

"We are realists... we dream the impossible" - Che



# Fire This Time!

## 5 Hours with the Cuban 5

Reflection by Former Cuban President Fidel Castro on his historic first meeting with the Cuban 5 Heroes, political prisoners, after their release from U.S. prisons and return to Cuba.

**O**n February 28, the Cuban leader received the Five anti-terrorists and conversed about the many years of injustice they suffered.

I received them on Saturday, February 28, 73 days after they stepped foot on Cuban soil. Three of them had served 15 long years of their youth breathing in the damp, foul smelling, repugnant air of yankee prison cells, after being convicted by venal judges. The other two, who also attempted to stop the empire's criminal plans against their homeland, were also sentenced to various years of brutal imprisonment.

*continued on page 27*



## Bill C-51: Attempt to Stifle Opposition... Faces Mass Opposition

**B**ill C-51 was introduced in Canadian Parliament on January 30, 2015 by minister of Public Safety Steven Blaney. It was the inevitable next step in the Harper's Conservative government's accelerating campaign of fear and intimidation, and was therefor obviously named the "Anti-Terrorism Bill, 2015". If passed, it would drastically increase the powers of government bodies to spy, disrupt and arrest anyone within purposefully vague and unclear definitions. The justification for these attacks has always been defending Canada from "extremist Muslims", but the rights they are trying to take away are from all poor and working people in Canada. One month after it's introduction, the understanding of the consequences of Bill C-51 are really growing, as well as organizing effort to defeat it.

*continued on page 2*

## "The promotion of equality, including social equity, gender equality and women's empowerment are pending issues on the international agenda"

**M**ariela Castro Espin is a Member of the Cuban Parliament, Director of Cuba's National Center for Sexual Education (CENESEX) and member of the United Nations Working Group for the International Conference on Population and Development. Mariela Castro attended a forum at the UN headquarters in February 2014, the forum was meant to outline goals for 2015 and onward in relation to the eight millennium goals set back in the year 2000. Mariela Castro took the opportunity to highlight gender inequality around the world and to demand concrete action for change.

Fire This Time is printing this speech in honour of the great work of Mariela Castro and to mark International Women's Day on March 8, 2015.

*continued on page 8*





urgency.”

The NDP members of Parliament made a big show of taking their time and slowly voting on a motion to limit

discussion of Bill C-51, but that doesn't take the place of robust debate. Most importantly, where is the input of poor and working people in Canada into this massive bill with huge implications? Where is the public consultation? Why the rush? It might simplify the issue a little, but as many have pointed

out, you are more likely to be killed by a moose than a terror plot in Canada. Given that, there is no need to rush through the discussion or bypass public consultation.

### We are Getting Stronger

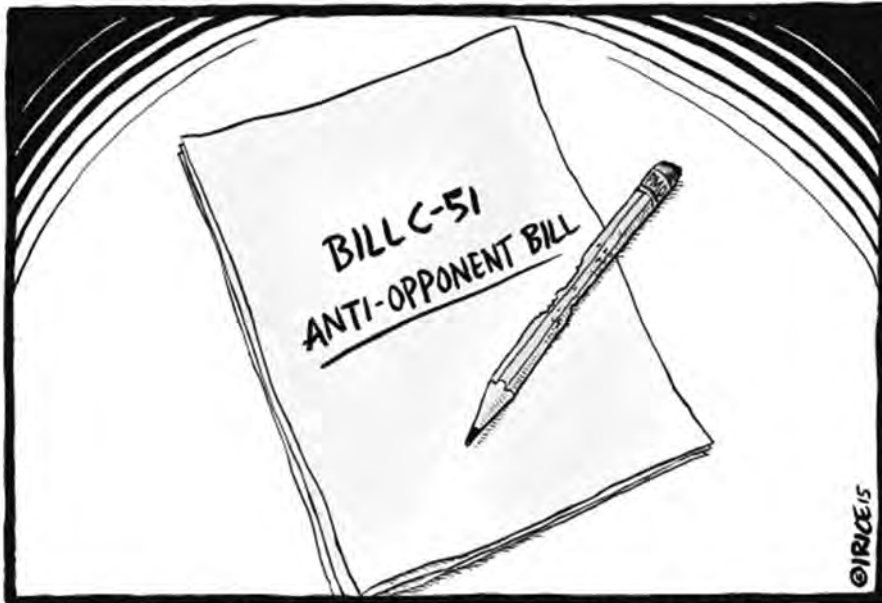
However, despite this failure of leadership among those elected to supposedly represent our interests, a movement is growing among a broad section of people who understand Bill C-51 is something much more sinister than we are being told.

A new coalition of 41 organizations from across Canada, including Amnesty International, the BC Civil Liberties Association, and the National Council for Canadian Muslims has strongly criticized the bill. "Bill C-51 should be of concern to all Canadians as it has the potential to impact on all of our rights given its stunningly far-reaching definitions of what constitutes a threat to Canada's security," said Ihsaan Gardee, Executive Director, National Council of Canadian Muslims.

Over 100 professors of law and related

fields also wrote a long open letter denouncing Bill C-51 which notes, "the Prime Minister during Question Period has been unable or unwilling to give examples of what conduct he would want to see criminalized now

and received numerous supportive honks from passing vehicles. Finally, March 14 has also been announced as a "Day of Action" with communities all across Canada organizing different public demonstrations against Bill C-51.



FIRST DRAFT OF ANTI-TERRORISM BILL

that is not already prohibited by the Criminal Code.”

Almost 50,000 people have so far signed an online petition called, "Reject fear. Stop Stephen Harper's 'secret police' bill"

Most importantly though has been the growing public actions of indigenous nations, nongovernmental and progressives organizations as well as many individuals opposing Bill C-51. In Vancouver alone there are 4 different actions in 2 weeks against the Bill C-51. The second rally against Bill C-51 in Vancouver was more than double the size of the first,

It is important to remember that the human rights exercised today in Canada were not handed down benevolently on them by the Canadian government – they were won through the organization of poor and working people in unions and other mass social movements. Canada didn't even have a Charter of Rights and Freedoms until 1982, 115 years after the official founding of the country! Rights are hard won, and even more difficult to regain after having lost them. Bill C-51 represents

the most wholesale attacks on human rights in Canada in decades, and must be exposed and opposed at every opportunity. All peace and freedom loving people should join the growing organizing effort demanding, "Scrap Bill C-51!"



PRESS RELEASE

# Canadian Rights Groups Decry **BILL C-51**

(26 February, 2015) Rights groups across Canada reacted with alarm and deep concern to the news that the government has brought forward a motion limiting study of Bill C-51, the Anti-Terrorism Act, 2015, by the House of Commons' Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security to only four sessions of two hours each. With the first session devoted to government witnesses, including the Minister of Public Safety, this would leave only six hours for all other potential experts.

Amnesty International Canada, the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, the Canadian Muslim Lawyers Association, the International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group, La Ligue des Droits et Libertés and the National Council of Canadian Muslims all called on the government to withdraw the motion and agree to a schedule of extensive hearings that will ensure that all relevant expertise and perspectives across the country is available to the Committee during the course of its study of Bill C-51.

"Canadians are being told they should embrace Bill C-51 without question because it will make us safer. Overlooked is that this Bill contains deeply worrying challenges to human rights protection, including the unprecedented proposition of empowering Federal Court judges to authorize violations of the Charter of Rights. To cut short the opportunity for these enormously consequential changes to be thoroughly examined is itself a grave human rights concern." Aïex Neve, Secretary General, Amnesty International Canada (English Branch)

"The Committee needs not only to examine what is in the Bill, but what is not in the Bill. It has become clear that a majority of Canadians, including four former Prime Ministers, are deeply concerned that there is no proposal in Bill C-51 to strengthen oversight and review of national security agencies. That critical issue cannot be considered in any meaningful way under this truncated schedule." Carmen Cheung, Senior Counsel, British Columbia Civil Liberties Association

"This is the most significant overhaul of

Canadian laws dealing with national security since 2001. At that time there were 19 sessions in Committee allowing 80 expert witnesses to be heard. It has come forward without any accompanying review of existing laws, policies and resources and an analysis of where they fall short. To allow such little time for scrutiny of its provisions runs counter to the expectation Canadians have that their elected representatives will consider legislation carefully before it is adopted." Sukanya Pillay, General Counsel and Executive Director, Canadian Civil Liberties Association

"Already, lawyers across Canada have raised serious concerns about Bill C-51's compatibility with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and with the rule of law. Cutting back on the time for the Committee to study those concerns and hopefully rectify those deeply problematic aspects of the Bill leaves open instead the prospect of years of time-consuming and expensive court challenges after the fact." Ziyaad Mia, Canadian Muslim Lawyers Association

"Our coalition is made up of 41 organizations across the country. They come from many different sectors and have, over the course of many years, developed varied expertise in a range of issues with respect to national security and civil liberties. They are ready to share that input with MPs and have a legitimate expectation that they should be able to do so. Many will have no opportunity to do so with so little time on offer." Roch Tassé, National Coordinator, International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group

"Bill C-51 is complex and very technical legislation that proposes two entirely new statutes and extensive amendments to three others. Each of those should receive thorough consideration. Four two-hour sessions of Committee study will not even begin to offer MPs an opportunity to grapple with and understand its implications." Nicole Filion, Coordonnatrice de la Ligue des droits et libertés

"Bill C-51 should be of concern to all Canadians as it has the potential to impact on all of our rights given its stunningly far-reaching definitions of what constitutes a threat to Canada's security. As we have learned from past and recent experiences, without robust oversight, review and redress mechanisms security agencies have abused the powers ceded to them. Given the disproportionate impact of anti-terrorism legislation in recent years on Canadian Muslims, these new proposals are of particular interest in our community. Such limited time for study by the Committee offers scant opportunity for those views to be meaningfully shared with Parliamentarians." Ihsaan Gardee, Executive Director, National Council of Canadian Muslims

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# GREECE AND THE LATIN AMERICAN PATH

By Manuel Yepe\*

When Alexis Tsipras was appointed prime minister of Greece, as a main result of the victory of the radical leftist coalition Syriza which he led in the parliamentary elections of January 25, some political scientists in Latin America and other countries saw certain similarities between the ongoing political events in Greece and those in Latin America in recent decades.

These elections in Greece were very important for those opposed to the anti-social policies of the Troika (European Economic Commission, IMF and European Central Bank), because a victory of Syriza would mean a strong questioning of the adjustment/austerity policies implemented in Greece and the whole European Union.

With 36.34% of the vote, Syriza won 149 seats in Parliament, surpassing the conservative New Democracy party led by the then-acting prime minister, Antonis Samaras, who won 27.81% of the vote and 76 parliamentary seats.

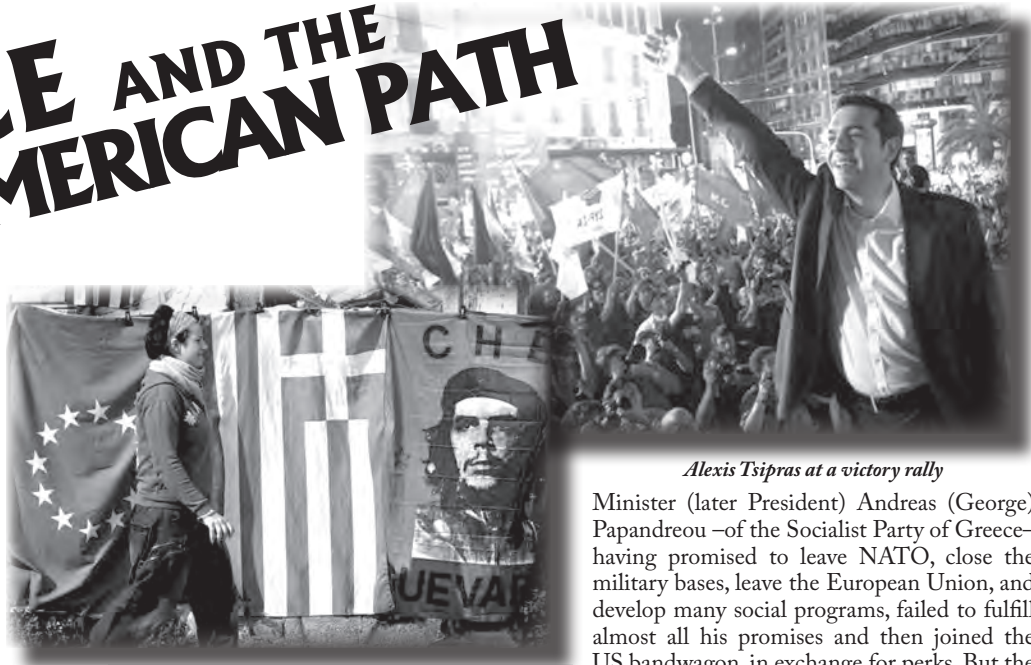
The Syriza and Anel (Independent Greeks) parties, which won 13 seats with 4.75% of the vote, agreed to form a coalition government which was announced by Anel leader, Panos Kammenos, and Syriza leader, now Prime Minister, Alexis Tsipras, after a brief meeting between the two.

The Greek parliament has 300 seats and 162 of them are now held by the brand new ruling coalition.

The Atarsya party, to the left of Syriza, won 6% of the vote –the same proportion as that obtained by the Greek Communist Party– while the Trotskyist Workers Revolutionary Party (EEK) obtained 0.3%. The left in Greece has thus become the national electoral majority.

Obviously, the Greek people voted against the policy of starvation imposed on their country by the European Union for the benefit of international bank creditors and to avoid the bankruptcy of the Greek banks.

Almost a decade of adjustments imposed by



*Alexis Tsipras at a victory rally*

Minister (later President) Andreas (George) Papandreou –of the Socialist Party of Greece– having promised to leave NATO, close the military bases, leave the European Union, and develop many social programs, failed to fulfill almost all his promises and then joined the US bandwagon, in exchange for perks. But the thing is that the Greek people would hardly put up with another similar felony!

Those who compare the Greek phenomenon and its effects throughout Europe with the political earthquake which, in a few years, has made Latin America the geographical area most densely governed by progressive leftist political movements, refer to what appears to be looming in Europe: popular movements outside the traditional parties becoming powerful political forces and altering the balance of power. Spain, Italy, UK, France and even Germany and the Scandinavian countries can attest to this.

February 11, 2015.

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A CubaNews translation. Edited by Walter Lippmann

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European big capital and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has provoked an unprecedented humanitarian crisis in Greece, and a desperate economic situation in Europe.

Alexis Tsipras' electoral commitments are strong and clear. He would help the poorest families; provide shelter, electricity, food and free health care for the victims of the austerity programs; end privatization; re-hire laid-off public employees, and implement a package of social measures contained in the Thessaloniki agenda which was the centerpiece of his electoral campaign.

But once in government, Syriza is facing serious difficulties to honor their electoral promises to solve the social problems which caused misery, and simultaneously fulfill their proclaimed pledge to uphold their commitment with the governments and banks in Europe to keep Greece in the European Union.

While Syriza has avoided presenting itself as an alternative to the capitalist system as a whole, its electoral victory is an expression of the wide field of development that the global crisis has opened for the revolutionary left in the world.

What happened in Greece in recent years is a clear example of how the structural adjustment policies of the Troika lead to social ruin. They have applied extreme neo-liberal policies in terms of privatization and cuts in public spending on health and education, among other austerity measures. All of these were aimed at creating conditions that would guarantee more business and profit for entrepreneurs and serve the interests of banks and creditors.

Important political scientists have, however, recalled that in Greece in the 1980s Prime



# GRECIA Y LA SENDA LATINOAMERICANA

\* EN ESPAÑOL \*

Por Manuel Yepe\*

Cuando Alexis Tsipras fue nombrado primer ministro de Grecia como principal resultado de la victoria de la coalición de izquierda radical Syriza que éste encabezó en las elecciones parlamentarias del 25 de enero, algunos politólogos en América Latina y en otros países del mundo apreciaron eventuales similitudes entre los sucesos políticos en desarrollo en Grecia con los latinoamericanos en décadas recientes.

Estas elecciones en Grecia eran muy importantes para quienes se pronunciaban contra las políticas antisociales de la Troika (Comisión Económica Europea, FMI y Banco Central Europeo), porque una victoria de Syriza significaría un cuestionamiento raigal de las políticas de ajuste que se vienen aplicando en Grecia y en el conjunto de la Unión Europea.

Con el 36,34% de los votos, Syriza obtuvo 149 escaños en el Parlamento superando al partido conservador Nueva Democracia encabezado por el entonces primer ministro en funciones Antonis Samarás que logró el 27,81% de los votos y 76 diputados.

Syriza y el partido Anel (Griegos Independientes), que obtuvo 13 escaños con el 4,75% de los votos, acordaron la formación de un gobierno de coalición que fue anunciado por Panos Kammenos, líder de Anel, con el líder de Syriza y ahora Primer Ministro, Alexis Tsipras, tras una rápida reunión entre ambos.

El parlamento griego tiene 300 escaños y de ellos 162 están ahora en manos de la flamante coalición



Los defensores de Syriza en un protesta



Pensionistas Grecia protestan

gobernante.

El frente Atarsya, que se ubica a la izquierda de Syriza, obtuvo el 6% de los votos -igual proporción que la obtenida por el Partido Comunista de Grecia- y el trotskista Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (EEK), obtuvo el 0.3 %. El conjunto de la izquierda de Grecia se ha convertido con ello en la mayoría nacional electoral. Obviamente la ciudadanía griega se pronunció contra la política de hambre impuesta a su país por la Unión Europea en beneficio de los acreedores bancarios internacionales y para evitar la quiebra de los bancos griegos.

Casi una década de ajustes impuestos por el gran capital europeo y el Fondo Monetario Internacional (FMI) han provocado una crisis humanitaria sin precedentes en Grecia y una situación económica desesperante en toda Europa.

Los compromisos electorales de Alexis Tsipras habían sido contundentes y claros. Ayudaría a las familias más pobres; ofrecería techo, electricidad, comida y sanidad gratuita a las víctimas de la austeridad; paralizaría las privatizaciones; serían re-contratados los empleados públicos despedidos, y se implementará una batería de medidas sociales consignadas en el llamado programa de Salónica que fue el eje de su campaña electoral.

Pero una vez en el desempeño del gobierno en Atenas, Syriza se enfrenta a serias dificultades para hacer honor a sus promesas electorales de resolver los problemas sociales causantes de la miseria y simultáneamente con su proclamada decisión de cumplir el compromiso con los gobiernos y bancos de Europa de mantener al país helénico en la Unión Europea.

Si bien Syriza ha evitado presentarse como una alternativa al sistema capitalista en su conjunto, su victoria electoral es

expresión del amplio campo de desarrollo que la crisis mundial ha abierto para la izquierda revolucionaria mundial.

Lo ocurrido en Grecia en los últimos años es un ejemplo más claro de cómo las políticas de ajuste de la Troika llevan a la ruina social. Se han aplicado las políticas neoliberales extremas en materia de privatizaciones y recortes de gastos públicos en sanidad y educación, entre otros. Todo ello dirigido a crear las condiciones que garanticen más negocios y beneficios a los empresarios y favorecer los intereses de la banca y los acreedores.

Importantes politólogos han hecho recordar, sin embargo, que en la Grecia de los años 1980 el Primer Ministro (luego Presidente) Andreas (George) Papandreu, del Partido Socialista de Grecia, habiendo prometido dejar la OTAN, cerrar las bases militares, salir de la Unión Europea y muchos avances sociales, incumplió casi todas sus promesas y se sumó al carro de Estados Unidos a cambio de prebendas. ¡Solo que difícilmente el pueblo griego soportaría otra análoga felonía! Quienes comparan el fenómeno griego y sus efectos en toda Europa con el terremoto político que en pocos años ha hecho de la América Latina la zona geográfica más densamente gobernada por movimientos políticos progresistas de izquierda, se refieren a lo que parece avvicinarsen en el viejo continente: movimientos populares ajenos a los partidos tradicionales que se convierten en poderosas fuerzas políticas y alteran la correlación de fuerzas. España, Italia, Reino Unido, Francia y hasta en Alemania y los países de Escandinavia pueden dar fe de ello.

Febrero 11 de 2015.

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# ON STRIKE FOR WORKPLACE SAFETY!



## U.S. OIL WORKERS DEFEND US ALL!

*By Alison Bodine*

Driving down a busy highway just outside Los Angeles, California takes you right alongside the Tesoro Los Angeles refinery, capable of refining 363,000 barrels of crude oil per day. Drive by in the last month and you might notice that on top of the usual bright lights, tall smoke stacks and large tanks there is something a bit different. The slogans “Never Again,” “Safe Refineries Save Lives,” and “Fair

Contract Now” have been projected on the sides of the tanks for all passing by to see. This visual display periodically accompanies the picketing oil workers, who walked off the job on in early February as part of U.S. wide strike actions. On February 1, 2015 oil workers from seven refineries in the U.S. went on strike for improved working conditions, primarily better workplace safety. By the fourth week of the strike, 5 other refineries, a co-generation plant and two petrochemical plants had joined the Unites Steelworkers (USW) unfair labour practice strike, which includes plants in Texas, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Louisiana and Washington. In total, there are now nearly 7,000 oil workers on strike at 15 plants, which are responsible for 20% of the crude oil refining capacity of the U.S.

“We all go to work to make a living, but in making a living we all want to come home.”  
- Tracy Scott, oil refinery worker, currently on leave to work for the union as a staff representative at the Tesoro Golden Eagle Refinery in an interview for InTheseTimes.com.

The strikes began after negotiations between the USW and Shell Oil Co., who is bargaining as a representative of many of the world's major oil companies targeted in the strikes, failed to produce a new contract before the old contracts expired. Health and safety is the major concern of the oil workers, who have seen worsening conditions over

the last many years, in an already dangerous industry. Gross neglect by companies and management includes: the refusal to replace old equipment, the under-staffing of plants resulting in unacceptable levels of fatigue in workers, and a general decline in the number of experienced, unionized maintenance workers, as oil companies move towards contracting out more and more of the every day upkeep of refineries and plants. Take, for example, the April 10, 2010 explosion and fire at the Tesoro Anacortes plant in Washington State, which killed 7 workers and injured 180. This tragedy occurred when a heat exchanger failed during a maintenance operation - the heat exchanger was nearly 40 years old!

Over the last month, the strikes have continued to spread and workers have held the line because big oil has refused to bargain over the fundamental right of a person to go to work and not risk their lives, and the safety of their communities, for a pay cheque. This is despite the fact that in the year 2013 alone, the top five oil companies in world made a combined \$93 billion in profits.

### **“An injury to one is an injury to all”**

During the month-long strike, workers out on the picket lines have not been alone. Since the walkouts began, communities and workers have come together, both in the U.S. and internationally, to show support for the strike actions. This included a “National day of Action for Safe Refineries, Secure Jobs and Healthy Communities,” called by the USW on February 7. On this day rallies and marches took place at over 50 locations around the U.S. There have also been international delegations and messages of support from many unions around the world.

As poor and working people in Canada, we need to understand the significance of this continued action by nearly 7,000 USW workers in the U.S. By taking a stand for their health and safety, up against one of the

largest industries in the world, oil workers in the U.S. are also taking a stand for the health and safety of all of us. Their victory in defense of their basic rights would be a victory for all workers, who would see that unity in struggle and in strike action can result in victory. Let us not forget that in 2013, 902 workers in Canada lost their lives due to work-related injury or illness, and this is a minimum number based only on specific statistics and definitions compiled by the Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada.

Furthermore, it is especially important that people in the environmental movement come together in support of striking oil workers. Oil workers are in fact, the very people capable of creating fundamental change in the oil industry. They are also the workers that every day prevent toxic spills and gas releases from destroying our land and communities further. Through this strike for better and safer working conditions they are fighting to preserve their ability to operate plants in a way that prevents leaks, fires and explosions. They are the workers that the environmental movement needs to march on together in the fight to save this planet from destruction.

As the world capitalist economic crisis deepens, health and safety at the workplace in every major industry, everywhere around the world, is going to decline. In an effort to constantly increase super-profits, industries are going push for more and more cuts to workplace safety, wages and benefits, and expansion of the contracting out of labour. That it is why it is so important for us to defend these rights today and support the striking oil workers in the U.S. Continue following the strike at [www.oilbargaining.org](http://www.oilbargaining.org)

Support and join the striking U.S. oil workers!  
Victory to the striking U.S oil workers!



## “The promotion of equality, including social equity, gender equality and women’s empowerment are pending issues on the international agenda”

*Continued from cover*

*This speech is reprinted from Mariela Castro’s blog: <http://blogmarielaCastro.com>*

Mr. Co-Chair,

My delegation fully endorses the speech given by the representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia in the name of the G-77.

The promotion of equality, including social equity, gender equality and women’s empowerment are pending issues of the international agenda that are urgently needed.

We cannot speak about sustainable development when more than a billion people live under extreme poverty, while an unfair distribution of income increases. There will not be sustainable development if inequality lasts in the international economic relations. We cannot achieve sustainable development without a real political will directed to put an end to the deep gaps between rich and poor countries, if the existing gaps within each nation are not also eliminated, if there is not an agreed action to eradicate poverty that mainly affects women, girls and boys, young people and other vulnerable groups. There will not be sustainable development if the right for development is not guaranteed in most of the UN member states.

Ending inequality from the national and international scenarios must be sustainable development goal. Its specific targets and means for implementation must be an essential part of this group’s precise recommendations.

As mentioned in the presentations by other speakers that we deeply appreciated, the promotion of social equity and women’s equality must be acknowledged as fundamental human rights. The right to life without exclusion, to health services and to free education, I insist, free of charge and

with the needed quality, it’s an essential and indisputable condition for development. If not, it cannot be considered a right.

Facts speak for themselves: everyday 800 women die due to preventable pregnancy and child birth complications; 80 million unwanted pregnancies, 30 million unplanned births and 20 million unsafe abortions are reported, mainly in developing countries where one in three girls under 18 years old also marries without her consent. Every year 16 million girls and adolescents give birth in countries with low and medium incomes, where maternal death is the main cause of death of this age group, while in other nations femicide is among the principal causes of women’s death.

In order to change the current dramatic situation, we should promote a new development agenda that includes:

- a) Sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- b) Women and girls rights and empowerment, as well as gender equality and ending violence towards them.
- c) Adolescents and young people’s empowerment, including the access to a comprehensive sexual education and the related services.
- d) Programmatic and financial means that accelerate the implementation of the pending agenda of Cairo’s Action Program. So, whenever the question of what strategy we must follow emerges, I always recall that we have this program. Its pending issues must be targets to achieve with specific indicators.

Mr. Co-Chair:

A comprehensive sexual education is a resource for the full emancipation of the

human being that contributes to their formation as individual subjects to the law, on the basis of the demystification of dominant judgments and prejudices that exist in every society and that are the reasons of why it must be inclusive.

It’s inadmissible that in the XXI Century women rights continue to be violated and that after so many speeches, conventions, and international consensus, in most countries women receive lower wages than men by doing the same job; that they are forced to choose between death and jail when they need to terminate an unwanted pregnancy. That situation shows the permanent patriarchal domain that does not recognize and violates our capacity and fundamental human right of deciding over our own lives.

Women are no longer willing to be condemned to death by burning at the stake for heresy and witchcraft, using euphemisms of contemporary language expressed in laws and policies that violate our rights and undermine the social transformation processes.

In order to change women’s condition, we must change men’s because gender is a related category. Both women and men should benefit from educational actions that break apart the dominant mechanisms that resist changing.

We cannot advance from isolated initiatives from individuals, institutions or countries. We cannot also speak about family’s responsibility as an abstract, if it continues to reproduce the same patriarchal domination models.

If there is not a policy that establishes new values for the change in the intergender and intergenerational power relationships within the family, we are not contributing to women’s, girls’ and young people’s human rights.

If we honestly pretend that the post 2015 development agenda contributes solutions to the social equity, gender equality and women’s empowerment problems, from an indivisible and interrelated human rights perspective, member states will have to express their political will in concrete changing actions internally and globally.

Thank you very much.





# “La promoción de la igualdad, incluida la equidad social, la igualdad de género y el empoderamiento de las mujeres son temas pendientes de la agenda internacional”

**\* EN ESPAÑOL \***

*Mariela Castro Espín es un miembro del Parlamento cubano, Directora del Centro Nacional de Educación Sexual (GENESEX) y miembro del Grupo de Trabajo de las Naciones Unidas para la Conferencia Internacional sobre la Población y el Desarrollo de Cuba. Mariela Castro asistió a un foro en la sede de la ONU en febrero de 2014, el foro se pretende delinear las metas para 2015 y en adelante en relación con los ocho objetivos del milenio establecidos allá por el año 2000. Mariela Castro aprovechó la oportunidad para destacar la desigualdad de género en todo el mundo y exigir acciones concretas para el cambio.*

*Fire This Time está imprimiendo este discurso en honor de la gran obra de Mariela Castro y para conmemorar el Día Internacional de la Mujer el 8 de marzo de 2015.*

*Este discurso se reproduce en el blog de Mariela Castro: <http://blogmarielacastro.com>*

Señor presidente:

Mi delegación endosa plenamente la intervención formulada por el representante del estado Plurinacional de Bolivia en nombre del grupo de los 77 más China.

La promoción de la igualdad, incluida la equidad social, la igualdad de género y el empoderamiento de las mujeres son temas pendientes de la agenda internacional que apremian.

No podremos hablar de desarrollo sostenible cuando más de mil millones de personas viven en la extrema pobreza, a la vez que se mantiene y crece la desigual distribución del ingreso. No lo habrá si perdura la desigualdad en las relaciones económicas internacionales. No se alcanzará sin una real voluntad política encaminada a eliminar las profundas brechas entre países pobres y ricos, si no se eliminan las existentes al interior de cada país, si no existe una acción concertada para erradicar la pobreza, que afecta esencialmente a las mujeres, las niñas y los niños, a las personas jóvenes y otros grupos vulnerables. No habrá desarrollo si no se garantiza el derecho al desarrollo de la mayoría de los estados miembros de las Naciones Unidas.

La eliminación de la desigualdad en los ámbitos nacionales e internacionales, debe convertirse en un objetivo de desarrollo sostenible. Sus metas específicas y medios de implementación deben ser parte esencial de las recomendaciones concretas de este grupo.

Como bien se ha señalado en las presentaciones de los panelistas que agradecemos profundamente, la

promoción de la equidad social y de la igualdad de la mujer pasan, en primer lugar, por su reconocimiento como derechos humanos fundamentales. El derecho, sin exclusión alguna, a la vida, a los servicios de salud y educación gratuitos, insisto, gratuitos y de calidad, es una condición inapelable e imprescindible para el desarrollo. De no ser así, no se trataría de un derecho.

Los hechos hablan por sí solos: Mueren, cada día, 800 mujeres por complicaciones prevenibles durante el embarazo y el parto; se reportan 80 millones de embarazos no deseados, 30 millones de nacimientos no planificados y 20 millones de abortos inseguros, principalmente en países en desarrollo, donde también una de cada tres niñas menores de 18 años contrae matrimonio sin consentimiento propio. Cada año, 16 millones de niñas y adolescentes dan a luz en países de ingresos bajos y medios, donde la mortalidad materna es la principal causa de defunción de este grupo étnico, mientras que en otros, el femicidio constituye una de las primeras causas de muerte de las mujeres.

Para cambiar la dramática situación actual debemos promover una nueva agenda de desarrollo que incluya:

- a) Salud y derechos sexuales y reproductivos
- b) Derechos y empoderamiento de las mujeres y las niñas, así como la igualdad de género incluida la eliminación de la violencia contra ellas,
- c) Derechos y empoderamiento de los adolescentes y jóvenes, incluido el acceso a la educación integral de la sexualidad y a los servicios relacionados
- d) Medios programáticos y financieros que aceleren la implementación de la agenda inconclusa del Programa de Acción de El Cairo. Por tanto, cuando en este marco emerge la pregunta sobre qué estrategia debemos seguir, me permito recordar que contamos con ese programa. Sus temas pendientes deben ser metas a cumplir con indicadores específicos.

Asimismo, la Agenda de Desarrollo después del 2015 deberá atender y dar respuesta a las necesidades especiales de las personas discapacitadas y a las de la tercera edad.

Señor presidente:

La educación integral de la sexualidad constituye un recurso para la emancipación plena del ser humano, que contribuye a su formación como sujeto de derecho, sobre la base de la desmitificación de los juicios y prejuicios dominadores que persisten en todas las sociedades y debe por tanto, ser inclusiva.



**Mariela Castro Espín**  
miembro del Parlamento cubano

Es inadmisibles que en pleno siglo XXI, los derechos de las mujeres sigan siendo ultrajados y que después de tantos discursos, convenciones y consensos internacionales, en la mayoría de los países las mujeres perciban un salario inferior al de los hombres por igual trabajo; que se vean obligadas a elegir entre la muerte y la cárcel cuando necesitan interrumpir un embarazo no deseado. Esta situación expresa el permanente dominio patriarcal que desconoce y violenta nuestra capacidad y derecho humano fundamental a decidir sobre nuestras vidas.

Las mujeres no estamos dispuestas a que se nos siga condenando a la hoguera por herejes y por brujas, utilizando eufemismos del lenguaje contemporáneo expresados en leyes y políticas que conculcan nuestros derechos y obstaculizan los procesos de transformación social.

Para cambiar la condición de la mujer hay que cambiar la condición del hombre porque el género es una categoría relacional. Mujeres y hombres deben beneficiarse de acciones educativas que desarticulen los mecanismos de dominación resistentes al cambio.

No podemos avanzar desde iniciativas aisladas de personas, instituciones o países. Tampoco podemos hablar de la responsabilidad de la familia en abstracto, si esta sigue siendo reproductora de los mismos modelos de dominación patriarcal.

Si no hay una política que instituya nuevos valores para el cambio en las relaciones de poder intergeneracionales e intergeneracionales dentro de la familia, no estamos haciendo ninguna contribución a los derechos humanos de las mujeres, las niñas y las personas jóvenes.

Si honestamente pretendemos que la agenda de desarrollo post 2015 aporte soluciones a los problemas de equidad social, igualdad de género y empoderamiento de las mujeres, desde una óptica de derechos humanos indivisibles e interrelacionados, los estados miembros tendremos que expresar voluntad política en acciones concretas de cambio al interior de nuestros países y a escala universal.

Finalmente la delegación cubana ratifica su apoyo al Consenso de Montevideo, adoptado en la primera reunión de la Conferencia Regional de Población y desarrollo de América Latina y el Caribe, que constituye una importante referencia para la formulación de objetivos específicos de desarrollo sostenible sobre estas problemáticas.

Muchas gracias

By Aaron Mercredi

# Fires on Reserves

In the early morning of February 17<sup>th</sup>, two children died in a house fire on the Makwa Sahgaiehcan First Nation in Northern Saskatchewan. Two-year old Harley and 18-month old Haley Cheenanow were asleep when a fire overtook their house and when no fire department showed up to fight it, their father was the one who carried their bodies out as he tried to rescue them. Throughout this ordeal, the volunteer fire department of nearby Loon Lake did not respond to the fire because the First Nation allegedly owed the village just over \$3,000. This story represents the very real crisis that reserves and Native communities across Canada are facing when it comes to basic infrastructure, security and their well-being and the failure of the government

## Part of a Bigger Crisis

of homes on reserves across the country, there is no other option for families and communities.

The crisis of fires on reserves is part of the overall crisis facing reserve life and comes down to government neglect. We are witnessing the same neglect that caused the evacuation of Kashechewan and Attawapiskat. If these

a similarly fire on the St. Theresa Point First Nation.

These examples pair up with the official data on fires on reserves. According to a 2010 Strategy on Fire Protection by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC),

deaths from

fires on First Nations reserves are 10 times higher than in similar off-reserve communities and fires, in general, are twice as common on reserves than off.

Fire services are not just about fighting fires, but also about applying codes, home safety, prevention programs and general awareness, and many First Nations would be placed in a



*Housing on Attawapiskat First Nation*



*Children on Attawapiskat First Nation*

of Canada to solve them. This story is also not a new one for reserves in Saskatchewan. In January, a young woman and a 10-year-old boy died in a house fire on the English River First Nation and in December 2014, a woman and her 10-year-old grandson died in a blaze at Ahtahkakoop First Nation. The same can be said for reserves across the country. In October 2014, the poor firefighting capability on reserves in Manitoba was given the spotlight when a baby, Errabella Harper, died in

difficult situation under the current system. The majority of homes on First Nations reserves do not meet codes and there is no funding to improve them. With the current crisis of overcrowding



*Fire truck on Makwa Sahgaiehcan First Nation*

# Proyecto de ley C-51 ATERRORIZANDO LA DISIDENCIA

**\* EN ESPAÑOL \***

**Por Thomas Davies**

**Traducido por**

**Macarena Cataldo Hernandez**

Recientemente, en el parlamento ha sido presentado el proyecto de ley C-51 el cual lleva el título de “Poderes investigativos para el siglo 21”. Tal proyecto transformará a Canadá en un estado policial, ampliado considerablemente las facultades del servicio Canadiense de Seguridad e Inteligencia (CSIS) entre otros entes gubernamentales. Con el C-51 será posible reducir la cantidad de pruebas necesarias para lograr la detención y arresto de ciudadanos, violando directamente los actuales derechos legales; aumentará también los procesos judiciales secretos y expandirá arbitrariamente listas como las “No-fly lists” (lista de ciudadanos con restricción a viajar en avión).

A pesar de la clara restricción a los derechos civiles, el discurso del gobierno argumenta que esta ley será usada solamente para combatir el “yihadismo violento” en supuesta “guerra” contra Canadá. Sin embargo que aceptemos este discurso sería un gran error, ya que este proyecto está dirigido contra cada uno de nosotros y seremos víctimas de éste.

Es sabido que desde los ataques del 11 de septiembre del 2001 a los Estados Unidos, el gobierno canadiense ha librado una continua y creciente lucha contra la población musulmana, promoviendo racismo e islam-fobia. Esta es la única manera que han encontrado para poder justificar el injustificable derroche de vidas y dinero, producto de su participación en guerras como las de Afganistán, Irak, Libia y Mali. Pero no sólo buscan justificar la guerra contra la población islámica, también han usado convenientemente este discurso racista para pelear la guerra contra los ciudadanos canadienses, reduciendo las libertades civiles en Canadá, comenzando con la ya estigmatizada comunidad musulmana. Un ejemplo de esto son:

- El uso de “certificados de seguridad” para detener indefinidamente a residentes no-ciudadanos sin necesidad alguna de presentar cargos, usando pruebas secretas en un proceso cuasi judicial. Basta decir que desde el 11-

09-2001, cinco residentes musulmanes permanecen arrestados sin cargos conocidos ni debido proceso judicial. Hassan Amrei, Adil Charkaoui, Mohamed Harkat, Mahmud Jaballah y Mahammad Zeki Mahjou llevan más de una década encarcelados, sin haber sido ninguno condenado por delito alguno.

- En Agosto del 2014, se usó el argumento de que se había descubierto una “célula durmiente” de Al-Qaeda, para poder así arrestar a 24 estudiantes musulmanes en Toronto. Cabe destacar que fue la RCMP en realizar estos ataques en conjunto con el Departamento de Ciudadanía e Inmigración de Canadá (CIC), y que todas las acusaciones de terrorismo contra los detenidos fueron retiradas dos semanas después. Los 24 hombres estuvieron presos en una cárcel de máxima seguridad fuera de Toronto de dos a cinco meses.

- El gobierno canadiense ha permitido al Instituto de Seguridad de Comunicaciones de Canadá (CSEC), el espiar correos electrónicos, mensajes de texto y llamadas telefónicas, cada vez que se esté comunicando con una persona fuera de Canadá. Por tal motivo, la Asociación de Libertades Civiles de B.C. se encuentra actualmente demandando al gobierno.

El proyecto C-51 no es un proyecto aislado, es claramente parte de un plan en curso para convertir a Canadá en un estado policial contra ciudadanos como todos nosotros. Sin embargo, esta vez el plan del gobierno ha ido muy lejos. Tan lejos ha ido que hasta incluso el periódico conservador “National Post” público una editorial bastante crítica al respecto: “A los canadienses se les ha dado muy poca información para poder decidir si la amenaza justifica las medidas propuestas por el proyecto de ley C-51. Esto es muy importante considerando que el C-51, prohíbe el “promover” y “proponer” el terrorismo, sin definir claramente estos términos”.

El gobierno canadiense está atacando a los musulmanes, inmigrantes y refugiados, y creando espacios para criminalizar las opiniones discrepantes. Existe también otro importante elemento a considerar: El esfuerzo por dividir a los trabajadores, entre blancos “canadienses” y no blancos, inmigrantes y refugiados, en un esfuerzo global para reducir los salarios.

Los “no blancos” que viven en Canadá han pasado de ser un 5% de la población en 1980 al 16,2% en 2006, y se estima que esta cifra alcanzará un 32% el año 2030. De acuerdo con el Centro Canadiense de Políticas Alternativas (CCPA), estos trabajadores ganan en media \$ 0.82 menos por cada dólar que un trabajador blanco gana. Las mujeres “no blancas” ganan solo \$0.556 por cada dólar ganado por un trabajador blancos.

También, como hemos informado anteriormente “In Fire This Time” el gobierno canadiense cambió la Ley de Trabajadores Temporales Extranjeros para permitir que los empleadores paguen a los trabajadores migrantes más calificados 15% menos, respecto a las tasas de salario prevalentes, y los empleadores están capacitados para acelerar el proceso de obtención de visas sus trabajadores temporales extranjeros, reduciendo el tiempo de 12 a 14 semanas a sólo 10 días. En la actualidad hay más de 300.000 trabajadores temporales extranjeros en Canadá, representando el triple respecto a una década atrás.

Esto se utiliza para tratar de crear un clima de racismo y división el cual es beneficioso para el gobierno canadiense y sus amigos de negocios, Los cuales impulsan la reducción de salarios de todo el mundo, especialmente a los trabajadores mejor pagados, para maximizar ganancias y así sobrevivir a la actual crisis económica mundial.

Alto a la guerra dentro y fuera del país!

El gobierno canadiense pasó a la ofensiva con la introducción del proyecto de ley C-51.

Sin embargo, se puede condenar tanto el ataque de Ottawa, como las políticas del gobierno de Canadá, las cuales han terminado con la vida de decenas de miles de personas en Afganistán y otros lugares, además de generar un sombrío panorama para el país. El proyecto de ley C-51 no guarda ninguna relación con la lucha contra el terrorismo. Si no mas bien se relaciona con la restricción de nuestros derechos, silenciar los disidentes y la creación de divisiones. La unidad de todos los pobres y trabajadores, sin distinción de raza, sexo o religión, es crucial para la defensa de nuestras vidas y subsistencia, en casa y en el extranjero, contra los ataques del gobierno canadiense.

Tira a la basura el proyecto de ley C-51!

# INTERVIEW WITH **MERLI VANEGAS**

CONSUL GENERAL OF THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA IN VANCOUVER

**Interview by Thomas Davies**

**Fire This Time (FTT):** In the second year since the passing of Chavez, what do you think the legacy of Chavez is for revolutionaries in Venezuela and around the world?

Today we can say that the legacy of our Eternal Comandante is beating in the hearts of the Venezuelan people, in those sectors that were historically excluded and doomed to poverty, but whose millions of lives have been dignified by the social policies of the Bolivarian revolution. Comandante Chávez not only honoured his pledge to our people by meeting long disregarded basic needs such as health, education and free housing, among others, but he also contributed to materialize the People's Power mandated in the first Constitution in history to be ever voted on by all Venezuelans. Along with paying the social debt, raising awareness on the key role of the People's Power is one of the huge contributions Chávez passed on to his people.

Comandante Chávez's greatness is not in question, not just for Venezuela but also for the oppressed peoples of the world to which he brought hope through his vision of integration and unity, along with his anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist thinking. As a result, he contributed to the creation of new regional organizations such as ALBA,



MERCOSUR, CELAC, UNASUR and PETROCARIBE, meant to help eradicate inequalities and poverty thanks to new integration mechanisms based on respect and cooperation between peoples.

**FTT:** How do you think the relationship between the US and Venezuela has developed since the death of Chávez?

Our government has always been respectful of the right to self-determination, every nation's sovereignty and all due international treaties and agreements. However, we have seen that the government of the United States has taken unilateral actions against Venezuelan officials, and President Maduro has denounced how this government meddles in our internal affairs. That is why, on behalf of his people and the Bolivarian Government, and proud of our history, President Nicolás Maduro has demanded once again that the government of the United States respect Venezuela's Independence and Sovereignty. Finally, it is important to emphasize measures announced by the Venezuelan Government regarding the enforcement of visa requirements to US citizens travelling

to Venezuela, refusal of visa rights for US politicians such as George Bush, among others, and the reduction of the US Embassy's staff in Venezuela.

**FTT:** What do you think about the state of revolutionary development in Venezuela today?

Since Comandante Chávez passed away, the Bolivarian Revolution has been permanently under attack through media, economic and political war tactics by fascist sectors in the Venezuelan opposition. They react to their inability to attain power through elections by resorting to violent agendas, including staple product hoarding and shortages induced by private economic sectors. Such forces are supported by the corporate media, which blows these events out of proportion in order to cause discomfort and distress in the people, expecting that they hold the government accountable. On February 12th, a new coup d'état against President Nicolás Maduro's administration was thwarted. It involved a group of retired officers of Venezuela's Aviation Force, some political opposition leaders and the collaboration of the US Embassy in Venezuela. The plan consisted of an airstrike on a number of public and state-run facilities, intending to create chaos and pave the way for a provisional government. However, all of this has served to strengthen the Revolutionary Bolivarian Government supported by the majority of Venezuelans, and thus faithfully follow Comandante Chávez's command during his last speech: Unity, Fight, Battle and Victory.

**FTT:** What message do you have for the progressive community in solidarity and in defence of the Bolivarian Revolution of Venezuela?

Our message to the progressive community is one of solidarity with the struggle of the peoples to attain justice, peace and put an end to inequalities. We hope to stay united and firm in the battle against imperialism and colonialism. The Revolutionary Venezuelan Government welcomes all the expressions of support and solidarity we have received from the social movements around the world, rejecting both the systematic aggressions staged by the fascist Venezuelan opposition and the imperialist interference in our nation.



# ENTREVISTA CON MERLI VANEGAS

## CÓNSUL GENERAL DE LA REPÚBLICA BOLIVARIANA DE VENEZUELA EN VANCOUVER

\* EN ESPAÑOL \*

Entrevista por Thomas Davies

**Fire This Time (FTT):** En el segundo año desde la siembra de Comandante Chávez, ¿qué cree usted es el legado de Chávez para los revolucionarios en Venezuela y en todo el mundo?

Hoy decimos que el legado de nuestro Comandante Eterno mantiene su vigencia en el pueblo venezolano, en esos sectores que siempre fueron históricamente excluidos y quienes, por millones, permanecieron sumergidos en la pobreza, pero que gracias a las políticas sociales de la Revolución Bolivariana, gozan ahora de una vida digna. El Comandante Chávez no sólo le cumplió al pueblo saldando la deuda social de necesidades básicas tales como la salud, la educación y la vivienda gratuita, entre otras, sino que también contribuyó a convertir en realidad el Poder Popular consagrado en la única Constitución que por primera vez en la historia de Venezuela ha sido aprobada por el pueblo en votaciones. Junto a todas estas reivindicaciones de carácter social, sembrar consciencia sobre el rol fundamental del Poder Popular es uno de los grandes aportes del legado de Chávez a su pueblo.

No hay duda de la grandeza de nuestro Comandante Chávez, no sólo para Venezuela sino para los pueblos oprimidos del mundo, a los que llevó esperanza con su visión integradora de unidad y su pensamiento antiimperialista y anticolonialista. De esta forma contribuyó al impulso y creación de nuevos organismos regionales como el ALBA, MERCOSUR, CÉLAC, UNASUR y PETROCARIBE, con el fin de contribuir a erradicar las desigualdades y la pobreza mediante estas nuevas formas de integración, basadas en el respeto y la cooperación entre

los pueblos.

**FTT:** ¿Cómo cree que la relación entre los EE.UU. y Venezuela se ha desarrollado desde la siembra de Comandante Chávez?

Nuestro Gobierno siempre ha sido respetuoso del derecho de autodeterminación de los pueblos, de la soberanía y de todos los tratados y convenios internacionales con las otras naciones. Sin embargo, hemos visto que el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos ha tomado medidas unilaterales en contra de funcionarios venezolanos. Igualmente nuestro Presidente Maduro ha denunciado la injerencia por parte de este Gobierno en nuestros asuntos internos. Es por ello, que una vez más el Presidente Nicolás Maduro en nombre de su pueblo y del Gobierno Bolivariano, y orgullosos de nuestra historia, ha exigido al Gobierno de los Estados Unidos respeto a la Independencia y Soberanía de Venezuela. Por último, es importante destacar las medidas que el Gobierno venezolano anunció en cuanto a la exigir visado a los ciudadanos estadounidenses que deseen ingresar a Venezuela, así como la negación de la entrada al país de algunos ciudadanos de ese país, entre otros a George Bush, y la reducción de los funcionarios estadounidenses en la embajada norteamericana en Venezuela.

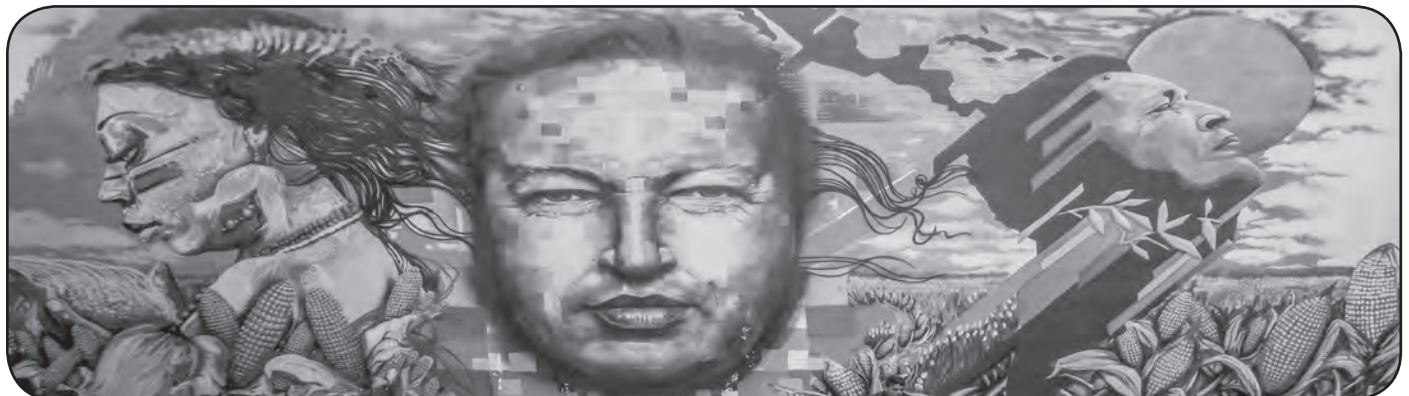
**FTT:** ¿Qué opinas tu sobre el estado del desarrollo revolucionario en Venezuela hoy en día?

Desde el fallecimiento del Comandante Chávez, la Revolución Bolivariana ha enfrentado una situación de permanente guerra mediática, económica y política por parte de sectores fascista de la oposición venezolana, quienes por no haber conseguido llegar al poder por la vía

electoral, mantienen una agenda de violencia, acaparamiento y escasez, inducida por sectores privados económicos, de los productos básicos de la alimentación, todo ello con el apoyo de los medios de comunicación corporativos, los cuales redimensionan todas estas situaciones a fin de causar molestia y angustia en el pueblo y sea éste quien responsabilice al Gobierno. El pasado 12 de febrero fue frustrado un golpe de Estado en contra del Gobierno del Presidente Nicolás Maduro, por parte de un grupo de oficiales retirados de la Aviación, algunos dirigentes de la oposición y la colaboración de la Embajada de los EE.UU. en Venezuela. El Plan consistía en el ataque aéreo de algunas instalaciones públicas y de gobierno, con el objetivo de crear caos y de esta forma llamar a un gobierno provisional. Todo esto ha hecho que hoy el Gobierno Bolivariano y Revolucionario, junto con la mayoría del pueblo, se fortalezcan y permanezcan fieles en el cumplimiento de la instrucción del Comandante Chávez en su última alocución: "¡Unidad, Lucha, Batalla y Victoria!".

**FTT:** ¿Qué mensaje tienes para la comunidad progresista en solidaridad y en defensa de la Revolución Bolivariana de Venezuela?

Nuestro mensaje a las comunidades progresista es de solidaridad con la lucha de los pueblos por alcanzar la justicia, la paz y la igualdad. Esperamos que nos mantengamos unidos y firmes en la batalla contra el imperialismo y el colonialismo. El Gobierno revolucionario venezolano agradece todas las muestras de apoyo y solidaridad que hemos recibidos de parte de los movimientos sociales en el mundo, rechazando las agresiones sistemáticas de la oposición fascista venezolana y la injerencia imperialista contra Venezuela.





by Gerardo Hernández Nordelo

Reprinted from: [www.granma.cu](http://www.granma.cu)

*Remarks by Gerardo Hernández Nordelo, during the event commemorating the 120th anniversary of the re-initiation of Cuba's War of Independence, and the decoration of the Cuban Five, in Havana's Convention Center, February 24, 2015, "Year 57 of the Revolution"*

Dear compañero Army General Raúl Castro Ruz, President of the Councils of State and Ministers; Compañeras and compañeros:

Honoring the Cuban men and women who on a day such as this, 120 years ago, decided to return to arms to struggle for the homeland's independence, is the best way to accept the "Hero of the Republic" honorific title, which has generously been awarded to five Cubans of these times whose achievement was none other than that of having fulfilled our duty.

José Martí, the soul of that national uprising of February 24, 1895, stated that the ability to be a hero is measured by the respect shown those who have been heroes. Thus, on a day such as this, our first thought is one of gratitude and loyalty to those who throughout history, with their sacrifice, have made possible that we live in a socialist, revolutionary, victorious Cuba, conscious that it is up to our generation, and those which are to come, to defend the continuity of this work, the dreams and ideals of our liberators.

The first thoughts of the Five today must be for a man whose leadership and strategic vision were decisive to the battle which led to our freedom, and who with his example

# Gerardo Hernández: "OUR SOLE ACHIEVEMENT IS HAVING FULFILLED OUR DUTY"

instilled in us a spirit of struggle, resistance and sacrifice. And who taught us that the word surrender does not exist in the dictionary of a revolutionary, and who, very early on, assured all Cubans that the Five would return to the homeland. Comandante en Jefe: This distinction which we proudly receive today is also yours. (Applause)

To our Army General Raúl Castro, who did not rest until what Fidel had promised was accomplished, to all the men and women who already wear this honorable star on their chests, and were always an example to the Five, we say: This distinction is also yours. (Applause)

To the Cuban people who made the cause of the Five their own, and still today encourage us with their support and affection; to the leadership of our country's Party and government; to the mass organizations, institutions, attorneys, religious bodies, figures and governments from other countries which stood in solidarity with our cause: This distinction is also yours. (Applause)

We also thank the sisters and brothers throughout the entire world who struggled shoulder to shoulder with us, over 16 years of legal and political battles, and say: This distinction is also yours. (Applause)

To our families, who struggled, suffered, and resisted with firmness for so many years, and to all of the persons who deserve to see this

day but are no longer among us: This distinction is also yours. (Applause)

To the faceless heroes and heroines who will never be able to receive a public tribute such as this, but who have dedicated, dedicate, and will dedicate tomorrow, their lives to the defense of the country from anonymous trenches: Know, wherever you may be, that this distinction is also yours. (Applause)

This honor we receive today is, at the same time, a summons which demands that we rise to the occasion to meet the new challenges which

the Revolution faces. More than a few times since our return, compatriots have approached us to say that they would have liked to have had the opportunity the Five had to protect our people from aggression. To them, and to all Cuban patriots, we say that our mission has not ended, and that they can join in.

The updating of our economic model in an effort to achieve a more efficient, prosperous and sustainable socialism, as well as the process of reestablishing relations with the United States, create a conjuncture of change, which demands that all of us act with intelligence, professionalism, commitment and conviction, to identify and confront the challenges and new perils which are coming.

There are, and will be, many ways to defend Cuba, and Cuba will always need loyal sons and daughters to protect her. It is encouraging to us to know that in the heart of this revolutionary people there are many "Five" willing to sacrifice all for their homeland.

With Ramón, René, Fernando and Antonio, we accept with pride and gratitude this great honor which the homeland confers upon us. The homeland can count on these five soldiers who today, before our people, reaffirm our commitment to serve you until our final days, and to always be loyal to the ideas of Martí, of Che, of Fidel and of Raúl. Thank you very much. (Applause)



Por Gerardo Hernández Nordelo

Tomado de: [www.granma.cu](http://www.granma.cu)

*Intervención de Gerardo Hernández Nordelo, en el acto por el aniversario 120 del reinicio de la Guerra de Independencia y de condecoración a los Cinco Héroes, en el Palacio de Convenciones, el 24 de febrero del 2015, Año 57 de la Revolución*

Querido compañero General de Ejército Raúl Castro Ruz, Presidente de los Consejos de Estado y de Ministros; Compañeras y compañeros:

Honar a las cubanas y cubanos que un día como hoy, hace 120 años, decidieron retomar las armas para luchar por la independencia de la patria, es la mejor manera de recibir el Título Honorífico de "Héroe de la República de Cuba" que generosamente se nos otorga a cinco cubanos de estos tiempos cuyo mérito no es otro que haber cumplido con nuestro deber.

José Martí, alma de aquel levantamiento nacional del 24 de febrero de 1895, sentenció que la capacidad para ser héroe se mide por el respeto que se tributa a quienes lo han sido. Por ello, en un día como hoy, nuestro primer pensamiento es de gratitud y fidelidad hacia todos los que a lo largo de la historia, con su sacrificio, han hecho posible que vivamos en una Cuba socialista, revolucionaria y victoriosa, conscientes de que corresponde a nuestra generación, y a las que nos siguen, defender la continuidad de esta obra, los sueños y los ideales de nuestros libertadores.

El primer pensamiento de Los Cinco en este día ha de ser para un hombre cuyo liderazgo y visión estratégica fueron decisivos en la batalla que condujo a nuestra liberación, y quien con su ejemplo nos inculcó siempre el espíritu de lucha, resistencia y sacrificio. Un hombre que nos enseñó que la palabra rendición no existe en el

diccionario de un revolucionario, y que desde muy temprano aseguró a todos los cubanos que Los Cinco regresaríamos a la patria. Comandante en Jefe: esta condecoración que hoy con orgullo recibimos, es también suya (Aplausos).

A nuestro General de Ejército Raúl Castro, quien no descansó hasta cumplir lo que Fidel había prometido, y a las compañeras y compañeros que como él llevan ya en sus pechos esta honrosa estrella, y fueron siempre un ejemplo para Los Cinco, les decimos que esta condecoración es también de ustedes (Aplausos).

Al pueblo cubano que hizo suya la causa de Los Cinco, y que aún hoy no deja de alentarnos con sus muestras de apoyo y de cariño; a la dirección del Partido y del Gobierno de nuestro país; a las organizaciones de masas, instituciones, abogados, religiosos, personalidades y gobiernos de otros países que se solidarizaron con nuestra causa: esta condecoración es también de ustedes (Aplausos).

Agradecemos también a los hermanos de todo el mundo que lucharon codo a codo durante más de 16 años de batallas legales y políticas, y les decimos que esta condecoración es también de todos ustedes (Aplausos).

A nuestros familiares, que lucharon, sufrieron y resistieron con firmeza durante tantos años, y a todas las personas que merecieron ver este día, y que ya no están entre nosotros: esta condecoración es también de ustedes (Aplausos).

A los héroes y heroínas sin rostros que nunca podrán recibir un homenaje público como este, pero que dedicaron, dedican, o dedicarán mañana sus vidas a la defensa de la patria desde anónimas trincheras: sepan, dondequiera que estén, que esta condecoración es también de ustedes (Aplausos).

Este honor que recibimos hoy, es a la vez un

GERARDO  
HERNÁNDEZ:  
“El mérito  
no es otro  
que haber  
cumplido  
con nuestro  
deber”

reto que nos exige estar a la altura de los nuevos desafíos que enfrenta la Revolución. No pocas veces, desde nuestro regreso, se nos han acercado compatriotas para expresarnos que les hubiera gustado tener la oportunidad que tuvimos Los Cinco de proteger a nuestro pueblo de agresiones. A ellos y a todos los patriotas cubanos, les decimos que nuestra misión no ha terminado, y que pueden sumarse.

La actualización de nuestro modelo económico en aras de lograr un socialismo más eficiente, próspero y sustentable, así como el proceso de restablecimiento de relaciones con los Estados Unidos, conforman una coyuntura de cambios que demanda de todos nosotros actuar con inteligencia, profesionalismo, compromiso y firmeza, para identificar y enfrentar los nuevos retos y nuevos peligros que se avecinan. Hay y habrá muchas maneras de defender a Cuba, y Cuba necesitará siempre de hijos leales que velen por ella. Es por eso que nos alienta saber que en el seno de este pueblo revolucionario hay muchos “Cinco” dispuestos a sacrificarlo todo por su patria.

Junto a Ramón, René, Fernando y Antonio, recibimos con orgullo y gratitud este alto honor que la patria nos confiere. Cuento la patria con estos cinco soldados que hoy, ante todo nuestro pueblo, reafirmamos el compromiso de servirle hasta el último de nuestros días, y de ser siempre fieles a las ideas de Martí del Che, de Fidel, y de Raúl.

¡Muchas gracias! (Aplausos.)

**Chávez  
Presente!**



**“No part of the human community can live entirely on its own planet, with its own laws of motion and cut off from the rest of humanity.”**

**“Ninguna parte de la comunidad humana puede vivir exclusivamente en su propio planeta, con sus propias leyes del movimiento y aislado del resto de la humanidad.”**

**Comandante Hugo Chávez  
1954 - 2013**



CHÁVEZ



# Cuban President RAUL CASTRO Speech to the Third CELAC Summit



*Speech by Army General Raúl Castro Ruz, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba and President of the Councils of State and Ministers, at the Third CELAC Summit, held in Costa Rica, on January 28, 2015, "Year 57 of the Revolution".*

*(Council of State Transcript)*

Esteemed President Luis Guillermo Solís; Esteemed Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean; Esteemed Heads of the Delegations and guests accompanying us:

Our America has entered a new era and has advanced, since the creation of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, in its goals of independence, sovereignty over its natural resources, integration, the construction of a new world order, social justice and democracy of the people, by the people and for the people.

Today there is a commitment to justice and the rights of the peoples which is superior to that in any other historical period. Together, we are the third largest economy in the world, the area with the second largest oil reserves, the greatest biodiversity on the planet and a high concentration of the globe's mineral resources.

To develop unity within diversity, cohesive action, and respect for differences will remain our primary purpose and an inescapable necessity, because the world's problems are serious, and great dangers and tough challenges persist which transcend national

and even sub-regional possibilities. Over the past decade, economic and social policies and sustained growth have allowed us to confront the global economic crisis and made possible a reduction in poverty, unemployment and



unequal income distribution.

The profound political and social transformations carried out in several countries in the region have brought dignity to millions of families who have escaped poverty. But the Latin American and Caribbean region remains the most unequal on the planet. On average, 20% of households with the lowest incomes receive 5% of total income; 167 million people still suffer from poverty, one in five children under-15 live in poverty, and the number of illiterates exceeds 35 million. Half of our youth do not have secondary education or a ninth grade education, but, in the lower income sector, 78% do not complete their studies. Two thirds of the new generation do not reach university.

The number of victims of organized crime and violence, which threatens the stability and progress of nations, is increasing. What would be the thoughts of the tens of millions of marginalized on democracy and human rights? What would their opinion be regarding political models? What would they argue about election laws? Is this the civil society which governments and international organizations take into account? What would they say if they were consulted on economic and monetary policies?

Little do many of the industrialized States have to show our region in this respect, where half of youth are unemployed, the crisis is heaped onto the workers, and students are repressed while the bankers are protected, unionization is prevented, lower wages are paid to women for equal work, inhumane policies are applied against immigrants, racism, xenophobia, violent extremism and neo-fascist tendencies are on the rise, and where citizens do not vote because they see no alternative to political corruption, or they know that election promises are soon forgotten.

To achieve social inclusion and environmental sustainability, we are obliged to create our own vision regarding economic systems, patterns of production and consumption, the relationship between economic growth and development, and also, the effectiveness of political models.

We must overcome the structural gaps, ensure

high quality free education, free universal health coverage, social security for all, equal opportunities, the full exercise of all human rights for all people. Within such efforts, an elementary duty will be solidarity and defense of the interests of the Caribbean and, in particular, Haiti.

A new international economic, financial and monetary order is required, where the interests and needs of the countries of the South, and of the majority, are accommodated and

prioritized, in which those who impose the concentration of capital and neoliberalism do not prevail.

The [UN] post 2015 Development Agenda must provide solutions to the structural problems of economies of the region, and generate the changes that will lead to sustainable development.

It is also essential to build a world of peace, governed by the Principles of the United Nations Charter and International Law, without which development is impossible.

The signing by heads of state and government of the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace marked a historic step forward and provides a reference for relations between our states and with the rest of the world. Solidarity in Our America will be decisive to advancing common interests.

We express vigorous condemnation of the unacceptable and unjustified unilateral sanctions against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and the continuing external intervention aimed at creating a climate of instability in this sister nation.

Cuba, profoundly familiar with all these tales, having endured them itself for over 50 years, reiterates its firmest support to the Bolivarian Revolution and the legitimate government led by President Nicolás Maduro Moros.

We join the Argentine Republic in its claim to the Malvinas, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas. We support the South American nation and its President Cristina Fernández, who faces attacks from hedge funds and the decisions of venal courts, in violation of the sovereignty of this country.

We reaffirm our solidarity with the people and government of Ecuador, led by Rafael Correa, in support of their demand for compensation for environmental damage caused by transnational Chevron in Ecuador's Amazon. As we have said before, the Community will be incomplete as long as Puerto Rico is absent. Its colonial situation is unacceptable, and its

Latin American and Caribbean character leaves no room for doubt.

In the Colombian peace process, the agreements reached by the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia - People's Army in the conversations taking place in Havana are significant. Never before have they advanced so much in the direction of achieving peace.

Cuba, in its capacity as guarantor and venue of these talks, will continue providing the necessary facilities and contributing as much as possible to an end to the conflict, and the construction of a just and lasting peace in the sister nation of Colombia. We resolutely support, as we have done to date, the just demands of Caribbean countries for reparations for the damages caused by slavery and colonialism, as well as resolutely opposing the decision to deprive them of vital financial resources on the basis of technocratic pretexts characterizing them as middle-income countries. We recognize the excellent developments achieved in the CELAC-China Forum and regional links with the BRICS group.

We reiterate our concern regarding the enormous and growing military expenditures imposed on the world by the United States and NATO, such as the attempt to extend their aggressive presence to the borders of Russia, with which we have historic, fraternal and mutually beneficial relations. We energetically oppose the imposition of unilateral and unjust sanctions on this nation. The growing aggression of the NATO military doctrine and the development of unconventional warfare - which have already had devastating consequences and grave results - threaten peace and international security.

For Cuba, the principal of the sovereign equality of all states and peoples' right to self-determination is inalienable.

The United Nations General Assembly must use its faculties to safeguard international peace and security, given the Security Council's double standards, excesses and omissions.

Full membership must be offered to Palestine without further delay, to which the people and government of Cuba convey their solidarity.

The Security Council's veto, which ensures that Israel's crimes go unpunished, must end. Africa, where our roots also lie, does not need advice or interference, but the transfer of financial resources, technology and fair trade.

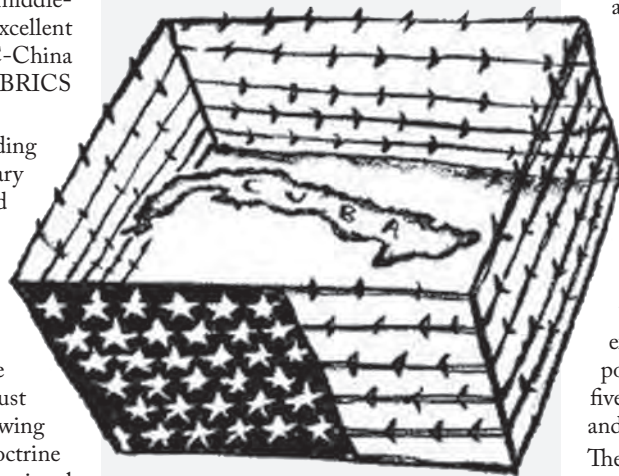
We will forever defend the legitimate interests of the nations with which we struggle, shoulder to shoulder, against colonialism and apartheid, and with which we maintain relations of fraternity and cooperation.

We always remember their unwavering

solidarity and support. Cuba's voice will tirelessly defend just causes and the interests of Southern countries and will remain faithful to their objectives and common positions, in the knowledge that homeland is humanity.

The foreign policy of the Cuban Revolution will remain faithful to its principles. Esteemed colleagues: Last December 17, saw the return to the homeland of Cuban anti-terrorists, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino and Antonio Guerrero, who together with Fernando González and René González are a source of pride and an example of conviction.

The President of the United States acknowledged the failure of the nation's policy toward Cuba, implemented for over 50 years, the country's complete isolation as a result; and the damages which the blockade has caused to our people. He has ordered a review of the obviously unjustifiable inclusion of the island on the list of state sponsors of



international terrorism. Also on that day, he announced the decision to reestablish U.S. diplomatic relations with our government.

These changes are the result of almost a century and a half of heroic struggle and loyalty to principles of the Cuban people. They were also made possible thanks to the new era our region is experiencing, and to the firm, valiant demands made by the governments and peoples of CELAC.

These changes vindicate Our America, which worked in close collaboration, in the United Nations and all other spheres, to achieve this objective. Preceded by the Alba Summit in Cumaná, Venezuela, the discussions held in the 2009 Summit of the Americas in Puerto España, Trinidad and Tobago, led President Obama, at that time recently elected, to propose a new beginning with Cuba. In Cartagena, Colombia, in 2012, a strong debate took place in which the blockade was unanimously and categorically rejected, compelling an important U.S. leader to describe the occasion as the great failure of

Cartagena, or disaster - was the exact phrase - and during which Cuba's exclusion from these events was debated.

Ecuador, in protest, had decided not to participate. Venezuela, Nicaragua and Bolivia stated that they would not attend another summit without the presence of Cuba, a sentiment which received support from Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay.

The Caribbean Community assumed a similar stance. Mexico and the remaining nations also agreed. Panamanian President, Juan Carlos Varela, before his inauguration, resolutely announced that he would invite Cuba, with full rights and equality of conditions, to the Seventh Summit of the Americas, and that is what he did.

Cuba immediately confirmed that it would attend. This demonstrates Martí's precision when he wrote "One just principle from the depths of a cave is more powerful than an army." (Applause) To all those present, I express Cuba's most profound gratitude.

To the 188 states which voted against the blockade in the United Nations; to those who made a similar demand at the General Assembly and international summits and conferences; and to all the popular movements, political forces, parliaments and personalities who tirelessly worked to achieve this objective, on behalf of Cuba, I sincerely thank you.

To the people of the United States who expressed growing opposition to the hostile policy and the blockade, imposed for over five decades, I also convey our appreciation and friendly sentiments.

These outcomes show that governments with profound differences can find a solution to their problems, through respectful dialogue and exchanges on the basis of sovereign equality and reciprocity, for the benefit of their respective nations.

As I have repeatedly stated, Cuba and the United States must learn the art of civilized co-existence, based on respect for the differences which exist between both governments and cooperation on issues of common interest, which contribute to solving the challenges we are facing in the hemisphere and the world. However, it must not be supposed that, in order to achieve this, Cuba would renounce its ideals of independence and social justice, or abandon a single one of our principles, nor cede a millimeter in the defense of our national sovereignty.

We will not invite, or accept any attempt to advise or exert pressure regarding our internal affairs. We have earned this sovereign right through great sacrifices and at the price of great risks.

Could diplomatic relations be restored without resuming the financial services of the Cuban Interests Section and its Consular Office

in Washington, denied as a consequence of the financial blockade? How can diplomatic relations be restored without removing Cuba from the list of state sponsors of international terrorism? What will be the future conduct of U.S. diplomats in Havana, in regards to observing the diplomatic and consular norms established by International Conventions?

This is what our delegation has said to the State Department during the bilateral talks held last week, and more meetings are required to address these issues.

We have shared with the President of the United States our willingness to advance toward normalization of bilateral relations, once diplomatic relations are reestablished, which would imply the adopting of measures by both parties to improve the climate between the two countries, to resolve other pending problems, and move forward on cooperation.

The current situation discreetly opens an opportunity for the hemisphere to encounter new, superior ways to cooperate, which would serve the two Americas. This would allow pressing problems to be resolved, and open new paths.

The text of the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace constitutes an indispensable foundation for this, including the recognition that every state has the inalienable right to chose its own political, economic, social, cultural system, without interference of any kind on the part of another state, which constitutes an undeniable principle of international law. The principal problem has not been resolved.

The economic, commercial and financial blockade, which causes great human and economic damage and violates international law, must end.

I remember the memorandum written by Undersecretary Mallory, in April of 1960, which, given the lack of an effective political opposition [in Cuba], proposed the objective of creating hunger, desperation and suffering to provoke the overthrow of the revolutionary government. Now, everything seems to indicate that the objective is to create an artificial political opposition though economic, political and communications means.

The reestablishment of diplomatic relations is the beginning of a process which can progress toward normalization of bilateral relations, but this will not be possible as long as the blockade exists, or as long as the territory illegally occupied by the Guantánamo Naval Base is not returned (Applause), or radio and television broadcasts which violate international norms continue, or just compensation is not provided our people for

the human and economic damage they have suffered.

It would not be ethical, just, or acceptable that something were requested of Cuba in return.

If these problems are not resolved, this diplomatic rapprochement between Cuba and the United States makes no sense.

Neither can it be expected that Cuba would agree to negotiate aspects mentioned with respect to our absolutely sovereign, internal affairs. Progress was made in these recent negotiations because we treated each other respectfully, as equals.

To continue advancing, this is how it must be. We have carefully followed the U.S. President's announcement of some executive decisions to modify certain aspects of the blockade's application. The measures announced are very limited.

Prohibitions on credit and the use of the dollar in international financial transactions remain in place; individual travel by U.S. citizens is hampered under the system of licenses for so-called people-to-people exchanges; these are conditioned by subversive goals; and maritime travel is not allowed.

Prohibitions remain on the acquisition in other markets of equipment and technology with more than 10% U.S. components, and on imports by the United States of goods containing Cuban raw materials, among many, many others. President Barack Obama could decisively use his broad executive powers to substantially modify the application of the blockade, that which is in his hands, even without a decision by Congress.

He could permit, in other sectors of the economy, all that he has authorized in the arena of telecommunications, with evident objectives of political influence in Cuba.

His decision to hold a discussion with Congress on eliminating the blockade is significant. U.S. government spokespeople have been very clear in specifying that they are now changing their methods, but not their policy objectives, and insist on continuing to intervene in our internal affairs, which we are not going to accept. Our U.S. counterparts should not plan on developing relations with Cuban society as if there were no sovereign government in Cuba. (Applause).

No one should dream that the new policy announced means acceptance of the existence of a socialist revolution 90 miles from Florida.

They want so-called civil society to be present at the Summit of the Americas in Panama, and this is what Cuba has always said. We have protested what has occurred at the World Trade Organization conference in Seattle, at the Summits of the Americas in Miami

and Quebec, at the Copenhagen Climate Change Summit, and whenever the G-7 or International Monetary Fund meet, when civil society is placed behind steel fences, faces brutal police repression, or is confined to locations dozens of kilometers from the events.

Of course Cuban civil society will attend, and I hope there are no restrictions on our country's non-governmental organizations, which obviously have no interest, or any status within the OAS, but are recognized by the UN.

I hope to be able to see in Panama the popular movements and non-governmental organizations which advocate for nuclear disarmament, for the environment, against neoliberalism, the Occupy Wall Street and the indignados of this region, university and high school students, farmers, trade unions, communities of original peoples, organizations which oppose the contamination caused by fracking, those defending the rights of immigrants and denouncing torture and extrajudicial executions, police brutality, racist practices, those who demand equal pay for women for equal work, those demanding compensation for damage caused by transnational corporations. Nevertheless, the announcements made December 17 have generated world recognition, and President Obama has received very broad support within his own country. Some forces in the United States will try to abort this process which is beginning.

They are the same enemies of a just relationship between the United States and Latin America and the Caribbean, those who disrupt bilateral relations with many countries in our region with that nation, those who always blackmail and pressure.

We know that ending the blockade will be a long, difficult process, which will require the support, the mobilization and resolute action of all persons of good will in the United States and the world; approval on the part of the United Nations General Assembly, during its next session, of the resolution calling for its elimination; and in particular, concerted action by Our America.

Esteemed Heads of State and Government,  
Dear friends,

We congratulate Costa Rica, President Solís and his government for the work done at the helm of CELAC. We welcome and offer our full support to Ecuador and President Correa, who will lead the Community in 2015. Many thanks. (Applause).



# Discurso del Presidente Cubano RAUL CASTRO en la III Cumbre de la CELAC



*Discurso del General de Ejército Raúl Castro Ruz, Primer Secretario del Comité Central del Partido Comunista de Cuba y Presidente de los Consejos de Estado y de Ministros, en la III Cumbre de la CELAC, Costa Rica, el 28 de Enero de 2015, "Año 57 de la Revolución"*  
(Versiones Taquigráficas - Consejo de Estado)

Estimado Presidente Luis Guillermo Solís;  
Estimadas Jefas y Jefes de Estado o de Gobierno de América Latina y el Caribe;  
Estimados Jefes de Delegaciones e invitados que nos acompañan:

Nuestra América se ha adentrado en una época nueva y ha avanzado, desde la creación de la Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños, en sus objetivos de independencia, soberanía sobre sus recursos naturales, integración, construcción de un nuevo orden mundial, justicia social y democracia del pueblo, por el pueblo y para el pueblo. Existe hoy un compromiso con la justicia y el derecho de los pueblos superior al de cualquier otro período histórico.

Juntos, somos la tercera economía a nivel mundial, la zona con la segunda mayor reserva petrolera, la mayor biodiversidad del planeta y con una alta concentración de los recursos mineros globales.

Desarrollar la unidad en la diversidad, la actuación cohesionada y el respeto a las diferencias seguirá siendo nuestro primer propósito y una necesidad ineludible, porque los problemas del mundo se agravan y persisten grandes peligros y recios desafíos

que trascienden las posibilidades nacionales e incluso subregionales.

En el último decenio, las políticas económicas y sociales y el crecimiento sostenido, nos permitieron enfrentar la crisis económica global y posibilitaron una disminución de la pobreza, el desempleo y la desigual distribución de ingresos.

Las profundas transformaciones políticas y sociales llevadas a cabo en varios países de la región han traído la dignidad a millones de familias que han salido de la pobreza.

Pero la región de América Latina y el Caribe es aún la más desigual del planeta. En promedio, el 20% de los hogares con menores ingresos capta el 5% de los ingresos totales; 167 millones de personas sufren todavía de la pobreza, uno de cada cinco menores de 15 años vive en la indigencia y la cifra de analfabetos supera los 35 millones.

La mitad de nuestros jóvenes no tienen educación secundaria o noveno grado de enseñanza, pero en el sector de menores ingresos no la completa el 78%. Dos tercios de la nueva generación no llegan a la universidad. Crecen las víctimas del crimen organizado y de la violencia que amenazan la estabilidad y el progreso de las naciones.

¿Qué pensarán las decenas de millones de marginados acerca de la democracia y los derechos humanos? ¿Cuál será su juicio sobre los modelos políticos? ¿Qué opinarán acerca de las leyes electorales? ¿Es esta la sociedad civil que toman en cuenta los gobiernos y las organizaciones internacionales? ¿Qué dirían si se les consultara sobre las políticas económicas y monetarias?

Poco tienen que mostrar a nuestra región, en estos aspectos, muchos de los Estados industrializados donde la mitad de sus jóvenes están en el desempleo, se descarga la crisis sobre los trabajadores y los estudiantes a los que se reprime, mientras se protege a los banqueros, se impide la sindicalización, se paga inferior salario a las mujeres por trabajo igual, se aplican políticas inhumanas contra los inmigrantes, crece el racismo, la xenofobia, el extremismo violento y tendencias neofascistas, y donde los ciudadanos no votan porque no ven alternativa a la corrupción de la política o saben que las promesas electorales se olvidan muy pronto.

Para alcanzar la llamada inclusión social y la sostenibilidad ambiental, tendremos que crear una visión propia sobre los sistemas económicos, los patrones de producción y consumo, la relación entre el crecimiento económico y el desarrollo y, también, sobre la eficacia de los modelos políticos.

Debemos superar las brechas estructurales, asegurar educación gratuita y de alta calidad, cobertura universal y gratuita de salud, seguridad social para todos, igualdad de oportunidades, lograr el ejercicio pleno de todos los derechos humanos por todas las

personas.

Dentro de tales esfuerzos, será elemental deber la solidaridad y la defensa de los intereses del Caribe y, en particular, de Haití.

Se precisa un nuevo orden económico, financiero y monetario internacional, donde tengan cabida y prioridad los intereses y necesidades de los países del Sur y de las mayorías, donde no prevalezcan los que impone la concentración del capital y el neoliberalismo.

La Agenda de Desarrollo después del 2015 debe ofrecer soluciones a los problemas estructurales de las economías de la región y generar los cambios que conduzcan al desarrollo sostenible.

Es también imprescindible construir un mundo de paz, sin el cual es imposible el desarrollo, regido por los Principios de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas y del Derecho Internacional.

La firma por los Jefes de Estado y Gobierno de la Proclama de América Latina y el Caribe como Zona de Paz, significó un paso histórico y ofrece una referencia para las relaciones entre nuestros Estados y con el resto del mundo.

La solidaridad en Nuestra América será decisiva para hacer avanzar los intereses comunes.

Expresamos enérgica condena a las inaceptables e injustificadas sanciones unilaterales impuestas a la República Bolivariana de Venezuela y a la continuada intervención externa dirigida a crear un clima de inestabilidad en esa hermana nación. Cuba, que conoce todas esas historias profundamente por haberlas padecido durante más de 50 años, reitera su más firme respaldo a la Revolución Bolivariana y al Gobierno legítimo conducido por el presidente Nicolás Maduro Moros.

Nos unimos a la República Argentina en su reclamo de las islas Malvinas, Georgias del Sur y Sandwich del Sur y los espacios marítimos circundantes. Apoyamos a la nación suramericana y a su Presidenta Cristina Fernández, que enfrenta los ataques de los fondos especulativos y las decisiones de cortes venales, violatorias de la soberanía de ese país.

Reafirmamos la solidaridad con el pueblo y gobierno de Ecuador, que preside Rafael Correa, en apoyo a sus demandas de reparación por los daños ambientales provocados por la trasnacional Chevron en la amazonia ecuatoriana.

Como hemos dicho en otras ocasiones, la Comunidad estará incompleta mientras falte Puerto Rico. Su situación colonial es inadmisibles, y su carácter latinoamericano y caribeño no admite lugar a dudas.

En el proceso de paz de Colombia, son significativos los acuerdos alcanzados por el Gobierno y las Fuerzas Armadas

Revolucionarias de Colombia - Ejército del Pueblo en la Mesa de Conversaciones que se desarrolla en La Habana. Nunca antes se había avanzado tanto en la dirección de alcanzar la paz. Cuba, en su condición de garante y sede de estas conversaciones, proseguirá brindando las facilidades necesarias y contribuyendo en todo lo posible al fin del conflicto y la construcción de una paz justa y duradera en la hermana Colombia.

Daremos resuelto apoyo, como hasta ahora, al justo reclamo de los países del Caribe de reparación por los daños de la esclavitud y el colonialismo, así como nos opondremos resueltamente a la decisión de privarlos de recursos financieros imprescindibles con pretextos tecnocráticos al pretender considerarlos de renta media.

Saludamos los excelentes progresos alcanzados en el Foro CELAC-China y en los vínculos de la región con el grupo BRICS. Reiteramos la preocupación por los enormes y crecientes gastos militares impuestos al mundo por Estados Unidos y la OTAN, así como el intento de extender la agresiva presencia de esta hasta las fronteras de Rusia, con la cual tenemos históricas y fraternales relaciones, mutuamente provechosas. Declaramos enérgica oposición a la imposición de sanciones unilaterales e injustas contra esa nación.

La creciente agresividad de la doctrina militar de la OTAN y el desarrollo de guerras no convencionales, que ya han tenido devastadoras consecuencias y graves secuelas, amenazan la paz y la seguridad internacionales.

Para Cuba, el principio de igualdad soberana de los Estados y de autodeterminación de los pueblos es irrenunciable.

La Asamblea General de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas debe usar sus facultades para preservar la paz y la seguridad internacionales ante los dobles raseros, excesos y omisiones del Consejo de Seguridad.

No debe esperar más para asegurar su plena membresía a Palestina, a la que expresamos la solidaridad del pueblo y gobierno cubanos. Debe cesar el veto en el Consejo de Seguridad para garantizar impunidad a los crímenes de Israel.

África, donde están también nuestras raíces, no necesita consejos ni intromisión, sino transferencia de recursos financieros, tecnología y trato justo. Siempre defenderemos los intereses legítimos de las naciones con las que luchamos hombro con hombro contra el colonialismo y el apartheid y con las que sostenemos fraternales relaciones y cooperación. Siempre recordaremos su invariable solidaridad y apoyo.

La voz de Cuba defenderá sin descanso las causas justas y los intereses de los países del Sur y será leal a sus objetivos y posiciones comunes sabiendo que Patria es Humanidad.

La política exterior de la Revolución cubana seguirá siendo fiel a sus principios.

Estimadas y estimados colegas:

El pasado 17 de diciembre, regresaron a su Patria los luchadores antiterroristas cubanos Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino y Antonio Guerrero, que junto a Fernando González y René González son para nosotros motivo de orgullo y ejemplo de firmeza.

El Presidente de Estados Unidos reconoció el fracaso de la política contra Cuba aplicada por más de cincuenta años y el completo aislamiento que ha provocado a su país; el daño que el bloqueo ocasiona a nuestro pueblo y ordenó la revisión de la obviamente injustificable inclusión de la isla en la Lista de Países Patrocinadores del Terrorismo Internacional.

También ese día, anunció la decisión de restablecer las relaciones diplomáticas de Estados Unidos con nuestro Gobierno.

Estos cambios son el resultado de casi siglo y medio de heroica lucha y fidelidad a los principios del pueblo cubano. Fueron también posibles gracias a la nueva época que vive nuestra región, y al sólido y valiente reclamo de los gobiernos y pueblos de la CELAC.

Han sido una reivindicación para Nuestra América que actuó en estrecha unidad por este objetivo en la Organización de las Naciones Unidas y en todos los ámbitos.

Precedidos por la Cumbre del ALBA en Cumaná, Venezuela, los debates sostenidos en el 2009 en la Cumbre de las Américas en Puerto España, Trinidad y Tobago, llevaron al Presidente Obama, recién electo, a plantear un nuevo comienzo con Cuba.

En Cartagena, Colombia, en el 2012, se produjo una fuerte discusión con un planteamiento unánime y categórico contra el bloqueo, ocasión en que incitó a un importante dirigente norteamericano a referirse a la misma como el gran fracaso de Cartagena o desastre —fue el término exacto— y se debatió sobre la exclusión de Cuba de estos eventos. Ecuador, en protesta, había decidido ausentarse. Venezuela, Nicaragua y Bolivia plantearon que no asistirían a otra Cumbre sin Cuba y recibieron el apoyo de Brasil, Argentina y Uruguay. La Comunidad del Caribe asumió igual postura. México y las restantes naciones se pronunciaron asimismo.

El presidente panameño, Juan Carlos Varela, antes de su toma de posesión, hizo saber

con determinación que invitaría a Cuba, con plenos derechos e igualdad de condiciones, a la VII Cumbre de las Américas y así lo hizo. Cuba inmediatamente declaró que asistiría.

Se demuestra la certeza de Martí cuando escribió que “un principio justo, desde el fondo de una cueva, puede más que un ejército” (Aplausos).

A todos los presentes les expreso la más profunda gratitud de Cuba.

A los 188 Estados que votan contra el bloqueo en las Naciones Unidas, a los que hicieron similar reclamo en la Asamblea General,



Cumbres y Conferencias internacionales y a todos los movimientos populares, fuerzas políticas, parlamentos y personalidades que se movilizaron incansablemente con ese objetivo, les agradezco sinceramente a nombre de la Nación.

Al pueblo de Estados Unidos que manifestó creciente oposición a la política de bloqueo y hostilidad, de más de cinco décadas, también le reitero nuestro agradecimiento y amistosos sentimientos.

Estos resultados demuestran que gobiernos que tienen profundas diferencias pueden encontrar solución a los problemas mediante un diálogo respetuoso e intercambios, basados en la igualdad soberana y la reciprocidad, en beneficio de sus respectivas naciones.

Como he afirmado reiteradamente, Cuba y Estados Unidos debemos aprender el arte de la convivencia civilizada, basada en el respeto

a las diferencias entre ambos gobiernos y en la cooperación en temas de interés común, que contribuya a la solución de los desafíos que enfrentan el hemisferio y el mundo.

Pero no se debe pretender que, para ello, Cuba tenga que renunciar a sus ideales de independencia y justicia social, ni claudicar en uno solo de nuestros principios, ni ceder un milímetro en la defensa de la soberanía nacional.

No nos dejaremos provocar, pero tampoco aceptaremos ninguna pretensión de aconsejar ni presionar en materia de nuestros asuntos internos. Nos hemos ganado este derecho soberano con grandes sacrificios y al precio de los mayores riesgos.

¿Acaso podrían restablecerse las relaciones diplomáticas sin reanudar los servicios financieros a la Sección de Intereses de Cuba y su Oficina Consular en Washington, cortados como consecuencia del bloqueo financiero? ¿Cómo explicar el restablecimiento de relaciones diplomáticas sin que se retire a Cuba de la Lista de Estados Patrocinadores del Terrorismo Internacional? ¿Cuál será, en lo adelante, la conducta de los diplomáticos estadounidenses en La Habana respecto a la observancia de las normas que establecen las Convenciones Internacionales para las Relaciones Diplomáticas y Consulares? Es lo que nuestra delegación ha dicho al Departamento de Estado en las conversaciones bilaterales de la semana pasada y se requerirán más reuniones para tratar estos temas.

Hemos compartido con el Presidente de

abrir nuevos caminos.

El texto de la Proclama de América Latina y el Caribe como Zona de Paz constituye la plataforma indispensable para ello, incluido el reconocimiento de que todo Estado tiene el derecho inalienable a elegir su sistema político, económico, social y cultural, sin injerencia en ninguna forma por parte de otro Estado, lo que constituye un principio irrenunciable de Derecho Internacional.

El problema principal no ha sido resuelto. El bloqueo económico, comercial y financiero, que provoca enormes daños humanos y económicos y es una violación del Derecho Internacional, debe cesar.

Recuerdo el memorándum del subsecretario Mallory, de abril de 1960, que, a falta de una oposición política efectiva, planteaba el objetivo de crear en Cuba hambre, desesperación y sufrimiento para provocar el derrocamiento del gobierno revolucionario. Ahora, todo parece indicar que el objetivo es fomentar una oposición política artificial por medios económicos, políticos y comunicacionales.

El restablecimiento de las relaciones diplomáticas es el inicio de un proceso hacia la normalización de las relaciones bilaterales, pero esta no será posible mientras exista el bloqueo, no se devuelva el territorio ilegalmente ocupado por la Base Naval de Guantánamo (Aplausos), no cesen las transmisiones radiales y televisivas violatorias de las normas internacionales, no haya compensación justa a nuestro pueblo por los daños humanos y económicos que ha sufrido.

tendrá que ser así.

Hemos seguido con atención el anuncio del Presidente de Estados Unidos de algunas decisiones ejecutivas para modificar ciertos aspectos de la aplicación del bloqueo.

Las medidas publicadas son muy limitadas. Persisten la prohibición de créditos, del uso del dólar en nuestras transacciones financieras internacionales; se impiden los viajes individuales de norteamericanos bajo la licencia para los llamados intercambios "pueblo a pueblo", se condicionan estos a fines subversivos y se impide también que viajen por vía marítima. Continúa prohibida la adquisición en otros mercados de equipos y tecnologías que tengan más de un 10% de componentes norteamericanos y las importaciones por Estados Unidos de mercancías que contengan materias primas cubanas, entre muchísimas otras.

El presidente Barack Obama podría utilizar con determinación sus amplias facultades ejecutivas para modificar sustancialmente la aplicación del bloqueo, lo que está en sus manos hacer, aun sin la decisión del Congreso.

Pudiera permitir en otros sectores de la economía todo lo que ha autorizado en el ámbito de las telecomunicaciones con evidentes objetivos de influencia política en Cuba.

Ha sido significativa su decisión de sostener un debate con el Congreso con el objetivo de la eliminación del bloqueo.

Los voceros del gobierno norteamericano han sido claros en precisar que cambian ahora los métodos, pero no los objetivos de la política, e insisten en actos de injerencia en nuestros asuntos internos que no vamos a aceptar. Las contrapartes estadounidenses no deberían proponerse relacionarse con la sociedad cubana como si en Cuba no hubiera un gobierno soberano (Aplausos).

Nadie podría soñar que la nueva política que se anuncia acepte la existencia de una Revolución socialista a 90 millas de la Florida.

Se quiere que en la Cumbre de las Américas de Panamá esté la llamada sociedad civil y eso es lo que Cuba ha compartido siempre. Protestamos por lo que ocurrió en la Conferencia de la Organización Mundial de Comercio en Seattle, en las Cumbres de las Américas de Miami y Quebec, en la Cumbre de Cambio Climático de Copenhague, o cuando se reúne el G-7 o el Fondo Monetario Internacional, donde se le situó detrás de cercas de acero, bajo una brutal represión policial, confinada a decenas de kilómetros de los eventos.

Claro que la sociedad civil cubana asistirá y yo espero que no haya restricciones para las organizaciones no gubernamentales de nuestro país que obviamente no tienen ni les interesa tener ningún estatus en la OEA pero sí cuentan con el reconocimiento de la ONU.



January 29, 2015 - Raul Castro with other leaders of the 3rd CELAC Summit in Costa Rica

Estados Unidos la disposición de avanzar hacia la normalización de las relaciones bilaterales, una vez que sean restablecidas las relaciones diplomáticas, lo que implica adoptar medidas mutuas para mejorar el clima entre ambos países, resolver otros problemas pendientes y avanzar en la cooperación.

La situación actual abre, modestamente, una oportunidad al hemisferio de encontrar nuevas y superiores formas de cooperación que convienen a las dos Américas. Ello permitiría resolver acuciantes problemas y

No sería ético, justo ni aceptable que se pidiera a Cuba nada a cambio. Si estos problemas no se resuelven, este acercamiento diplomático entre Cuba y Estados Unidos no tendría sentido.

No puede esperarse tampoco que Cuba acepte negociar los aspectos mencionados por nuestros asuntos internos, absolutamente soberanos.

Se pudo avanzar en esta reciente negociación porque nos tratamos recíprocamente con respeto, como iguales. Para seguir avanzando,

*Continued on page 29*

# ¡Venceremos!

# We Will Win!

## OUR STRUGGLE

## AROUND THE WORLD



### **Cuban Medics Fighting Ebola Nominated for Nobel Peace Prize**

*More than 460 Cuban doctors and nurses have been stationed in West Africa since October to help fight the Ebola epidemic in the region.*

Venezuela, 5 February, 2015 (teleSUR)

A team of Cuban doctors and nurses specialized in disaster situations and serious epidemics currently stationed in West Africa fighting the Ebola outbreak was nominated in Norway for this year's Nobel Peace Prize.

The Henry Reeve Cuban Medical Brigade's candidacy was approved unanimously by the Annual Conference of Norwegian Trade Unions in Trondheim, a meeting attended by Cuba's ambassador to Norway, Maria Esther Fiffe, Cuban press reported Thursday.

According to official figures, 461 Cuban doctors and nurses belonging to the brigade have been stationed in West Africa since October to help fight the Ebola epidemic there, which has killed 8,921 people and infected as many as 22,334, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Since the virus was first detected in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1976, 23 outbreaks have been reported in several countries. The most recent outbreak began in Guinea, but spread to neighboring Sierra Leone and Liberia, which is currently the most affected country.

The Henry Reeve Brigade was created on Sept. 19, 2005, with over 1,500 members. Its first missions were in Guatemala and Pakistan, countries that faced the consequences of a hurricane and a devastating earthquake, respectively.

Cuba had also offered to dispatch the brigade to the United States to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina, a move that U.S. authorities rejected.

### **Venezuela imposes limits on US diplomats**

28 February, 2015 (BBC News)

Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro has announced measures to limit the number of US diplomats working in the country. President Maduro said he wanted a review and reduction of American diplomatic staff. US citizens visiting the country would also need visas and there would be a list of politicians who would be banned from entry. Mr Maduro said US meddling had forced him to adopt the new measures. The president said that the US government had 100 employees working in Venezuela whereas Venezuela had 17 based in the US. Mr Maduro said Venezuela would be charging Americans the same rates for visa as those levied on Venezuelans wishing to visit the United States.

A list of banned politicians would include George W Bush, Dick Cheney, Bob Menendez and Marco Rubio. Mr Maduro said these were all men who had violated human rights and encouraged terrorism, particularly in Iraq and Syria.

Earlier this month the United States imposed visa restrictions on unnamed Venezuelan officials it accused of human rights violations and corruption. The move builds on sanctions imposed last year on Venezuelan officials alleged to have violated the rights of protesters during demonstrations that shook the country in the first six months of 2014. The list of officials banned from entering the US was extended to include family members.

Earlier this month President Maduro accused the US of working with opposition groups to stage what he said was a coup that involved bombing the presidential palace. Washington rejected the accusations as ludicrous. The two countries have not exchanged ambassadors for the last five years.

### **Second graduation of Pakistani doctors in Cuba**

Islamabad, February 25, 2015 (Embassy of Cuba in Pakistan)

The next February 27 and 28 will be memorable days in the history of bilateral links between Pakistan and Cuba, distant countries but at the same time friendly, which currently have good political relations. In these two days will be held at the Universities of Medical Sciences of Sancti Spiritus and Cienfuegos the graduation ceremony of about 600 Pakistani students. With these ceremonies, will culminate their studies in Cuba, after seven years as a part of the free Scholarship Program that was provided by the Government of Cuba in 2006 in which 1000 Pakistani were studied to graduate as doctors.

For the vast majority of the students, Cuba was the first foreign country to which they were traveling. They were received as ambassadors of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and were made to creditors of such symbolic qualification for its friendship, love, dedication and effort displayed during these years. They studied far away from their family and friends, making enormous sacrifices that today are awarded with the recognition of the educational authorities of both countries.

Now, once they graduate, many of them with gold titles, they will return to provide services in their origin communities and will be humble ambassadors of Cuba and will relocate to his people the affection and love received during your stay in our country. For these students Cuba has become his second homeland and have beautiful memories of it. Our country welcomed them as children and provided them with the best of what we have in the field of education of public health, high reputation worldwide.

Congratulations on behalf of the Embassy of Cuba in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the graduates, the authorities of the High Education Commission, the Government of Pakistan and all officials from various government institutions and other sectors of Pakistani society who's always provided its full support to this project which now it's successfully completed. Also congratulations for their family and close friends who always gave them support, encouraging them to not miss out on the opportunity provided by the Government of Cuba to be doctors and offer their services to the people of Pakistan.



CHÁVEZ  
VIGENCIA ETERNA  
PARA LOS PUEBLOS

Hoy 5 de marzo se cumplen dos años de la partida del Gigante que hizo despertar al pueblo de Venezuela y toda la América, Hugo Chávez Frías, líder de la Revolución Bolivariana de Venezuela.

*"Nuestra lucha hoy, la batalla histórica de la Revolución y del pueblo venezolano es acabar con toda forma de esclavitud moderna, una oscura y sutil esclavitud que ya no se ejerce mediante el látigo, el hierro y los grilletes, sino a través de cadenas invisibles de los brutales y perversos mecanismos de la explotación capitalista: la alienación, la dominación, la enajenación, la opresión y mercantilización de las relaciones humanas".*

Gobierno Bolivariano de Venezuela

Hugo Chávez



CHÁVEZ  
ETERNAL PRESENCE  
FOR THE PEOPLES

Today, March 5<sup>th</sup>, marks the 2<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of the passing of the Giant who made the people of Venezuela and of the Americas awake, Hugo Chávez Frías, leader of the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela.

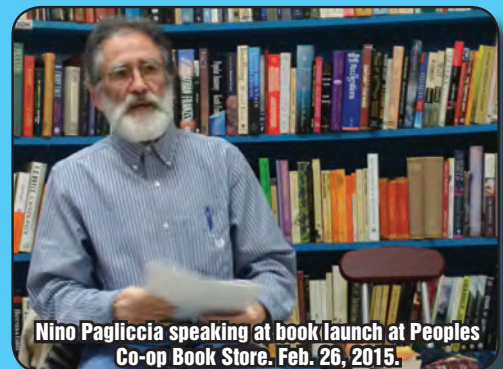
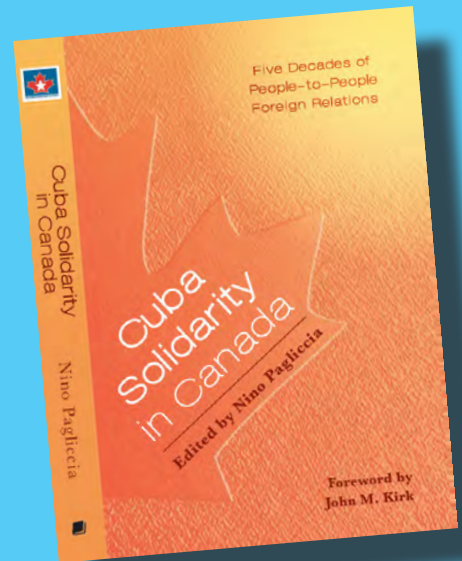
*"Our struggle today, the historic battle of the Revolution and the Venezuelan people is to put an end to all forms of modern slavery, a dark and subtle slavery no longer exerted through the whip, the iron and the shackles, but through invisible chains of brutal and perverse mechanisms of capitalist exploitation: alienation, domination, estrangement, oppression and commodification of human relations".*

Gobierno Bolivariano de Venezuela

Hugo Chávez

# Cuba Solidarity in Canada

Five Decades of  
People-to-People  
Foreign Relations



Edited by Nino Pagliccia

[www.cubasolidarityincanada.ca](http://www.cubasolidarityincanada.ca)



**ORGANIZE!**

**EDUCATE!**

**MOBILIZE!**

## MAWO Actions in Vancouver Call to Organize Against Imperialist War, Occupation & Islamophobia

By Janine Solanki

Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO), like any other antiwar organization, doesn't have the luxury to decide what topic we are going to organize on. Our demands, reflected on picket signs, banners, posters and petitions, are in direct response to the actions of imperialist governments like the US and Canada. We must anticipate their moves and respond as new fronts are opened in the new era of war and occupation that our world today is defined by. But respond how? One aspect of antiwar organizing is to mobilize to take our demands out on to the streets and directly protest these criminal, brutal wars and occupations, with information and speeches that serve to educate the public. But in order to develop our demands and to really understand the arguments against war and occupation that activists must be prepared to defend, we have to organize and educate ourselves also. To accomplish this, alongside our monthly anti-war, anti-occupation rally and petition campaigns, MAWO also brings activists, organizers and the general public together for forums to discuss and debate issues facing the antiwar movement today. With the guiding line of "Organize, Educate, Mobilize!" MAWO's February events and actions demonstrate the importance of education and action.

Why education? Antiwar organizations don't own the mainstream media outlets, unfortunately. The TV, radio and newspaper that the general public are confronted with constantly feeds people with pro-war propaganda and skillfully stirs up a fear campaign to justify the imperialist war drive. The



February 21, 2015 Petitioning in downtown Vancouver

US and their allies, including Canada, have launched a new war on Iraq as well as a military intervention against Syria, using ISIS as a justification for further war and occupation. To gain support for this war drive, the mainstream media and popular culture is chalk full of anti-Islam messages and creating an Islamophobic fear campaign. This campaign of Islamophobia is used not only to justify the new era of war and occupation, but is also serves to divide poor and working people at home and is responsible for crimes and violence against those practicing Islam here in Canada and the US. On February 10th, 2015 three young Muslim students were shot to death in North Carolina. Not only did the killing itself shine a spotlight on the tragedies created by the campaign of Islamophobia, but the lack of response from mainstream media to cover this shooting and to name it as a hate crime targeting Muslims was deplorable.

To bring the topic of Islamophobia to the table, MAWO held a forum in Vancouver on February 17th titled "Islamophobia! What Is It and Why the Anti-War Movement Must Campaign Against This Form of Racism!" Guest speaker Sherry Rashidan, a university student and youth Muslim community activist, spoke about the rise of Islamophobia here at home, including the deaths of the three Muslim students in North Carolina and the lack of response from the mainstream media. Mamdoh Ashir, an Iraqi-Canadian and Muslim community organizer, connected the rise of Islamophobia to the justifications of imperialist governments for war, and Ali Yerevani, political editor of Fire This Time and participant in the 1979 Iranian Revolution, brought an analysis of the broader New Era of War and Occupation and reinforced the need for antiwar coalitions to demand US and Canada Hands off Syria! A wide range of people from different communities joined the forum and took part in a lively discussion.

A few days after the forum, on February 21st MAWO took the demands of "US and Canada Hands Off Syria!" "No New War on Iraq!" "No to Islamophobia!" out to the streets of Downtown Vancouver with a monthly anti-war, anti-occupation rally and petition campaign. Activists engaged in many discussions with passersby and



February 17 2015 Public Forum against Islamophobia  
From left to right: Janine Solanki, Ali Yerevani, Sherry Rashidan & Mamdoh Ashir

collected signatures demanding that the US stop their covert funding of ISIS and to stop using ISIS as a pretext for war on Iraq and Syria. Mamdoh Ashir again joined along with Thomas Davies, Fire This Time editorial board member, to speak at the rally to the crowd that gathered in front of the Vancouver Art Gallery.

From picket signs and banners on the streets of Vancouver, MAWO came together again for a public forum and discussion on February 24th, this time with the topic "No War on Syria! This is Not a War on ISIS/ISIL, it is the New Imperialist War Drive in the Middle East!" This forum focused on the recent moves of the US government to escalate their attempt to overthrow the sovereign and independent government of Syria. This included discussing the recent US President Obama's request to Congress for the authorization of military force including ground troops to be used against ISIS without geographical boundaries. This is not-so veiled language for authorizing a direct military intervention in Syria. Speakers Janine Solanki, MAWO chairperson, and Thomas Davies presented on the critical issue of why antiwar organizations must organize against this escalating war drive against Syria, which was followed by a discussion and the commitment to continue organizing more events against war on Syria.

This view of MAWO antiwar activities over the month of February is a snapshot of MAWO's monthly events and actions, which follows a strategy of organizing, educating and mobilizing. Alongside these events MAWO also organizes cultural evenings, conferences and the Vancouver International Film Festival for Peace and Vancouver International Hip Hop for Peace Festival. To find out more on MAWO's events and actions please visit [www.mawovancouver.org](http://www.mawovancouver.org) or follow @mawovan on twitter.



# FIDEL CASTRO: ~~Cinco horas con Los Cinco~~

**\* EN ESPAÑOL \***

Los recibí el sábado 28 de febrero, 73 días después que pisaron tierra cubana. Tres de ellos habían consumido 16 largos años de su más plena juventud al respirar el aire húmedo, maloliente y repugnante de los sótanos de una prisión yanqui, después de ser condenados por jueces venales. Otros dos, que igualmente trataban de impedir los planes criminales del imperio contra su Patria, fueron condenados también a varios años de prisión brutal.

Los propios organismos de investigación, ajenos por completo al más elemental sentido de la justicia, participaron en la inhumana cacería.

El pasado 28 de febrero el líder cubano recibió a los Cinco antiterroristas e intercambiaron sobre la injusticia de tantos años

La inteligencia cubana no necesitaba en absoluto seguir los movimientos de un solo equipo militar de Estados Unidos, porque esta podía observar desde el espacio todo lo que se movía sobre nuestro planeta a través de la Base de Exploración Radioelectrónica "Lourdes", al sur de la capital de Cuba. Este centro era capaz

de detectar cualquier objeto que se moviera a miles de millas de nuestro país.

Los Cinco Héroes antiterroristas, que nunca hicieron daño alguno a Estados Unidos, trataban de prevenir e impedir los actos terroristas contra nuestro pueblo, organizados por los órganos de inteligencia norteamericanos que la opinión mundial sobradamente conoce.

Ninguno de los Cinco Héroes realizó sus tareas en busca de aplausos, premio o gloria. Recibieron sus honrosos títulos porque no los buscaron. Ellos, sus esposas, sus padres, sus hijos, sus hermanos, y sus conciudadanos, tenemos el legítimo derecho a sentirnos orgullosos.

En julio de 1953, cuando atacamos el Moncada, yo tenía 26 años y mucho menos experiencia que la que ellos demostraron. Si estaban en Estados Unidos no era para hacer daño a ese país, o tomar venganza por los crímenes que allí se organizaban y abastecían de explosivos contra nuestro país. Tratar de impedirlos era absolutamente legítimo.

Lo principal a su llegada era saludar a sus familiares, amigos y al pueblo, sin descuidar un minuto la salud y el riguroso chequeo médico.

Fui feliz durante horas ayer. Escuché relatos maravillosos de heroísmo del grupo presidido por Gerardo y secundado por todos, incluido el pintor y poeta, al que conocí mientras construía una de sus obras en el aeródromo de Santiago de Cuba. ¿Y las esposas? ¿Los hijos e hijas? ¿Las hermanas y madres? ¿No los va a recibir también a ellos? ¡Pues también hay que celebrar el regreso y la alegría con la familia!

Ayer, en lo inmediato, quería intercambiar con los Cinco Héroes. Durante cinco horas ese fue el tema. Dispongo desde ayer, afortunadamente, del tiempo suficiente para solicitarles que inviertan una parte de su inmenso prestigio en algo que será sumamente útil a nuestro pueblo.

Fidel Castro Ruz  
Marzo 1 de 2015  
10 y 12 p.m.



*René González, Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, Fernando Hernández y Ramón Labañino se reunieron con Fidel Castro.*

# ~~Fidel: Five Hours with the Five~~

*Continued from cover*

The very same investigating bodies, completely devoid of the most basic sense of justice, participated in their inhumane incarceration.

Cuban intelligence services had absolutely no need to track the movements of a single U.S. military team, as they could observe from space everything that moved on our planet through the Lourdes Radio Electronic Exploration Centre, located to the south of the Cuban capital. This center was able to detect any moving object thousands of miles from our country.

The Five anti-terrorist Heroes, who never did any harm to the United States, worked to anticipate and prevent terrorist acts against our people, organized by U.S. intelligence agencies which the world knows more than enough about.

None of the Five Heroes carried out their work in search of applause, awards or glory. They received their honorific titles because they didn't seek them out. They, their wives, parents, children, siblings and fellow citizens, we all have the legitimate right to feel proud.

In July 1953, when we attacked the Moncada barracks, I was 26 years old and had far less experience than that which they demonstrated. If they were in the U.S. it wasn't to harm that country, or take revenge for the crimes being organized there and the explosives that were being stockpiled to be used against our country. Attempting to stop this was absolutely legitimate.

The first thing they did upon arrival was greet their families, friends and people, without neglecting for a minute the rigorous health checkup.

I was happy for hours yesterday. I heard

amazing tales of heroism from the group presided by Gerardo and supported by them all, including the painter and poet, whom I met while he was building one of his works in the Santiago de Cuba airfield. And their wives? Their sons and daughters? Sisters and mothers? Was I not also going to receive them? Well, their return and joy must also be celebrated with the family!

Yesterday, I immediately wanted to converse with the Five Heroes. For five hours this is what we did. Fortunately, yesterday I also had enough time to request that they invest part of their immense prestige in something that will be extremely useful for our people.

Fidel Castro Ruz  
March 1, 2015  
10:12 p.m.

**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION!**  
 MARKING 12 YEARS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR ON IRAQ

**NO TO NEW U.S. WAR ON  
 IRAQ!**



U.S. + CANADA HANDS OFF SYRIA!  
 STOP BILL C-51!  
 NO TO ISLAMOPHOBIA!  
 END THE BLOCKADE OF GAZA!  
 SELF-DETERMINATION FOR PALESTINE!  
 END THE BLOCKADE OF CUBA!  
 U.S./EU/NATO/CANADA: HANDS OFF UKRAINE!  
 U.S. HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!  
 LIFT ALL SANCTIONS AGAINST IRAN!  
 FREE PRIVATE MANNING. SOLDIER OF HUMANITY!  
 NO TO U.S. DRONES!  
 U.S. AND ALL IMPERIALISTS OUT OF AFGHANISTAN NOW!  
 HANDS OFF NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST!  
 SELF-DETERMINATION FOR INDIGENOUS NATIONS AND ALL OPPRESSED NATIONS!  
 MONEY FOR JOBS, HOUSING, HEALTHCARE AND EDUCATION. NOT FOR WAR AND OCCUPATION!  
 NO TO WAR AND OCCUPATION!  
 YES TO SELF-DETERMINATION!

**MONTHLY ANTI-WAR RALLY + PETITION DRIVE** **FRIDAY MARCH 27 5PM**  
**VANCOUVER ART GALLERY** ROBSON ST @ HORNBY ST  
 DOWNTOWN, VANCOUVER

**MOBILIZATION AGAINST WAR + OCCUPATION - MAWO**  
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**“By Any Means Necessary...”**




**MALCOLM X SPEAKS**

“That’s our motto. We want freedom by any means necessary. We want justice by any means necessary. We want equality by any means necessary. We don’t feel that in 1964, living in a country that is supposedly based upon freedom, and supposedly the leader of the free world, we don’t think that we should have to sit around and wait...”


“Education is an important element in the struggle for human rights. It is the means to help our children and our people rediscover their identity and thereby increase their self respect. Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs only to the people who prepare for it today.”

“You tell me what kind of country this is. Why should we do the dirtiest jobs for the lowest pay? Why should we do the hardest work for the lowest pay? Why should we pay the most money for the worst kind of food and the most money for the worst kind of place to live in? I’m telling you we do it because we live in one of the rottenest countries that has ever existed on this earth. It’s the system that is rotten; we have a rotten system. It’s a system of exploitation, a political and economic system of exploitation, of outright humiliation, degradation, discrimination – all of the negative things that you can run into, you have run into under this system that disguises itself as a democracy, disguises itself as a democracy. And the things that they practice against you and me are worse than some of the things that they practiced in Germany against the Jews. Worse than some of the things that the Jews ran into. And you run around here getting ready to get drafted and go someplace and defend it. Someone needs to crack you up ‘side your head.”

*Excerpts from Malcolm X’s June 28 1964 speech in New York City, eight months before he was assassinated.*




REPÚBLICA BOLIVARIANA DE  
**Venezuela**  
 CONSULADO EN VANCOUVER



**Hugo Chávez People's Defense Front**  
 SOUTH-WEST CHAPTER CANADA

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**My Friend Hugo**

Documentary by Oliver Stone

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 On this 2nd anniversary of his passing

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Fdphe\_so@gmail.com
[www.consulvenancouver.org](http://www.consulvenancouver.org)

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**April 27-May 9, 2015**

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**Tamara Hansen 778-882-5223**

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For full program please visit:

[www.canadiannetworkoncuba.ca/brigade](http://www.canadiannetworkoncuba.ca/brigade)

## VANCOUVERITES PROTEST BILL C-51



**By Noah Fine**

On Monday March 2, around 60 democratic rights activists and supporters gathered in one of the busiest transit hubs in Vancouver during rush hour traffic to protest the unfair and undemocratic Bill C-51. The highly controversial Bill, which has already been submitted to parliament for approval, seeks to expand Canada's spy agencies reach into the private lives of people living in Canada as well as making aggressive moves towards limiting freedom of expression.

However the pushing through of this extremely undemocratic Bill has not gone unnoticed by people living in Canada from all different backgrounds. Opposition to the Bill is growing and the March 2<sup>nd</sup> protest in Vancouver was a testament to that growing discontent.

People gathered for the protest were welcomed by rally organizer Charles Boylan. Charles thanked people for joining and encouraged participants to get involved in the campaign to "Defeat Harper in 2015" and to defeat Bill C-51. Next in the program was drumming and singing by members of the Indigenous community who also participated in the protest against Bill C-51 connecting it to the struggle for Indigenous rights.

Gail Davidson from Lawyers Against the War (LAW) spoke next concluding by encouraging people to get involved in an upcoming meeting to plan for continued actions against Bill C-51.

Fire This Time's Thomas Davies also spoke about Bill C-51's attempts not only to heighten the Harper government's campaign of Islamophobia, but also as a tool to limit freedom of expression and the right to gather and protest.

There are a number of events planned in protest of the Bill taking place across Canada including in Vancouver. Fire This Time would like to encourage its readership to take part and join in these activities for democratic and human rights, freedom of expression and against Islamophobia.

*Continued from page 23*

Espero poder ver en Panamá a los movimientos populares y las Organizaciones No Gubernamentales que abogan por el desarme nuclear, ambientalistas, contra el neoliberalismo, los Occupy Wall Street y los Indignados de esta región, los estudiantes universitarios y secundarios, los campesinos, los sindicatos, las comunidades originarias, las organizaciones que se oponen a la contaminación de los esquistos, las defensoras de los derechos de los inmigrantes, las que denuncian la tortura, las ejecuciones extrajudiciales, la brutalidad policial, las prácticas racistas, las que reclaman para las mujeres salario igual por trabajo igual, las que exigen reparación por

los daños a las compañías trasnacionales.

Sin embargo, los anuncios realizados el 17 de diciembre han concitado reconocimiento mundial y el presidente Obama ha recibido por ello muy amplio apoyo en su país.

Algunas fuerzas en Estados Unidos tratarán de abortar este proceso que comienza. Son los mismos enemigos de una relación justa de Estados Unidos con América Latina y el Caribe, son los que entorpecen las relaciones bilaterales de muchos países de nuestra región con esa nación. Son los que siempre chantajejan y presionan.

Sabemos que el cese del bloqueo será un camino largo y difícil que requerirá del apoyo, la movilización y la acción resuelta de todas las personas de buena voluntad en Estados

Unidos y en el mundo; de la aprobación por parte de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, en su próxima sesión, de la resolución que reclama ponerle fin y, muy en particular, de la acción concertada de Nuestra América.

Estimadas Jefas y Jefes de Estado y Gobierno:

Estimados amigos:

Felicitemos a Costa Rica, al Presidente Solís y a su gobierno por la labor desarrollada al frente de la CELAC. Damos la bienvenida y prestaremos pleno apoyo al Ecuador y al Presidente Correa que presidirá la Comunidad en el 2015.

Muchas gracias (Aplausos).

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## OUR HERITAGE



Clara Zetkin

German Marxist theorist, activist, and organizer of the first International Women's Day in 1911

*The following is an excerpt from a speech by Clara Zetkin at the Party Congress of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, Gotha, October 16th, 1896.*

"How does the women's question appear in the circles of the petit-bourgeoisie, the middle class and the bourgeois intelligentsia? Within the bourgeois intelligentsia, another circumstance leads to the worsening of the living conditions: capitalism needs the intelligent and scientifically trained work force. It therefore favored an overproduction of mental-work proletarians and contributed to the phenomenon that the formerly respected and profitable societal positions of members of the professional class are more and more eroding. To the same degree, however, the number of marriages is decreasing; although on the one hand the material basis is worsening, on the other hand the individual's expectations of life are increasing, so that a man of that background will think twice or even thrice before he enters into a marriage. The age limit for the founding of a family is raised higher and higher and a man is under no pressure to marry since there exist in our time enough societal institutions which offer to an old bachelor a comfortable life without a legitimate wife. The capitalist exploitation of the proletarian work force through its starvation wages, sees to it that there is a large supply of prostitutes which corresponds to the demand by the men. The wives and daughters of these circles are pushed out into society so that they may establish for themselves their own livelihood which is not only supposed to provide them with bread but also with mental satisfaction. In these circles women are not equal to men in the form of possessors of private property as they are in the upper circles. The women of these circles have yet to achieve their economic equality with men and they can only do so by making two demands: The demand for equal professional training and the demand for equal job opportunities for both sexes. In economic terms, this means nothing less than the realization of free access to all jobs..."

## Distribute Revolutionary Change in Your Area!

For distribution of Fire This Time in your area, across BC, and internationally, please contact:

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Phone: (604) 780-7604

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## Spring Rising: an antiwar intervention in DC

March 18-21, 2015

[SpringRising.org](http://SpringRising.org)

# No War on Syria!

**This is Not a War on ISIS/ISIL!**

**This is the New Imperialist War Drive in the Middle East!**



## Statement by Mobilization Against War & Occupation-MAWO

February 20, 2015

For almost four years the United States and other imperialist governments have been actively engaged in a bloody campaign to overthrow the government of Syria. They have been limited so far to imposing a cruel civil war upon the country by pumping it full of anti-government mercenaries. Throughout this entire time they have been constantly searching for an excuse to justify a full scale military intervention. Now they think they finally have one in a so called "the war against ISIS/ISIL".

More than 190,000 people have been killed and 22 million displaced because of the installed civil war in Syria. Within this fiery chaos also emerged the armed group ISIS/ISIL. Nobody benefited more from the hyper-injection of foreign military aid and funding than they did, and thanks to the vacuum of power created in war torn areas, they also expanded across Syria and moved into Iraq.

Never ones to miss an opportunity to justify increased war and occupation, the US used this as a justification to re-escalate their occupation of Iraq through hundreds of air strikes and an expanded military presence. The Canadian military joined the war drive by sending almost 700 soldiers, six CF-18 warplanes, two surveillance aircraft and an air-to-air-tanker. The first six months

of the Canadian mission alone will cost taxpayers 166 million dollars. This is despite repeated demands by Iraqis that all foreign troops leave the country immediately.


Now they are using a supposed war against ISIS/ISIL, a group they helped

and to remove any geographic boundaries in the fight. The US is already in Iraq, so where else would they go besides Syria?

We have seen these warn out boogiemans excuses time and time again since September 11, 2001. They have been used by the US and other imperialist countries to try and justify their wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Haiti, Libya, Mali and beyond. In Afghanistan it was the Taliban, which they also created! In Iraq it was weapons of mass destruction, which never existed! Now over a decade later and millions of people dead and displaced by these wars, they want us to once again believe they have only the best of intentions in their newest offensive.

In August of 2013, the US and UK were literally hours away from bombing and direct military intervention in Syria. Pressured by the mobilization of poor and working people across the world, the government of the UK lost a key vote to authorize the military action the strategy fell apart from there. Even US President Obama had to concede the defeat in a televised address. This was an important victory for all peace loving people!

Now in February 2015, it is crucial that we once again rise up to demand an end to imperialist war and occupation, and especially against a new war in the Middle East: the war on Syria. The new era of war and occupation these governments have been imposing on oppressed people around the world must be brought to an end, and we cannot allow them to expand their bloody campaign further into Syria. We must unite to educate, organize and mobilize against imperialist war and occupation! We must demand, "No War on Syria!", "Imperialists Out of the Middle East!"






Multimedia, Speaker • Discussion  
Free Public Forum

**US HANDS OFF SYRIA!**

7pm  
**TUESDAY  
March 31**

**JOE'S CAFE**  
1150 Commercial Dr.  
Large North Hall



Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO)   
[www.mawovancouver.org](http://www.mawovancouver.org)  @mawovan

create, to try and finally accomplish what they've been aiming for the whole time: large scale direct military intervention in Syria. US President Barack Obama has asked for authorization to dispatch ground troops to fight against ISIS/ISIL,

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A REVOLUTION WITHIN THE REVOLUTION

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International Greetings:

**Miraly González González**  
First Secretary of the Cuban Embassy in Ottawa

**Carolina Escarrá**  
International Relations of the Youth of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (JPSUV)

Some remarks & poetry by:

Tamara Hansen  
Kelly White  
Macarena Cataldo Hernandez  
& Mayra



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# Rumbo a Cuba! On Route to Cuba!



## SOLIDARIDAD

### Fundraising Party for Cuba

Fundraising for a much needed tractor & freezer truck for the Julio Antonio Mella International Solidarity Camp in Caimito, Cuba.

### Fiesta a Beneficio de Cuba

Los fondos recaudados serán utilizados en la compra de un tractor y un camión refrigerado para el campamento de solidaridad internacional Julio Antonio Mella, en Caimito, Cuba.

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Saturday  
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