ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES
Permanent Mission of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations

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UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
(69th Session)

Statement

By

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Permanent Representative of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations

Explanation of Vote/Position on

Agenda Item 40
“Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”
(Draft Resolution A/69/L.4)

October 28th, 2014
New York

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Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines voted in favor of Draft Resolution A/69/L.4. We align ourselves fully with the statements made earlier today by the Caribbean Community, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of 77 and China, and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr President,

Previous versions of this resolution have been tabled for the past 22 sessions of the General Assembly, and have been enjoying near-unanimous support over the years. There is no other example of the international community speaking so overwhelmingly, and so consistently. However, the embargo remains stubbornly in place, and its negative impacts have intensified.

The embargo has been and continues to be a violation of International law. It is contrary to the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines takes the floor to re-emphasize our deeply held conviction that the ongoing embargo is a flagrant, massive and systematic violation of the rights of an entire people. Moreover, the embargo against Cuba is not merely a bilateral matter between Cuba and the United States, but due to its extraterritorial nature, it violates the sovereign rights of many other states.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines believes that this blockade is not only illegal but it is morally unsustainable. As he introduced his famed essay entitled "Common Sense", Thomas Paine said, "a long habit of not thinking a thing wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defense of custom. But tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than reason."

And so it is today, with respect to this blockade. Citizens across the United States are joining the international community by increasingly voicing their disapproval and calling for the lifting of the unilateral sanctions.

Opposition to this inhumane policy, Mr President, is now almost universal in nature.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines feels compelled to once again recite the words of President Barack Obama which he made in his inaugural address to the United Nations in 2009, President Obama told us that
"The world must stand together to demonstrate that international law is not an empty promise. ...No one nation can or should try to dominate another nation. No world order that elevates one nation or group of people over another will succeed. ...The traditional division between nations of the south and north makes no sense in an interconnected world. Nor do alignments of nations rooted in the cleavages of a long gone Cold War. The time has come to realize that the old habits and arguments are irrelevant to the challenges faced by our people."

We believe that the time has indeed come for the right thing to be done. And as President Obama enters the final phase of his presidency we hope that his understanding of what is just will soon be accompanied by the requisite action making it so.

Mr President,

The Cuban people have given freely of themselves in a manner that has touched the hearts and souls of the people of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. No dollar amount can adequately reflect the value of their support, solidarity and partnership. Our appreciation cannot be overstated.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines remains unequivocal in our call for the removal of this developmental constraint on our Caribbean neighbor.

I thank you.