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ENGLISH and SPANISH only

VENEZUELA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR HAIFA AISSAMI MADAH
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOLIVARIAN
REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA TO THE OPCW
AT THE NINETY-THIRD SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
IN EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT OF REPLY TO THE STATEMENT BY BOLIVIA,
BRAZIL, CANADA, CHILE, COLOMBIA, GUATEMALA, HONDURAS,
PARAGUAY, AND PERU**

The pronouncements contained in the statement by the self-proclaimed “Lima Group” are an attack upon multilateralism—the heart of international law.

These statements constitute an attack against the sovereignty of Venezuela, an aggression against Venezuela as a fully-fledged member of the OPCW, a free and sovereign country that answers only to its people when it comes to domestic affairs.

The only government that Venezuela has is led by President Nicolás Maduro, elected constitutionally on 20 May 2018 by 68% of the vote in the presence of 120 international observers.

President Nicolás Maduro cannot be replaced in any way other than a free, universal, secret, and direct vote, as stipulated by the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

As such, the only legitimate representation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the OPCW is the one exercised by the Permanent Representation for years now.

We proceed from a principle of peaceful coexistence, the juridical equality of the States, non-intervention in domestic affairs, respect for sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity—all principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

The countries of the self-proclaimed “Lima Group” are looking to contaminate this Organisation by bringing a discussion that aims to draw attention away from the real issues of interest to the OPCW States Parties.

They want us to ignore facts such as the illegitimacy of a number of their own governments, that one of their constituents is a narco-state, that we forget about the assassinations of social leaders, union leaders, farming leaders, and defenders of human rights; that they have made intolerance, racism, and discrimination against the indigenous peoples and xenophobia against immigrants a State policy in these countries that have proclaimed themselves as the “Lima Group”—they cannot lecture anyone.



The Permanent Representation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela requests that this statement be considered an official document of the Ninety-Third Session of the Executive Council and kindly requests that it be published on the Organisation's extranet and website.

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