemned the increasing attacks on the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and urged the Governments of Member States of the United Nations to ensure respect for the protection of the personnel of humanitarian organizations, in conformity with the relevant international law, as well as of their facilities.

Mr. President,

8. Moreover, while reaffirming that the protection of civilians throughout their whole territory is the primary responsibility of the host country, the Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) recognized that this is a task which is also mandated in a number of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, to which they reaffirmed their commitment.
9. In this regard, the Member States of the Movement acknowledge that many humanitarian agencies and medical personnel operate in countries where UN Peacekeeping Operations are deployed, and in which they play an important role of assistance to civilians, in the context of armed conflict. Hence, the need for all parties to fully comply with their obligations under international law, as applicable, and international humanitarian law, in particular their obligations under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the obligations applicable to them under the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977 and 2005, as stated in the Concept Note for this Open Debate, in order to allow and facilitate the safe and unhindered passage of impartial humanitarian relief, including medical missions, their personnel and supplies.
10. In addition, the Member States of the Movement call upon all parties to international armed conflict to redouble their efforts to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law, including the principles of precautions against the effects of attacks, proportionality and distinction, by, inter alia, prohibiting the targeting of civilian populations, civilian property and certain special property during an armed conflict, and obliging parties to any conflict to ensure general protection against dangers arising from military operations for civilian installations, hospitals, means of transportation and relief materials, and distribution of such relief materials.



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11. Furthermore, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) stresses the fact that humanitarian agencies and their personnel must respect the international humanitarian law and the laws of the countries they work in, as well as the guiding principles of humanitarian assistance set forth in the Annex of General Assembly resolution 46/182, including humanity, neutrality and impartiality, and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of the host countries, as well as the sovereignty, territorial integrity, national unity and independence of States.

Mr. President,

12. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) recognizes the importance of early registration and effective registration systems and censuses as a means to the quantification and assessment of needs for the provision and distribution of humanitarian assistance, as well as the need to respect international refugee law, preserve the civilian and humanitarian nature of the refugee camps, and, in this regard, it calls upon host States to ensure the demilitarization of refugee camps.
13. Moreover, another issue of deep concern to the Member States of the Movement is their ability to respond to humanitarian emergencies, including in the context of armed conflicts, due to the impact of various phenomena; ranging from climate change to the ongoing consequences of the financial and economic crisis, and from food, energy, and water insecurity to the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures, among many others. We must work together to address these challenges and strengthen our resilience, particularly in terms of prevention, preparedness and response.
14. To conclude, we, the 120 countries that comprise the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), would like to pay tribute and recognize the commendable work carried out by the many humanitarian workers, including doctors and other health staff, that carry out their work in the context of armed conflicts, and who operate, in many cases, in adverse conditions on the ground, and even risking their lives on a daily basis, in the pursuit of their noble duty of alleviating the human suffering of those caught in the middle of armed conflicts. Our sincere recognition goes to those men and women who work in favor of life and humankind.

I thank you, Mr. President.