

## In UN address, Venezuela decries effects of capitalism as enemy of Mother Nature

25 September 2017 – Echoing the sentiments of other speakers from the Latin American and Caribbean, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Venezuela, Jorge Arreaza Montserrat, told the United Nations today that countries in the region are suffering extreme weather and climate catastrophes due to rampant consumption and consumerism in which they played no part.

Calling for adherence to the principle of ‘shared and differentiated’ responsibility when tackling climate change, Jorge Arreaza Montserrat, voiced solidarity with those affected by recent natural disasters, noting that such events had made millions of people victims of “a war they did not choose; this is the war of the developed countries and their capitalist system against Mother Nature.”

Indeed, he said: “Let us not change the climate, let us change the system.” The responsibility must not fall on developing countries alone; it was especially unfair for the United States – the world’s largest emitter – to withdraw from the [Paris Agreement](#).

He went on to say that while the UN is a “noble instrument” intended to serve as a podium for discussion of pressing issues like the State of the planet it nevertheless played host to “arrogant powers” such as the US, which “desecrated, disrespected and offended [this] the house for peace.” He said Venezuela’s people had been directly threatened by President Donald Trump, including by military threats and the imposition of unilateral sanctions.

While Venezuela would always deal with the United States and other nations through mutual respect, it was nevertheless prepared to defend itself “in any way,” he stressed.

As for the situation in his country, Mr. Arreaza said democracy in Venezuela is “active and popular” and the “violence of the opposition” had been eased after the July 30 elections in which Venezuelans went to vote to choose to the members of the National Constituent Assembly.

“Total political peace returned to the country from July 31. Our National Constituent Assembly is [in line] with the rest of the constituted powers,” he explained, calling it an instrument for national dialogue and dealing with the most urgent problems of the country.

[Full statement \(in Spanish\) available here](#)