

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



Fire This Time!

MAY DAY! MAY 1st! WORKERS DAY! WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!

REVOLUTIONARY ROSA LUXEBURG ON THE ORIGINS OF MAY DAY *Page 31*



The ABC's of Anti-Democratic Bill C-51

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THE NEW ERA OF WAR & OCCUPATION



It seems as though a great madness has gripped our world today. Every time one turns on the news, there is a new story of destruction, of violence, of terror. New wars seem to crop up daily. Other military missions, labelled as "humanitarian interventions", make any rational person question the definition of humanitarianism. In today's wars, no one is safe. Battles are no longer fought between armed soldiers on the front lines, but have been brought into people's very homes. Men, women, and children alike are victims.

The war on terrorism was supposed to make the world a safer place. Humanitarian



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Raul Castro's Speech at 7th Summit of the Americas

NEW ERA OF WAR AND OCCUPATION FROM AFGHANISTAN TO YEMEN: MORE THAN ONE DECADE OF WAR, OCCUPATION AND BLOODSHED - WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

By Nita Palmer

continued from cover

interventions to topple dictators were supposed to improve human rights and democracy. Yet any rational person can see that terrorist attacks, both in the Middle East and Western countries, have increased since 9/11. Human rights in the Middle East have not improved but crumbled away under the pressure of war. In the West, our civil rights have been dramatically curtailed in the name of stopping terrorism.

Why has over a decade of war and occupation in the Middle East failed to stop or even slow terrorism? Perhaps the war on terror is a facade, just smoke and mirrors designed to distract us from the true cause of these wars: Western imperialism.

Imperialism, as defined by the Oxford Dictionary, is "a policy of extending a country's power and influence through colonization, use of military force, or other means". Is this the policy the US and their allies have been pursuing in the Middle East for the past fourteen years, or have they truly been waging a war



on terrorism? Let us review the results of fourteen years of war in the Middle East and North Africa (we will cover the situation in Africa as a whole in a future article).

Afghanistan

Within weeks of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Centre, the US was bombing Afghanistan. The invasion succeeded in overthrowing the Taliban government (which, ironically, came to being out of US funding of anti-Soviet forces in

Afghanistan in the 1980s). However, the downfall of the Taliban certainly did not usher in democracy. While the current government of President Ashraf Ghani is favoured by the US and internationally recognized, it holds little real power outside of Kabul. Either local warlords or the Taliban form the de facto government in most of the country, even collecting taxes and carrying out judicial duties in some cases.

The war has forced 4.1 million Afghans from their homes, according to the UNHCR. Nearly 450,000 of these are internally displaced persons -- refugees in their own country. They live in squalid camps on the outskirts of the cities, with little access to food or water and little hope of returning home.

Poverty is epidemic in Afghanistan, with 42% of the population living on less than \$2/day. This is exacerbated by high unemployment, sitting at around 40%. Children often must work to feed their families, while the war's widows are often forced into prostitution in order to survive. Though life in Afghanistan was difficult even before the war, the instability created by ongoing bombings and firefights has created an even more desperate situation.



Iraq

The 2003 invasion and occupation of Iraq killed over a million people, according to estimates by the Lancet Medical Journal. Tragic as this loss of life is, there are a thousand more tragedies to Iraq's story since 2003. The country's health care system, once one of the best in the region, is in shambles. Many hospitals were destroyed in the US bombing campaign and occupation, only a fraction of which have been rebuilt. Many of Iraq's best doctors were lost in the war, either killed or forced to leave the country.



The bombing campaign also left Iraqis with the horrific legacy of depleted uranium and other toxic munitions. The overall cancer rate in the country has increased from 40 cases per 100,000 people in 1991 to 1,600 per 100,000 in 2005, according

most horrifying, children being born with grotesque and previously unseen birth defects. Sadly, this toxic legacy will remain in Iraq's soil and water for thousands of years to come.

The overthrow of Saddam Hussein certainly did not bring democracy to Iraq,

organizations and al-Qaeda in Iraq, an organization which had virtually no presence in the secular Iraqi state prior to the 2003 invasion.

Now, the US and their allies, including Canada, have begun bombing the country again in the name of fighting ISIS -- the very terrorist force which they helped to create.

Libya

NATO countries, including Canada, began bombing Libya in 2011, claiming they were supporting a movement for democracy against Libyan President Muammar Gaddafi. What in fact took place in Libya was one of the biggest blows to democracy, secularism, and human rights in the region. Prior to NATO's intervention, Libya was the wealthiest country in Africa. Education was free right through university. Quality health care was free as well.

Today, Libya is a shattered country, ruled by a variety of militias and terrorist organizations, including ISIS. The country's economy is in shambles. The health care system is in crisis as instability has forced hospitals to close and caused many foreign health care workers to leave the country. Women's rights have been eroded as religious fanatics and sectarian of all sorts have taken control in many areas.



to Iraqi government statistics. The Iraqi Ministry of Health has also reported a sharp rise in miscarriages, infertility and

either. Twelve years after the invasion, the country has been torn apart by the violent extremists known as ISIS. ISIS was born from various Sunni insurgent



There is no one to blame for this crisis but the US and NATO. Clare Lopez, a former CIA officer told the Daily Mail that the US was "knowingly facilitating the provision of weapons to known al-Qaeda militias and figures" in Libya. The real crime of the Libyan government in the eyes of the US and NATO was its firm stance on maintaining the country's right to independence and control over its own resources.

Syria

In Syria, a so-called "popular movement" against President Bashar al-Assad began in 2012, ostensibly as part of the wave of "Arab Spring" protests that swept the Middle East and North Africa. However, evidence quickly began to mount that these rebels were not acting alone. The New York Times reported that CIA operatives were working inside Syria, helping to supply weapons to the rebels.

The "civil war" in Syria -- created largely by support from the US, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia, has claimed over 210,000 lives (various estimation) and displaced over 10 million people, according to the UNHCR. The country's health care system has also suffered greatly. Over half of the country's hospitals have been destroyed in the fighting, leaving many without basic medical care.

And once again, Western intervention has not stopped terrorism - in the case of Syria, it has directly aided the terrorists. The US supplied the "rebels" of the Free Syrian Army with material support, even as "hundreds of fighters under the command of the opposition Free Syrian Army (FSA) have reportedly switched allegiance to al-Qaeda-aligned groups," according to a 2013 report by Al-Jazeera.

Today, a large portion of Syria is under the control of ISIS -- sadly in large part to support, direct or indirect, from the US and her imperialists allies.

Yemen

The newest front of war in the Middle East is the bombing campaign of Yemen by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), led by Saudi Arabia. The bombing began after rebels opposed to the government of former President Mansur Hadi - a staunch Saudi and US puppet - began to make gains across the country, including capturing the capital. The bombing campaign has claimed the lives of over 1100 Yemenis to date, including at least 115 children. While the US have claiming has not been directly involved in this bombing campaign, they have been providing logistical and intelligence

support to the Saudis. Nevertheless, one must think what would be more "direct" "intervention by US in Yemen.

However, the US has in fact been carrying out their own bombing campaign of Yemen for years. The CIA has been launching air strikes from drones against those who they deem to be terrorists. These air strikes have killed hundreds of people, including children.

Millions of Yemenis are in desperate need of humanitarian aid, but Saudi Arabia is preventing even basic essentials like food and water from entering the country. According to the United Nations, the shortage of fuel in the country means that most Yemeni hospitals will no longer have electricity within two weeks, which will leave many ill and injured without care.

Why has the War on Terror failed?

The last fourteen years have succeeded in completely destroying the Middle East. In that time, however, Western countries have not succeeded in stopping terrorism. In fact, the most violent extremists now have their own state! So why hasn't the war on terror succeeded, even in a small sense?

The truth is that the US, Canada, and their allies are not fighting terrorism -- in many cases, in fact, they are working with the terrorists. The real motives behind the wars in the Middle East are political and economic. As global competition for trade markets and natural resources increases, imperialist countries are trying to ensure they have the upper hand in the market.



They are trying to crush any government or popular resistance movement which is fighting for independence and against imperialist influence and domination in their countries. They are also attempting to ensure they have a foothold in the region above their competitors, particularly China and Russia.

Canada's role

Of course, we must not forget that our own government has involved us in this mess. People in Canada can no longer sit idly by and claim that the Americans have a patent on wars and atrocities. One hundred and fifty-eight Canadian soldiers died in Afghanistan - and how many Afghans died at the hands of the Canadian Forces? Canada has bombed Libya and now Iraq as well. Blood is on Canada's hands, even though the majority of Canadians oppose these wars. Silent opposition is not enough, though -- if we are to end these atrocities, we must actively oppose them.

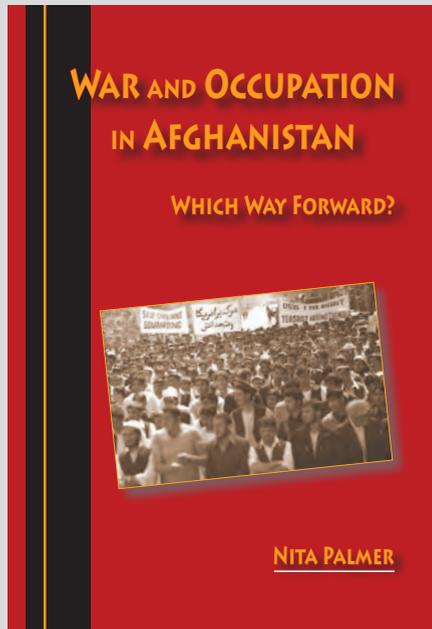
Who is the real enemy?

It is not Russia, China, Iran, or the governments which the West has overthrown in the name of democracy. Our real enemy - the greatest, most immediate threat to humanity - is imperialism. The wolves of imperialism—be they American, Canadian, British, French or other--have no human principles or morals. The last few years have proven that they will ally themselves with anyone--be it the antidemocratic and despotic Saudi regime or even the terrorists themselves--to achieve their goals. They are plundering our pockets--stripping away services like health care and education - while more and more funding is put into these wars. This destruction of the Middle East and North Africa has not made the world safer. It has ruined millions of lives, torn apart countries, and supported the development of extremism.

If we care about our future, our children's future, and the future of our world, there is only one thing to do: unite to end these bloodsheds and atrocities, to stop wars and occupations.

Battle of Ideas Press

WAR AND OCCUPATION IN AFGHANISTAN WHICH WAY FORWARD?



“The problem of Afghanistan boils down to just two words: foreign occupation. The Canada/US/NATO occupation forces claim that corruption, poverty, drug production, the presence of the Taliban and other social or political crises are the fundamental problems of Afghanistan which they must fix. The irony of this claim is that the same occupation forces have proven themselves completely incapable of fixing these problems or of bettering the lives of Afghan people one bit after eight years of occupation. Under the watchful eye of the occupation forces, corruption has become rampant in Afghanistan, from the local level all the way up to the highest levels of government. Afghanistan has gone from producing less than 10% of the world’s opium in 2001 to producing a staggering 93% of the world’s opium in 2008, according to the UN World Health Organization.”

BY NITA PALMER

Nita Palmer is an author and researcher on the war in Afghanistan. She is a member of the editorial board of Vancouver, Canada-based social justice newspaper Fire This Time.

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the **abc's** of **BILL C-51**

By Thomas Davies

Since the introduction of Bill C-51 in Canadian Parliament in January, there has been a real growth of opposition to it across different communities and the country. This has been shown in the polls,

I have participated in all 9 of these actions, and experienced the growing opposition first hand. People are eager for more information and tools to help explain Bill C-51 to family, friends and co-workers. The Harper Conservative Government introduced this draconian legislation without even a millisecond of public consultation. Their strategy in the last few

draw some different conclusions! We have noticed at our many actions opposing Bill C-51 that there are four questions almost everyone asks. To help explain Bill C-51, we are providing answers to the following questions.

These questions are:

What is Bill C-51?

What about the terrorists?

Why would the government do something like this?

How can I help to stop it?

1. What is Bill C-51?

Our first response to this question is usually this, "The government is basically writing itself a blank cheque to spy on, disrupt, detain, even torture people,



National Day of Action Against Bill C-51 - Vancouver, B.C. Canada

in every major Canadian newspaper, and very importantly, in the number of people who continue to make their voices heard by joining public demonstrations. This has been seen in two successful National Days of Action, as well as the day to day organizing being done in many different areas.

In Vancouver, the Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 has organized 9 consecutive weeks of public demonstrations in busy transit hubs across the city to an increasingly enthusiastic public response. Thumbs up, high-fives and offers and sandwiches have become commonplace as we speak out against Bill C-51, distribute information, and engage people in a discussion on its consequences.

months has been to dodge explanations and exaggerate time and time again the "jihadi terrorist threat" Canada is facing. Answers to serious questions about violations of fundamental human rights to free speech, assembly, and privacy are all met with the same non-answer, "Just trust us!"

As law professors Craig Forcese and Kent Roach said in their March 29 editorial to the Globe and Mail Newspaper, "The government has not made its case for C-51."

We continue to ask, "If this Bill is so great, why hasn't the government explained their own bill?" If the government of Canada is unwilling to explain their Bill, we will do it for them. However, we will

and to break almost any law they want. They're even giving themselves the power to do this in secret, all in the name of 'fighting terrorism'. They have made the language of the Bill so broad and so vague that they would be able to target pretty much anybody they wanted to, especially people who disagree with their policies." Naturally, this statement needs to be supported by specifics.

Some of the most concerning aspects of Bill C-51, among many, are:

1. It allow government agencies to arrest someone if they think a terrorist act "may" be committed instead of the current standard of "will" be committed. This might seem like a small grammatical

change, but the practical difference is huge. You actually need proof when arresting someone because they “will” do something. How do you define “may”? Could it be said that someone “may” commit a terrorist act because they rent a lot of Hollywood movies with those kinds of storylines? Or if they focus their studies on terrorism as part of academic research? To this, the government of Canada simply smiles and says, “Just trust us, we won’t abuse it.”

2. The bill would also give CSIS, Canada’s spy agency which is currently limited only to investigative powers, the ability to “disrupt suspected terror activity,” including websites and social media sites. The power applies inside and outside of Canada. What is the definition of “disrupt”, and what are its limitations? Could this be used to take down information critical of the Canadian government’s policies? “Just trust us!”

3. There are already 14 broadly worded terrorism related offences in the Canadian Criminal Code, but Bill C-51 would now allow the government to take it even further and target those accused of speech

promoting and advocating “terrorism in general”. What exactly does this ambiguous new term mean? “Just trust us!”

4. The word “terrorism” is made even more vague and open to abuse in Bill C-51. Bill C-51 adds that this includes interference with various aspects of public life or “the economic or financial stability of Canada”. As we asked in the last issue of FTT, “Does that make it illegal to publicly support a strike by workers at the Port of Vancouver for better safety regulations?” Can you guess the answer? “Just trust us!”

5. Bill C-51 stipulates that CSIS can any break laws and violate any individual rights, but:

“In taking measures to reduce a threat to the security of Canada, the Service shall not:

(a) cause, intentionally or by criminal negligence, death or bodily harm to an individual;

(b) wilfully attempt in any manner to obstruct, pervert or defeat the course of justice; or

(c) violate the sexual integrity of an individual.

Lawyers Clayton C. Ruby and Nader R. Hasan point out in a Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives article that, “These limited exclusions leave CSIS with incredibly expansive powers, including water boarding, inflicting pain (torture) or causing psychological harm to an individual.” To enact these kind of actions, all the government has to do is find one judge who agrees they can break Canadian law, “to reduce a threat to the security of Canada,” in a “reasonable” and “proportionate” way. Ruby and Nader point out, “It amounts to asking judges



to look into a crystal ball to determine if Canada will be safer in the future if a CSIS officer takes some measure.”

Why make laws if all the government has to do is find one agreeable judge to be able to break them? Why leave our rights up to crystal balls and speculation? “Just trust us!”

6. Bill C-51 would also allow the government to ask for information in immigration proceedings to be sealed at any point in the process. How would we know if someone was targeted unfairly because of political viewpoints or other reasons? “Just trust us!”

There are many other troubling aspects of the Bill, such as the manner our personal information can now be shared among government many agencies, the expansion of “no-fly” lists, and the massive expansion of private security powers with

zero expansion of oversight. The last 3 issues of the Fire This Time newspaper also have many articles detailing different aspects of the Bill, such as the way our personal information among many government agencies shared. Many other articles and research papers highlighting different concerns have also contributed to the growing movement against Bill C-51 as well.

2. What about the terrorists?

Prime Minister Stephen Harper has really played up the “jihadi terrorist threat.” According to him, Canadians “are targeted by these terrorists for no other reason than that we are Canadians. They want to harm us because they hate our society and the values it represents.” Canada’s Public Safety Minister, Stephen Blaney even invoked the World War 2 concentration camps of Germany in an attempt to justify Bill C-51’s attacks on free speech by saying that the, “Holocaust did not begin in the gas chamber, it began with words.”

So is there really an army of “jihadi terrorists” poised to take over Canada and began a systematic campaign of genocide?

Three people have been killed by terrorist attacks in Canada in the last year. That’s less than half a percent of the homicides in Canada in 2013. Every day 4 people die from impaired driving related accidents in Canada. Almost 4000 people die from suicide every year in this country. Yet we are supposed to believe we need to suspend our fundamental rights and freedoms because of the “jihadi terrorists threat?” There are many simple and practical measures the government could take to save thousands of lives in areas where people are actually dying in large numbers. We don’t support terrorism. Nor do we think it should be ignored.

Finally, it’s worth asking: What “values” is the Canadian government promoting when it occupies Afghanistan, when it helps overthrow a democratically elected government in Haiti, or when it bombs

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From 2012 Québec Students Continue Leading the Struggle for Humanity



By *Azza Rojbi*

It seems like only yesterday when the 2012 students strikes swept the streets of Québec in response to the Liberal government of Jean Charest's proposal of raising tuition fees by 75% over the next 7 years. The students mobilization in Québec sustained the longest and largest student strike in the history of North America. May 22, 2012 marked the 100th day of the strike, with hundreds of thousands of protesters taking to the streets of Montréal in what has been described as the single biggest act of civil disobedience in Canadian history.

The consistent fight of the Québec students movement succeeded in defeating the Liberal Charest government which was defeated in the next election. The new Parti Québécois government cancelled the tuition increases on September 5, 2012.

Fast forward in 2015, the new liberal government of Philippe Couillard haven't learned the lesson from their defeat in 2012. In a move to balance their 2015-16 budget the Couillard liberal government is on a roll to cut and slash healthcare, pension benefits and education budgets. This time again the students movement in Québec is taking up the challenge to lead the struggle!

Students in Québec leading the fight against Austerity

In a press release from December 2, 2014, Finance Minister Carlos Leitão said Québec was on track to get rid of its \$2.35-billion

deficit by 2015-16.

"We are determined to return to a balanced budget in Québec as of next year, and we will do so through

tight control of spending," said the Minister of Finance.

The Couillard government announced in December it would cut \$700 million in public service jobs, \$300 million in payments to municipalities and \$200 million to the health-care system, as well as hiking fees for car insurance, eliminating the province's universal fee for daycare and scaling back the allowable tax deduction for union dues.

On October 31, 2014, 50,000 people took to the streets of Montréal in a Halloween day march against austerity entitiled "L'austérité est une histoire d'horreur" (Austerity is a horror story).

As many as 25 student associations, representing 45,000 students province wide, voted for a strike mandate to participate in this march ,according to the student union Association pour une solidarité syndicale étudiante (ASSÉ).

On March 21, 2015, braving the snowy weather over 5,000 people marched in the streets of Montréal as part of a demonstration entitled "Popular Protest Against Austerity and the Petro Economy".

"Today, we're proud to launch a raucous spring," said Fannie Poirier, spokesperson for the Spring 2015 protest committee. "Austerity measures have been presented

as the lesser of evils to confront a deficient economy. But what we're seeing ... is a massive impoverishment of the population, full-frontal attacks on working conditions and a loss of security for society's most vulnerable people."

As many as 25 Quebec student associations participated in the two weeks strike including the CÉGEP du Vieux-Montréal, Concordia University, Laval University, Université de Montréal, Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) and Université du Québec à Chicoutimi.

Finance Minister Carlos Leitão delivered the 2015-16 budget on march 26, 2015. The tabled budget registered an increase of only 1.4 per cent for health and social services and 0.2 per cent for education. This seemingly increase in spending, amounts essentially to a cut once you factor in inflation and normal cost increases.

According to the Montréal Gazette, this education budget will mean \$45 million less for all of the school boards in the province, \$21 million less for the CEGEP system (public post-secondary education collegiate) and \$10 million less for universities. The federation of Québec school boards estimates that after factoring in only inflation and normal operating costs, the system needs \$350 million more a year to keep its head above water.

Rather than raising taxes for large business, fighting against corporate tax avoidance or cutting down the outrageous salaries and severance packages government higher-ups receive, the liberal Couillard government is cutting funding away from health, education and social services. On top of this austerity cuts the finance minister Leitão promised to gradually reduce the corporate tax from 11.9 per cent to 11.5 per cent.

The student movement in Québec sees the cuts to education as part of a broader attack by the government on Québec's social services and a degradation of working class life.

In an interview with VICE news Fannie Pommier, a political science student at Université de Québec à Montréal (UQAM) and member of Comité printemps 2015 said "In 2012 there was a fight against the \$1,625 tuition increase, which itself was an austerity measure. We've been cutting

back on public services since the 80s (and) what we've seen is global impoverishment. We are demanding the immediate withdrawal of all austerity measures proposed by Couillard's government."

Protestors met with brute force

While the finance minister presented his budget hundreds of students gathered outside of the national assembly in Québec City to peacefully protest. According to the student union ASSÉ eight buses filled with students from Montréal travelled to Québec City to join the protest. Police officers in Québec City used tear gas on protesters and declared the protest illegal. Riots police were deployed and an 18-year-old Québec City post-secondary CEGEP student, Naomie Trudeau-Tremblay, was shot in the face point-blank with a tear gas canister.

This brutal use of force by the police to crackdown on protesters continued. Reports surfaced of violent attacks on demonstrators by riot police, the use of police dogs against protesters and the mass arrest of 274 protesters at a march in Québec City on March 24

On March 27, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association issued a press release expressing their concern on the police use of force and mass arrests to shut down protests in Montréal and Québec City. The CCLA reiterated that "free speech, expression and protest are constitutionally protected rights in Canada – and must be upheld and protected."

The Université de Québec à Montréal (UQAM) imposed a court injunction on students protesters and started proceeding to expel nine students for their involvement in protests at the university. UQAM's rector, Robert Proulx also approved a \$500,000 contract with a private security company that is being employed for the duration of the student strike. Students said this money could of have gone to program funding or stalled union negotiations.

According to ICI Radio Canada student activist Hamza Babou was arrested and held 10 days in custody before his court hearing on April 17, 2015. Babou, 23 year old, faces 14 charges after being arrested for participating a protest at UQAM. He was denied bail in a controversial ruling by municipal court judge Justice Denis Laberge.

"It is exceedingly rare to hold a defendant in custody at this stage, especially for summary offences, because they are presumed



innocent," Babou's lawyer Veronique Robert told La Presse. Babou has been a main organizer within the university's student strike movement against austerity at UQAM.

And the Struggle continues...

Despite the violent police crackdown and the fear mongering tactics used by the Couillard's government to stop the protests, over 30,000 people gathered in Montréal on April 2 for the #manif2avril national day of action. Over 130,000 students were on strike for the day of the demonstration, organized by the student union ASSÉ.

Richard-Alexandre Laniel, a spokesman for ASSÉ said the protest measures will continue.

"We are calling on the current strike movement against austerity, against hydrocarbons and against political repression to keep going," he said.

On April 11, over 25,000 people marched for climate action in Québec City, as well as 15 other Canadian cities including Vancouver. It was the largest environmental protest ever in Québec City and one of the largest climate rallies in Canada's history.

On March 31, the executive committee of Québec student union association ASSÉ suggested to its members a "strategic withdrawal" by delaying their strike actions until after the summer in the wait of a general strike of public sector and trade unions.

The Comité Printemps 2015 criticized the recommendation on a post on their website "Being overtaken by its base should always be good news for a union, rather than a threat to the strategic plan of a paternalistic leadership."

During the ASSÉ congress held on April 6, ASSÉ members disagreed with delaying the protests and the six executive members responsible for the "strategic withdrawal" letter apologized and handed their resignations. ASSÉ's interim spokesperson, Hind Fazizi, told VICE news that what went down in the congress meeting is about values and accountability.

"We wanted to say it loud that accountability is something very important for us. But there is no confusion in our association because we also voted for a detailed action plan for the rest of spring and summer."

"It's not a student strike, it's a social strike. It's totally different than 2012. It was the greatest student strike. It's not comparable. Movements in Québec have always been led by students, that's why media is focusing on us. But it's not about us it's about everyone." Fazizi added.

Students have been calling for a social strike on May 1st, International Worker's Day.

Despite the unenthusiastic support for actions on May 1 from the leadership of labour federations, many unions locals are planning to join the students on strike.

Nurses union as well as teachers at several CEGEPs, including Joliette, Rimouski and Sherbrooke, have voted for a strike on May 1st .As many as 3,000 home daycare operators will also be joining the one-day strike.

Québec students are leading a dignified path to defend not only their right to an accessible education but the rights of all against a provincial and federal government that puts profit before people. They are the vanguard of struggle against capitalist austerity in Canada.

Richard-Alexandre Laniel, a spokesman for ASSÉ said "We are launching this as a long term struggle against a government that is trying to ruin our living conditions. He (Couillard) can expect us to struggle against for the years to come."

The Québec students movement consistent organizing against austerity is setting an example for students and workers in Canada about how to fight, to organize, to educate, to mobilize and to win.

STRONGER THAN EVER! ACTIVISTS IN VANCOUVER MARK SEVEN MONTHS OF PROTEST FOR THE 43 DISAPPEARED AYOTZINAPA STUDENTS

By *Janine Solanki*

April 26, 2015 marked seven months since the violent disappearance of 43 students from Ayotzinapa, Mexico. On September 26, 2014 the students were traveling from Ayotzinapa, Mexico on their way to Mexico City to participate in a protest rally. However while passing through the city of Iguala in Guerrero state, their bus was attacked with gunfire by local police and men in black masks who killed six people and kidnapped 43 students. While the government of Mexico has attempted to offload blame to local officials and has failed to investigate what has happened to the 43 students, huge protests throughout Mexico and echoed worldwide have made it clear that the people hold the state responsible for the disappearance of not only the 43 missing students, but also the over 100,000 murdered and 25,000 disappeared that have been the victims of Mexico's so-called "war on drugs".

In Vancouver, this seven month anniversary was marked with the rally "7 Months Without Them: We Are Still Missing 43 from Ayotzinapa" organized by the Vancouver Solidarity with Ayotzinapa Collective. Protesters, many who have been supporters of the events for the 43 students over the last seven months, joined together in front of the Vancouver Art Gallery in Downtown Vancouver. Holding signs bearing the faces and names of the missing students, those gathered raised their voices together to demand "They took them alive, we want them alive!" This has become a central demand in the struggle for the 43 missing students, and reflects



the determination that the Mexican government must be held accountable and must give answers for what has happened to the 43 students.

The rally culminated what has been a successful month of struggle in solidarity with Ayotzinapa. From April 12th to April 17th, five public events were held as part of the "Ayotzinapa to Ottawa Caravan" tour in BC. The tour, organized by CIPO and Co-Development Canada (CODEV) in BC and supported by many other organizations, brought to Vancouver Hilda Legideño Vargas, the mother of one of the 43 disappeared students; Jorge Luis Clemente Balbuena, a member of the student committee of the Ayotzinapa teachers' college; and Vidulfo Rosales Sierra, a lawyer from the human-rights center Tlachinollan and the legal representative of the families of the 43

disappeared students. The first event of the tour was on Sunday April 12th with a panel titled "The Ayotzinapa Disappearances and Mexico's Human Rights Crisis". Later that day a dinner and cultural presentation was held with the title "The People Help the People: Coast Salish with Ayotzinapa".

In a moving blanketing ceremony, the mother Hilda Legideño Vargas was given a traditional star blanket by Indigenous Elder Kelly White with the participation of Vancouver Solidarity with Ayotzinapa activists and supporters.

On Thursday April 16th the delegation traveled to the Secwepemc Indigenous Nation in South-Central BC for the event "Ayotzinapa to Secwepemculecw - Love for the 43 Disappeared Mexican Students and their Families" where activists from the Secwepemc Nation held a feast and cultural

event for the visiting delegation.

This month of activity for the 43 Ayotzinapa students shows the resolve of activists and supporters in Vancouver to keep up the struggle for Ayotzinapa and to keep supporting the struggle in Mexico for a better and more just society. At the recent rally marking seven months without the 43 students, the Vancouver Solidarity with Ayotzinapa Collective vowed to continue organizing rallies for the 43 missing students on the 26th of every month. Fire This Time encourages all who support justice to support this cause and to come out to the next rally for the 43 Ayotzinapa students on May 26th at the Vancouver Art Gallery. For more information search "Solidaridad Con Ayotzinapa Vancouver" on facebook or follow @AyotziVancouver on twitter. Alos you can check out our web site www.firethistime.net.

THE HUMAN CRISIS MADE BY IMPERIALIST POWERS



THE TRAGEDY OF "MIGRATION"? OR IMPERIALIST WAR CRIME?

By Alison Bodine

On April 19, 2015 a 3-deck fishing boat carrying hundreds of refugees heading for Europe sank 96km off of the coast of Libya. Over 800 people drowned in the waters of the Mediterranean Sea, or as it has come to be known, "the sea of death." Only 28 people were rescued from the capsized ship, surviving because they had been able to pay to remain on the top levels of the boat, while others were locked below.

Imagining the sinking of this ship, described by a rescue worker from Malta as a "floating cemetery," is horrific, but this human tragedy goes even further. Only one week before, up to 400 people drowned when another boat, overcrowded and unable to make the crossing, also capsized. This year alone, an estimated 1,800 people have lost their lives while passing through the Mediterranean, fleeing violence and poverty in Africa and the Middle East to find better life for themselves and their loved ones. The bodies of many of the people that have drowned will not be recovered. For most that have lost their lives, their coffin will have no name, only a DNA sample number in case a relative ever comes to identify the body.

Despite the danger, in the first four months of 2015, over 26,000 people have risked their lives to make the Mediterranean crossing (the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees - UNHCR). They came from many countries in Africa and the Middle

East – but mainly from Gambia, Senegal, Somalia, Eritrea, and Syria. Imperialist domination in Africa and the Middle East through wars, occupation, sanctions and other forms of foreign intervention forces people to move to where they can survive.

The Origins of the Humanitarian Crisis in the Mediterranean

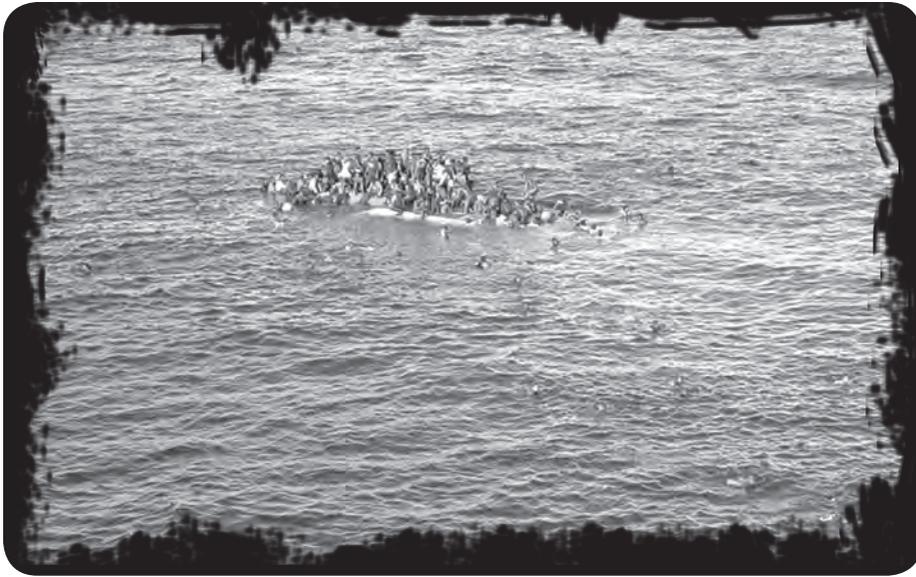
Now the harrowing stories of the refugees crossing the Mediterranean are beginning

to fade from the spotlight of most Western media outlets. Since the April 19th disaster there have been headlines, feature news pieces and hundreds of articles published about this human crisis. The corporate media has told the story of the people that have drowned; or have even covered the journey that many of them take through the Sahara desert. Others have explained the reasons that people are forced to migrate, the instability, poverty and war that forces refugees to flee. Most of these articles have cried out "There is a crisis at hand!" but few have gone as far to explain who is responsible for this crisis.

In order to understand the origins of this human crisis in the Mediterranean, it is important to look closer at two important trends in recent migration through the deadly passage. Looking at the alarming statistics from over the last few years alone, there are two important conclusions to be drawn. One is that the total number of people to refuge from North Africa to Europe has grown, especially since the

SOMEWHERE BETWEEN LIBYA AND EUROPE...





Western bombing and the overthrow of the government of Libya in 2011. The second horrifying trend is that number of people that have died in the crossing has also increased at an alarming rate.

Why the Increasing Numbers of Refugees?

According to the European Union's Border Agency Frontex, 40,000 people crossed into Europe through what they called in "Central Mediterranean" area in 2008. In 2011, that number jumped to 64,000. In 2014, there was the largest masses of refugees into one country in the history of the European Union, with more than 170,000 entering Italy alone. Greece has also reported a spike in the number of refugees this year, saying it has more than doubled to 10,000 people.

The majority of refugees destined for Italy depart from ports in Libya, a country where smuggling and human trafficking have flourished in the complete atmosphere of chaos that now exists. Before the 2011 imperialist bombing campaign and overthrow of Libyan President Muammar Gaddafi Libya had jobs, infrastructure and the highest life expectancy in Africa. Today, just four years after the US/France/Canada/NATO bombing began, Libya has been economically, socially and politically devastated and destroyed.

According to Federico Soda, (International Organization for Migration - IOM) Regional Director for the Mediterranean "This month we have witnessed an unprecedented number of fatalities at sea... among the arrivals there are a growing number of sub-Saharan migrants. Some of them always had the goal of reaching Europe. Others decided to risk their lives to cross the Mediterranean after having lived for months or even years in Libya, a country that has become too dangerous, particularly for labour migrants from West Africa."

However, instability and violence in Libya is not the only reason why crossing through the Mediterranean has dramatically increased. Since the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan by the United States, a new era of war and occupation began that has

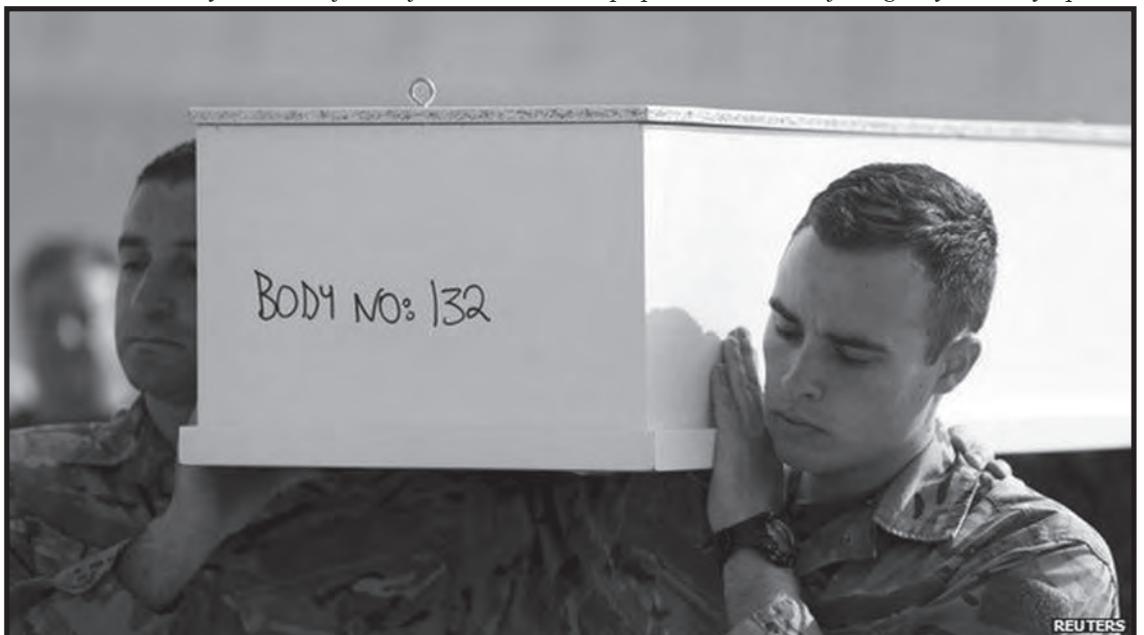
brought devastation and instability to countries all over the region. Three countries, Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya have been completely destroyed by imperialist forces fighting to re-gain hegemony in North Africa and the Middle East. Four years of a civil war in Syria, fomented by Western intervention and backing of so-called rebel forces has resulted in over 3.8 million refugees (UNHCR), over 190,000 people killed and 10.8 million people in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. Now the US, along with Canada and their European allies, is bombing Iraq and Syria in the name of "fighting terrorism." Naturally people ask where to go to be safe.

From the time of European colonization to today, there has always been migration in all its forms (as a migrant or refugee) from North Africa into Europe, but this has been dramatically accelerated by the new era of war and occupation. The increase in refugees from Syria can even be seen in the different amounts that smugglers are charging, \$400 to \$700 per person for a person from Africa and \$1,500 for a person from Syria (IOM). Wars, occupations, sanctions and foreign intervention by Imperialist countries have made life impossible for tens of millions of people in Africa and the Middle East.

Why Has the Crossing Become More Dangerous?

As of April 28, 2015, we are only 118 days into the year and an estimated 1,850 people have drowned while crossing the Mediterranean from North Africa to Europe. This devastating loss of human life represents 18 times the number of deaths

Soldiers carry the bodies of some of the more than 800 people who died while fleeing Libya. Sunday April 18





on the same crossing one year ago, from January through April, 2014 (IOM).

There are a few reasons for this increasing death rate, including the criminal policies of EU governments towards people fleeing persecution, poverty and death. This includes cuts to rescue operations, following the backwards thinking of British Tory Minister Baroness Anelay, who claimed last year that rescue operations were actually encouraging more refugees to across the Mediterranean. This is a ridiculous claim given not only the rate of refugees so far this year, but the estimation by the UN International Maritime Organization that nearly 500,000 refugees will make the perilous journey this year.

The increasing number of migrants and the

instability of Libya has also enabled human traffickers to send people on completely unsafe and overcrowded boats and rafts without facing any consequence. Often times there is little hope of reaching Europe without being rescued by a passing fishing boat, merchant ship, or governmental operation.

Open the Doors! Imperialism is the Problem not Refugees!

“What we witnessed today in Brussels was a face-saving not a life-saving operation”- John Dalhuisen, Amnesty International’s Director for Europe and Central Asia

The European Union had an emergency meeting on Thursday, April 23 in order to discuss a response to the humanitarian crisis

for migrants in the Mediterranean that had just been thrown into the international spotlight. The results of this meeting were far from relieving any aspect of the human crisis, which calls for an increase in rescue operations and resettlement of refugees as a short term solution to disaster. Instead, EU countries have committed boosting the Frontex Triton operation, which will retain its limited mandate and work only within 50 miles from the European shoreline, just with some extra ships and aircraft and triple the funding. EU countries also plan to work through diplomatic channels in order to get countries to agree to Europe taking military action against the boats used in human trafficking, another useless action given the great availability of ships.

For human and peace-loving people throughout the world, it is unimaginable to think that people fleeing violence and poverty for a better life should simply be turned around and told to go back home. This is especially true given that the wars and devastation that they are facing are in fact caused by EU and other imperialist governments, as well as by the legacy of European colonization in Africa and the Middle East.

There are between 500,000 and one million people in Libya waiting to board a ship or a raft and risk their lives in order to survive and that number will only grow, and along with it the death toll for those crossing. The new era of war and occupation will continue to push people out of Africa and the Middle East. Already, an estimated 10,000 people fleeing Yemen on boats destined for the Horn of Africa since the US/Saudi Arabia bombing began just over one month ago. On top of this, a 3 meter high razor wire fence in being constructed along the Bulgarian border with Turkey in order to deter land crossing into Europe.



So, in response to this great human crisis, what can human and peace loving people do? The same governments that are responsible for death and destruction in Africa and the Middle East are also responsible for the austerity measures and attacks on basic human rights here at home. We must unite together to combat the xenophobia and racism that divides us from refugees fighting for a better life.

We watch in horror as people just like us drown in the Mediterranean, and we cannot be silent:

Imperialists Hands off the Middle East and Africa!
Open the Doors to all Refugees!
Increase the safety of the Mediterranean passage!

Make the Call For Mumia's Life

Statement from MOVE and the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal (ICFFMAJ)

Monday, April 27

This government is actively killing Mumia right now at SCI Mahanoy. When Mumia was transferred to general population in December of 2012, Maureen Faulkner and the Fraternal Order of Police made it clear that they intended for him to die there. Maureen Faulkner stated that now the time "doesn't seem

so far off" before Mumia "stands before his ultimate judge." She hinted that she hoped he'd be killed by another inmate. They are currently carrying out that exact plan with prison doctors! Mumia was held in isolation for thirty years. When they saw that he had emerged from that strong, healthy, and determined, they decided to come at him another way. Despite being shot and beaten on December 9th, 1981, Mumia survived. They failed at executing him despite two execution dates, and after thirty years of isolation they couldn't break his spirit. Mumia's medical condition goes far beyond medical neglect or incompetence— this is deliberate murder.

Mumia's wife, Wadiya Jamal, visited him twice this week and witnessed that his condition is way worse than the previous week. Mumia came into the visiting room walking baby steps, in severe pain, and talking slowly and quietly. His face was sunken in, his skin is blackened like a burn victim with open wounds, and his arms, torso, legs and testicles are severely swollen with skin that is tightened and hard from swelling. Sitting down and standing up are both painful.

Prison doctors say they don't know exactly what's wrong with Mumia and yet they won't allow outside doctors in to see him. It isn't that they don't know, it's that they know exactly what's happening and it is exactly what they intend to happen! One of the drugs Mumia is being given, Cyclosporine, is known to lower the immune system and to cause many of the symptoms Mumia is being tortured by: chills, aches, problems with speech or walking, muscle weakness, tremors or muscle spasms. Mumia is suffering horribly and he is stuck choosing between having no medical care or being treated by the people employed by an institution which is set on his murder. The



only solution is for Mumia to be home with his family!

It's no accident that this attack on Mumia comes as people are rising up across the country to protest the police murders of Eric Garner, Mike Brown, Freddie Gray and many more. Mumia's voice has been key in educating the world about these killings and in uniting people in struggle.

As masses of people are rising up in rebellion they need Mumia silenced more now than ever. We must unite like never before to fight against this police terrorism and bring Mumia home! Mumia has given his life for this movement, he has sacrificed everything for true justice, now is the time to pay it back!

Flood the Phone lines!

Call the following numbers and demand that Mumia be granted: treatment by specialists of his choosing who are outside the Dept of Corrections, an appropriate diet, and daily visits by family, friends, and attorneys.

- John Wetzel - Secretary, PA Department of Corrections, (717) 728-4109
- Thomas Wolf - Governor of Pennsylvania, (717) 787 2500
- John Kerestes - Superintendent SCI Mahanoy, (570) 773 2158 x8102
- Susan McNaughton - Press secretary, PA Department of Corrections, (717) 728 4025

For more information visit:
www.freemumia.com

DEMAND THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA RELEASE MUMIA FROM PRISON SO THAT HIS FAMILY AND FRIENDS CAN PROVIDE HIM WITH THE MEDICAL CARE HE NEEDS!

Scan the QR code to sign the petition online



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Political Editor:

Ali Yerevani - editorftt@mail.com

Editorial Board:

Tamara Hansen, Aaron Mercredi, Alison Bodine, Nita Palmer, Janine Solanki, Thomas Davies, Ali Yerevani

Layout & Design:

Janine Solanki, Azza Rojbi, Lien Gangte, Alison Bodine, Shakeel Lochan, Noah Fine & Ali Yerevani

Copy Editors:

Tamara Hansen, Nita Palmer, Aaron Mercredi & Colleen Glynn

Publicity & Distribution Coordinator:

Thomas Davies

Production Managers:

Janine Solanki, Thomas Davies

Contributors to this Issue:

Azza Rojbi, Sanam Soltanzadeh Lien Gangte & Adrian Fu

Contact:

Phone - (604) 713-6270

Email - firethistimecanada@yandex.com

Mail - PO Box 21607 Vancouver BC, V5L 5G3

Subscriptions

For a one year subscription outside the lower mainland, make cheques payable to "Nita Palmer" (Canada \$15, USA \$20, International \$30) Send to: PO Box 21607 Vancouver BC, V5L 5G3

Distribution

For Fire This Time in your area across BC, Canada, and Internationally contact Publicity and Distribution Coordinator *Thomas Davies*

Phone : (778) 889-7664

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Statement from Mobilization Against War & Occupation - MAWO



STOP THE NEW CRIMINAL WAR BY UNITED STATES IN THE MIDDLE EAST!

**>> U.S./SAUDI ARABIA HANDS OFF YEMEN!
>> SELF-DETERMINATION FOR YEMEN!**

April 22, 2015

For one month Saudi Arabia, with the backing of the US, has devastated Yemen with a brutal and criminal bombing campaign. According to UN estimates, over 1,100 innocent Yemeni people have been killed. UNICEF last week released a report that by conservative estimates, more than 115 children have been killed by the Saudi-led war on Yemen. The indiscriminate bombing campaign against Yemen has created a humanitarian crisis where basic infrastructure has been destroyed, over 150,000 people have been displaced from their homes, and 12 million people in Yemen do not know where their next meal is coming from.

Under international condemnation and pressure, on Tuesday April 21, 2015 Saudi Arabia announced that their "Operation Decisive Storm" bombing campaign was over, and they announced the start of "Operation Renewal of Hope". This attempt of Saudi Arabia to appear less brutal is a complete farce. Less than 6 hours after this announcement, Saudi airstrikes on Yemen continued. An air and naval blockade has been imposed on Yemen including at least seven U.S. combat ships blocking Yemen's ports. The U.S. and Saudi Arabia are not only breaking and undermining international laws but also are denying the people of Yemen of their self-determination, as well as are attacking Yemen's sovereignty. Yemen's struggle to determine their own future free of U.S.-backed regimes is now facing foreign intervention and war with the help of the U.S.

Mobilization Against War and Occupation categorically condemns the Saudi Arabian bombing campaign against the innocent people of Yemen and the complete destruction of infrastructure of cities including roads, hospitals, schools, food and water sources, mosques and electrical power in Yemen.

Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO)





Heiltsuk Nation & the Fight to Protect West Coast Herring

By Aaron Mercredi

After a hard-fought struggle to defend their rights and the future of the West Coast herring, members of the Heiltsuk First Nation successfully shut down an unwelcome herring fishery on their territory, taking on the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) along the way.

The Heiltsuk Nation is located on the central coast of British Columbia. Historically, they have lived off the land and sea. Throughout their history, they have had a thriving fishery to rely upon which is integral to their culture and economy. However, due to the dramatic changes in fish stocks, their traditional way of life is under constant threat.

Since 2006, the central coast of BC had been closed to commercial herring fisheries due to low fish stocks as a result of over-fishing. In 2014, the DFO re-opened the coast to commercial herring fishing. Not only did this go against the

constitutional rights of the Heiltsuk First Nation and the other coastal First Nations whose interests were ignored, but leaked emails revealed that the government's own scientists recommended that the fishery remain closed in order to help re-build the herring population.

The DFO has since claimed that its science was updated in 2015 and that a 'limited catch' is sustainable. During this time, the

Heiltsuk had already given up their herring licenses, and closed the commercial fishery for this year. Despite this, on March 22nd, the DFO opened a commercial seine fishery without informing the Heiltsuk. Community members took to the waters in their boats to try and stop the seine fleet from harvesting the herring, but by the time they had arrived, the fleet had already harvested about 680 tonnes of herring. When the DFO planned to open a commercial gill-netting fishery in an area known as Area 7, allocating another 600 tonnes of herring to the commercial fleet, the Heiltsuk promised that they would stop the fishery 'by any means necessary.'

On March 29th, after the DFO refused to cancel the gill-net fishery, members of the Heiltsuk First Nation began an occupation of the DFO office on Denny Island with the support of more than 150 community members camping outside. The following day, an occupation began outside the DFO office in Vancouver. Solidarity actions took place across the coast as supporters protested



the planned fishery on Heiltsuk territory. The United Fisherman and Allied Worker's Union backed the Heiltsuk, advising gillnet fishers not to fish the central coast.

On April 2nd, after ten days of negotiations and demonstrations, Heiltsuk vessels escorted commercial herring boats as they made their way out of the central coast after having successfully closed the Area 7 gillnet fishery. The DFO signed a historic letter of understanding to jointly manage resources with the Heiltsuk.

Bad Science, Bad Intentions

There are good reasons for Indigenous nations not to have much faith in the science and intentions of the DFO. In the 1990s, the DFO allowed over-fishing to cause a disastrous collapse of the Maritime cod stock. While the DFO blamed the collapse on forces beyond their control, including 'cold water temperature and predation by seals', it gagged its own scientists who either warned of the impending collapse or tried to reveal the truth afterward. To this day, the East Coast cod have never recovered. This drive for capitalist profits out of the rivers, lakes and oceans leads the decisions and policies of the DFO. Indigenous nations have also had to square off with the DFO from coast to coast to assert their rights to harvest and protect fish on their territories. In 1999, well-armed DFO boats ran over Mi'kmaq fishing boats on the waters of Burnt Church, Nova Scotia, to prevent the Mi'kmaq from harvesting lobster on their territory. For years, the DFO brutalized members of the Cheam First Nation for harvesting salmon on the Fraser River on their un-ceded traditional territory. The Heiltsuk have also had to take their struggle to assert their fishing rights to the Supreme Court of Canada to win the Gladstone Decision acknowledging their legal right to harvest herring roe.

Strong and United: The Heiltsuk Victory

The actions taken by the Heiltsuk to protect not only the herring, but the future of their way of life, sends a strong message to people across Canada that you can stand up for your rights and win. They are joining the Haida Nation who had already won an injunction to block a planned commercial fishery this year.

It is important to note that this recent struggle could look very differently with the passing of the Harper Conservative government's Bill C-51. Under this new bill, the Heiltsuk would have certainly been placed under the category of 'terrorist' for having interfered with Canada's 'economic stability' and faced the heavy-handed tactics of the Conservative's proposed secret police force. It is our job to take the inspiration from the Heiltsuk struggle and strengthen our opposition to the Conservative government's attack on all of our rights.





Speech to the 7th Summit of the Americas **CUBA WILL CONTINUE TO DEFEND THE IDEAS FOR WHICH OUR PEOPLE HAVE ASSUMED THE GREATEST SACRIFICES & RISKS**

April 11, 2015

Army General Raúl Castro Ruz, President of the Councils of State and Ministers, thanked the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean for their solidarity, which enabled Cuba to participate on an equal footing in this hemispheric forum, as well as the President of the Republic of Panama for the invitation to attend and the time granted for his speech

(Translation of Council of State Spanish Transcript)

It was high time I spoke here on behalf of Cuba. I was told at first that I could make an eight-minute speech; although I made a great effort, along with my Foreign Minister, to reduce it to eight minutes, and as I'm owed six summits from which we were excluded, 6 times 8, 48 (laughter and applause), I asked President Varela a few moments before entering this magnificent hall, to allow me a few minutes more, especially after we have been hearing so many interesting speeches, and I am not only referring to that of President Obama, but also that of Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa, President Dilma Rousseff and others. Without further ado, I will begin.

His Excellency Juan Carlos Varela, President of the Republic of Panama, Presidents, Prime Ministers, Distinguished guests: Firstly, I express our solidarity with President Bachelet and the people of Chile, for the natural disasters that they have been enduring.

I thank all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean for their solidarity, which enabled Cuba to participate on an equal footing in this hemispheric forum, as well as the President of the Republic of Panama for the invitation to attend he so kindly extended us. I bring a fraternal embrace for the Panamanian people and those from all the nations represented here. When on December 2 and 3, 2011, the Community of Latin American and

Caribbean States (CELAC) was created in Caracas, a new stage in the history of Our America began, which clearly asserted the hard earned right to live in peace and develop as its peoples freely decide, and plotted a path for future development and integration based on cooperation, solidarity and the common will to preserve independence, sovereignty and identity. The ideal of Simón Bolívar to create a "great American Homeland" inspired truly epic independence struggles. In 1800, the U.S. had considered adding Cuba to the Union of the North, as the southern boundary of its vast empire. In the nineteenth century, the Doctrine of Manifest Destiny emerged with the goal of dominating the Americas and the world, together with the "ripe fruit" theory regarding the inevitable gravitation of Cuba toward the United States, which rejected the birth and development of a particular, emancipatory thinking of our own. Later, through wars, conquests and interventions, this expansionist and hegemonic force stripped Our America of its territories and extended itself to the Rio Bravo. Following long and frustrated struggles, José Martí organized the "necessary war" of 1895 – the Great War, as it was also called, began in 1868 – and created the Cuban Revolutionary Party to lead it and to found a Republic "with all and for the good of all," which set out to achieve "the full dignity of man." Accurately defining and anticipating the characteristics of his time, Martí devoted himself to the duty "of preventing the United States from spreading throughout the Antilles as Cuba gains its independence, and overpowering, with that additional strength our lands of America" – those were his exact words. Our America for him was that of the Creoles, the indigenous, the blacks and the mulattos, the mestizo and hardworking America that had to make common cause with the oppressed and plundered.

Today, beyond geography, this is an ideal that is beginning to become a reality. One hundred seventeen years ago, on April 11, 1898, the then President of the United States requested authorization from Congress to militarily intervene in the independence war, which Cuba at the time had been fighting for nearly 30 years, already virtually won at the cost of rivers of Cuban blood, and this – the U.S. Congress – passed a deceptive joint resolution, which recognized the independence of the island "in fact and in law." They came as allies and seized the country as occupiers. An appendix to its Constitution was imposed on Cuba, the Platt Amendment – known by the name of the Senator who proposed it –, which stripped the island of its sovereignty, authorized the powerful neighbor to intervene in its internal affairs and led to the establishment of the Guantanamo Naval Base, which still usurps part of our territory. During this period, the invasion of northern capital increased, thereafter there were two military interventions and support for cruel dictatorships. When Cubans, at the beginning of the twentieth century, drafted their Constitution and presented it to the governor, a U.S. general arbitrarily appointed by his country, he responded that there was something missing, and when the Cuban constitutionalists asked what that might be, he said: This amendment presented by Senator Platt, giving the United States the right to intervene in Cuba whenever it deems necessary.

They made use of that right. Of course, Cubans rejected it and the response was... very well, we'll stop here. That lasted until 1934.

There were two further military interventions and the support for cruel dictatorships in the mentioned period.

Regarding Latin America, "gunboat diplomacy" and then the "Good Neighbor" policy took precedence. Successive interventions overthrew democratic governments and installed terrible dictatorships in 20 countries, 12 of them simultaneously. Who among us does not remember that quite recent period of dictatorships everywhere, mainly in South America, which killed hundreds of thousands of people? President Salvador Allende left us an enduring example.



Exactly 13 years ago, there was a coup d'état against the dear President Hugo Chávez Frías which the people defeated. Then came, almost immediately, the costly oil shutdown.

On January 1st, 1959, 60 years after American soldiers entered Havana, the Cuban Revolution triumphed and the Rebel Army, commanded by Comandante Fidel Castro Ruz, arrived in the capital, the same day, exactly 60 years later. Such are the unfathomable ironies of history. The Cuban people, at a very high price, began the full exercise of their sovereignty. They were six decades of absolute domination.

On April 6, 1960 – just a year after the triumph –, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Lester Mallory, wrote in a perverse memorandum – I can not find another adjective to describe it. This memorandum was declassified decades later –, I quote certain paragraphs: “(...) the majority of Cubans support Castro...There is no effective political opposition. The only foreseeable means of alienating internal support is through disenchantment and disaffection based on economic dissatisfaction and hardship (...), to weaken the economic life of Cuba (...) denying money and supplies to Cuba, to decrease monetary and real wages, to bring about hunger, desperation and overthrow of government.” End of quote. 77% of the Cuban population was born under the rigors imposed by the blockade, more terrible than even many Cubans can imagine, but our patriotic convictions prevailed, the aggression increased resistance

and accelerated the revolutionary process. That happens when you impede the natural revolutionary process of the peoples. The harassment brings more revolution, history demonstrates this and not only in the case of our continent or Cuba.

The blockade did not start when President Kennedy signed it in 1962, later I will make a brief reference to him given his positive initiative to contact the leader of our Revolution to begin what President Obama and I are now starting. Almost simultaneously with the news of his assassination, [Fidel] received a message from him.

That is to say the aggression increased. The attack on Playa Girón came in 1961, a mercenary invasion, sponsored and organized by the United States. Six years of war against armed groups who on two occasions encompassed the whole country. We had no radar, and clandestine aviation – it is not known where it came from –, was throwing down weapons in parachutes. That process cost us thousands of lives; we have not been able to calculate the economic costs with accuracy. It was January 1965 when it concluded, and they had begun supporting it towards the end of 1959, about 10 or 11 months after the triumph of the Revolution, when we had not yet declared socialism, which was declared in 1961, at the funeral of the victims of the airport bombings the day before the invasion.

The next day our army, small at that time, and all our people went to fight against that

All leaders at the 7th Summit of the Americas

aggression and fulfilled the order of the Leader of the Revolution to destroy it within 72 hours. Because if they had managed to establish themselves there at the landing site, which was protected by the largest swamp of the Caribbean islands, they would have brought in an already formed government – with a Prime Minister and the appointment of other ministers – which was at a U.S. military base in Florida. If they had been able to consolidate the position they initially occupied, it would have been easy to bring that government over to Playa Girón. And immediately the OAS, which had already banned us for proclaiming ideas alien to the continent, would have recognized it. This government formed in Cuba, establishing itself on a small piece of land, would have asked the OAS for help and that help was located on U.S. warships situated three miles off the coast, which was the then existing limit of our territorial waters, which as you know is now is 12 [miles].

The Revolution continued to gain strength, to radicalize. The other option was to give up. What would have happened? What would have happened in Cuba? How many hundreds of thousands of Cubans would have died? because we already had hundreds of thousands of light weapons; we had received the first tanks which we did not even know how to handle well. The artillery, we knew how to shoot cannon fire, but we did not know where they were going to hit; what

some militia learned in the morning, they had to teach to others in the afternoon.

But there was a lot of courage, you had to go along a single route, because it was a swamp where the troops could not spread out, nor could tanks or heavy vehicles be deployed. We suffered more casualties than the attackers. That's why Fidel's order was fulfilled: to eliminate them within 72 hours. And that same U.S. fleet was the one which accompanied the expedition from Central America, and it was there, from the coast where some of their ships could be seen just three miles away. What was the cost to Guatemala of the famous invasion in 1954?, which I remember well because I was imprisoned on the Isle of Youth – or Pines, as it was called then –, for the attack on the Moncada Barracks a year earlier. How many hundreds of thousands of Mayans, indigenous peoples and other Guatemalan citizens perished throughout a long process that would take years to recover from? That was the beginning.

Once we had already proclaimed socialism and the people had fought to defend Playa Girón, President John F. Kennedy – to whom I already made reference just a moment ago – was assassinated precisely at the very moment, the same day on which the leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro, had received a message from him – from John Kennedy – looking to initiate a dialogue. After the Alliance for Progress and having paid the foreign debt several times over without preventing it from further multiplying, a savage and globalizing neoliberalism was imposed on us, as an expression of imperialism in this era, which caused a lost decade in the region.

The proposal then of a mature hemispheric association resulted in the attempt to impose

the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) on us, associated with the emergence of these Summits, which would have destroyed the economy, sovereignty and common destiny of our nations, if it had not been run aground in 2005, in Mar del Plata, under the leadership of Presidents Chávez, Kirchner and Lula. A year earlier, Chávez and Fidel had given birth to the Bolivarian Alternative, today the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America.

Your Excellencies:

We have expressed – and I reiterate now – to President Barack Obama, our willingness to engage in respectful dialogue and a civilized coexistence between the two states within our profound differences. I consider as a positive step his recent statement indicating that he will decide shortly regarding Cuba's presence on the list of state sponsors of terrorism – imposed by the Reagan administration – on which it should never have appeared.

Us, a terrorist country! Yes, we have undertaken certain acts of solidarity with other peoples, who may be considered terrorists, when we were cornered, forgotten and harassed to the limit, there was only one choice: surrender or fight. You know what we chose with the support of our people. Who could think that we would force a whole people to make the sacrifice made by the Cuban people to survive, to help other nations?! (Applause). But “the dictatorship of the Castros forced them,” just like it forced 97.5% of the population to vote for socialism.

I reiterate that I consider as a positive step the recent statement by President Obama to speedily decide on the presence of Cuba on a list of state sponsors of terrorism that it should never have been on, I was telling you, because when this was imposed it turned

out that the terrorists were those of us who provided the corpses – I don't have the exact figure to mind –, for terrorism in Cuba alone, and in some cases against Cuban diplomats in other parts of the world who were killed. The figure was just provided me by my compañeros: in that period we saw 3,478 dead and 2,099 disabled for life; plus many others who were wounded.

The terrorists were those who provided the corpses. Where did the terror come from then? Who provoked it? Some of those who have even been here in Panama these past few days, such as the CIA agent Rodríguez, who murdered Che and took his cut-off hands to prove with his fingerprints, I don't know where, that it was the corpse of Che, which later we recovered with the help of a friendly government in Bolivia. But still, since then we continue to be the terrorists.

Truly, I ask you to excuse me, including President Obama and others present at this event, for expressing myself in this way. I told him myself that passion seeps from my very pores when it comes to the Revolution. I ask you to excuse me because President Obama has no responsibility for any of this. How many presidents have we had? Ten before him, every one of them have an outstanding debt with us, except President Obama.

After saying so many harsh things about a system, it is fair that I ask him to excuse me, because I am among those who believe – and I have expressed this to quite a few heads of state and government that I see here, in private meetings I have had with them, when receiving them in my country – that, in my opinion, President Obama is an honest man. I've read some of his biography in the two books which have appeared, not in full, I'll do that given more time. I admire his humble origins, and I think his nature is due to this humble background (Long applause).

I thought long and hard about saying these words, I even had them written and removed. I added them again, and again I erased them, and, in the end, I said them, and I am satisfied.

To date, the economic, commercial and financial blockade continues to be applied in full force against the island, causing harm and scarcities to the people and is the fundamental obstacle to the development of our economy. It constitutes a violation of International Law and its extraterritorial reach affects the interests of all States.

The almost unanimous vote, apart from Israel and the United States itself, against the blockade in the UN over so many years, is no coincidence. And while the blockade exists, a situation for which the President is not responsible, and that due to past agreements and bills was codified into a law in Congress

Raúl Castro & President of Ecuador Rafael Correa



which the President cannot modify, we must continue to struggle and support President Obama in his intentions to eliminate the blockade. (Applause)

One issue is the establishment of diplomatic relations and another is the blockade. Therefore, I ask you all, and life also obliges us, to continue supporting this struggle against the blockade.

Excellencies:

We have publicly expressed to President Obama, who was also born under the blockade policy toward Cuba, our recognition of his brave decision to participate in a debate with his country's Congress in order to put an end to it.

These and other elements must be resolved in the process toward the future normalization of bilateral relations.

For our part, we will continue to be engaged in the process of updating the Cuban economic model with the aim of perfecting our socialism, advancing toward development and consolidating the achievements of a Revolution which has proposed to "conquer all justice" for our people. What we will do has been outlined in a program since 2011, approved in the Party Congress. In the next Congress, which will take place next year, we will expand it; we will review what we have done and what remains to be done in order to achieve our goal. Esteemed colleagues: I should warn you that I am only half way through, if you like I will stop, and if you're interested I will continue. I will speed up a bit (laughter).

Venezuela is not, nor can it be, a threat to the national security of a superpower like the United States. (Applause). It is positive that the U.S. President has recognized this as such.

I must reiterate our total support, resolute and loyal, to the sister Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, to the legitimate government and the civic-military union led by President Nicolás Maduro, to the Bolivarian and chavista people who are struggling to follow their own path and facing destabilization attempts and unilateral sanctions which we demand be lifted, that the Executive Order be revoked - although this is difficult given the law - which would be appreciated by our community as a contribution to hemispheric dialogue and understanding. We know each other. I believe that of those of us gathered here, I may be one of the few that best knows the Venezuelan process, it is not because we are there, nor that we are exerting influence there and they tell us everything, we know the process because they are proceeding along the same path which we passed and are suffering the same aggressions we suffered, or some of them. We will continue to support the efforts

of the Republic of Argentina to recuperate the Malvinas, Georgias del Sur and Sandwich del Sur Islands, and will continue to support its legitimate struggle to defend its financial sovereignty. We will continue to support the actions of the Republic of Ecuador in the face of transnational companies which cause ecological harm to its territory and attempt to impose abusive conditions.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Brazil, and of President Dilma Rousseff, to the strengthening of regional integration and to the development of social policies which have brought advances and benefits to broad sectors of the population, which, within the offensive against diverse leftist governments of the region, they are attempting to oust. Our support for the Latin American and Caribbean people of Puerto Rico in their efforts to achieve self-determination and independence -, as the United Nations Decolonization Committee has ruled on dozens of occasions -, will be unwavering. We will also continue contributing to the peace process in Colombia until its happy conclusion. We should all increase help to Haiti, not only through humanitarian aid, but with resources enabling it to develop, and support Caribbean countries so that they receive just and differentiated treatment in their economic relations, and reparations for the damages caused by slavery and colonialism. We live under the threat of enormous arsenals posed by nuclear weapons which should be eliminated and that of climate change which leaves us no time. Threats to peace are increasing and conflicts are spreading.

As President Fidel Castro expressed, "The fundamental causes lie in poverty and underdevelopment, and in the unequal distribution of wealth and knowledge which prevail in the world. It can not be forgotten that current underdevelopment and

poverty are the consequences of conquest, colonization, slavery and the plundering of much of the earth by colonial powers, the rise of imperialism and the bloody wars for a new dividing up out of the planet. Humanity must consider what we have been and what we can not continue to be. Today," continued Fidel, "our species has acquired sufficient knowledge, ethical values, and scientific resources to advance toward a historic era of true justice and humanism. Nothing of what exists today in the economic and political order serves the interests of humanity. It can not be sustained. It must be changed," concluded Fidel.

Cuba will continue to defend the ideas for which our people have assumed the greatest sacrifices and risks and fought for, alongside the poor, the sick lacking medical attention, the unemployed, boys and girls abandoned to their fate or forced to work or prostitute themselves, the hungry; the discriminated, the oppressed and the exploited who make up the vast majority of the world's population.

Financial speculation, the privileges of Bretton Woods and the unilateral suspension of the convertibility of the dollar into gold are increasingly asphyxiating. We require a transparent and equitable financial system.

It is unacceptable that less than a dozen corporations, mainly from the U.S. - 4 or 5 among 6 or 8 - decide what is read, seen or heard on the planet. The Internet must have an international, democratic and participative system of governance, especially in regards to the creation of content. The militarization of cyberspace and use of covert and illegal information systems to attack other States is unacceptable. We will not allow ourselves to be blinded and colonized again. In regards to the Internet, which is a marvelous invention, one of the greatest in recent years, we might

Raúl Castro & Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro at the Summit of the Americas





Latin American & Caribbean leaders at the CELAC Summit earlier this year in Costa Rica

say, recalling the example of the tongue in Aesop's fable, that the Internet can be used in the best way and is very useful, but in turn, can also be used for the worst.

Mr. President:

Hemispheric relations, in my opinion, must change profoundly, in particular in the political, economic and cultural spheres, to focus on developing mutually beneficial ties and cooperation to serve the interests of all our nations and their stated objectives, in accordance with international law and respect for the exercise of self-determination and sovereign equality.

The approval of the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, in January 2014 during the Second CELAC Summit in Havana, constituted a significant contribution to this goal, marked by Latin American and Caribbean unity within its diversity.

This is demonstrated by the fact that we are advancing toward a genuine process of Latin American and Caribbean integration through CELAC, UNASUR, CARICOM, MERCOSUR, ALBA-TCP, SICA and the Association of Caribbean States, which highlights the growing awareness of the need to unite to ensure our development.

Through the aforementioned Proclamation we are obliged to ensure that "differences between nations are peacefully settled through dialogue and negotiations or other means, fully consistent with international law."

Today, to live in peace, cooperating with each other in order to confront the challenges and resolve the problems which, at the end of the day, affect and will continue to affect us all, is imperative. As stated in the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace "The inalienable right of every State to choose its political, economic, social and cultural system, as an essential condition to guarantee peaceful coexistence among

nations," must be respected.

With this we commit ourselves to fulfilling our "obligation not to intervene, directly or indirectly, in the internal affairs of any other state and observe the principles of national sovereignty, equal rights and self-determination of peoples," and to respect "the principles and norms of international law (...) and the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter."

This historic document urges "all member states of the International Community to fully respect this declaration in their relations with CELAC member states." Now, we have the opportunity for all those present to learn, as the Proclamation also expresses, to "practice tolerance and live together in peace as good neighbors."

Yes, there exists substantial disagreement, but also points in common, on which we can cooperate in order to make it possible to live in this world full of threats to peace, and [ensure] the survival of humanity. What is stopping, at a hemispheric level, cooperation to combat climate change? As other Presidents who preceded me have already inquired.

Why can't the countries of the two Americas, the North and the South, fight together against terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime, without politically biased positions? Why not seek together the necessary resources to provide the hemisphere with schools, hospitals – even if they aren't luxurious, a modest little hospital, in those places where people die because there is no doctor, to stimulate employment, to advance in the eradication of poverty.

Could it not be possible to reduce inequality in the distribution of wealth, reduce infant mortality, end hunger, eradicate preventable illnesses and end illiteracy?

Last year, we established hemispheric cooperation in the fight against and

prevention of Ebola and the countries of the two Americas worked together, which should serve to stimulate greater efforts. Cuba, a small country, lacking in natural resources, which has developed within an extremely hostile context, has been able to achieve full citizen participation in the political and social life of the nation; free universal healthcare and education; a system of social security which guarantees that no Cuban is left homeless; significant progress toward ensuring equality of opportunity and combating discrimination in all its forms; the full exercise of children's and women's rights; access to sports and culture; the right to life and citizen security.

Despite scarcities and difficulties, we remain true to sharing what we have. There are currently 65,000 Cuban collaborators working in 89 countries, above all in the spheres of medicine and education. 68,000 professionals and technicians from 157 countries have graduated from the island, 30,000 of which in the field of health.

If, with scarce resources, Cuba has been able to achieve this, what could the hemisphere do, with the political will to combine efforts to support the countries most in need?

Thanks to Fidel and the heroic Cuban people, we have come to this Summit, to fulfill the mandate of Martí with the freedom won by our own hands, "proud of Our America, to serve and honor her... with the determination and capacity to help ensure that she is valued for her merits, and respected for her sacrifices," as Martí stated.

Mr. President:

And to you all, forgive me for the time I have taken.

Many thanks to you all. (Applause)

DISCURSO DE RAÚL CASTRO

EN LA VII CUMBRE DE LAS AMÉRICAS

CUBA SEGUIRÁ DEFENDIENDO LAS IDEAS POR LAS QUE NUESTRO PUEBLO HA ASUMIDO LOS MAYORES SACRIFICIOS Y RIESGOS



* EN ESPAÑOL *

11 de abril, 2015

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 VII Cumbre de las Américas, Panamá, el 11 de abril de 2015.

(Versiones Taquigráficas – Consejo de Estado)

Ya era hora de que yo hablara aquí a nombre de Cuba.

Me informaron al principio que podría hacer un discurso de ocho minutos; aunque hice un gran esfuerzo, junto con mi Canciller, de reducirlo a ocho minutos, y como me deben seis cumbres de las que nos excluyeron, 6 por 8, 48 (Risas y aplausos), le pedí permiso al presidente Varela unos instantes antes de entrar a este magnífico salón, para que me cedieran unos minutos más, sobre todo después de tantos discursos interesantes que estamos escuchando, y no me refiero solo al del presidente Obama, sino también al del presidente ecuatoriano, Rafael Correa, a la Presidenta Dilma Rousseff y otros. Sin más preámbulos, comenzaré.

Excelentísimo Señor Juan Carlos Varela, Presidente de la República de Panamá; Presidentas y Presidentes; Primeras y Primeros Ministros; Distinguidos invitados:

En primer lugar, expreso nuestra solidaridad con la Presidenta Bachelet y el pueblo de Chile, por los desastres naturales que han estado padeciendo.

Agradezco la solidaridad de todos los

países de la América Latina y el Caribe que hizo posible que Cuba participara en pie de igualdad en este foro hemisférico, y al Presidente de la República de Panamá por la invitación que tan amablemente nos cursara. Traigo un fraterno abrazo al pueblo panameño y a los de todas las naciones aquí representadas.

Cuando los días 2 y 3 de diciembre de 2011 se creó la Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños (CELAC), en Caracas, se inauguró una nueva etapa en la historia de Nuestra América, que hizo patente su bien ganado derecho a vivir en paz y a desarrollarse como decidan libremente sus pueblos, y se trazó para el futuro un camino de desarrollo e integración, basada en la cooperación, la solidaridad y la voluntad común de preservar la independencia, soberanía e identidad.

El ideal de Simón Bolívar de crear una “gran Patria Americana” inspiró verdaderas epopeyas independentistas.

En 1800 se pensó en agregar a Cuba a la Unión del Norte como el límite sur del extenso imperio. En el siglo XIX, surgieron la Doctrina del Destino Manifiesto con el propósito de dominar las Américas y al mundo, y la idea de la Fruta Madura para la gravitación inevitable de Cuba hacia la Unión norteamericana, que desdeñaba el nacimiento y desarrollo de un pensamiento propio y emancipador.

Después, mediante guerras, conquistas e intervenciones, esta fuerza expansionista y hegemónica despojó de territorios a Nuestra América y se extendió hasta el Río Bravo. Luego de largas luchas que se frustraron, José Martí organizó la “guerra necesaria” de 1895 —la Gran Guerra, como fue llamada

también, empezó en 1868— y creó el Partido Revolucionario Cubano para conducirla y fundar una República “con todos y para el bien de todos” que se propuso alcanzar “la dignidad plena del hombre”.

Al definir con certeza y anticipación los rasgos de su época, Martí se consagra al deber “de impedir a tiempo con la independencia de Cuba que se extiendan por las Antillas los Estados Unidos y caigan, con esa fuerza más, sobre nuestras tierras de América” —fueron sus palabras textuales.

Nuestra América es para él la del criollo, del indio, la del negro y del mulato, la América mestiza y trabajadora que tenía que hacer causa común con los oprimidos y saqueados. Ahora, más allá de la geografía, este es un ideal que comienza a hacerse realidad.

Hace 117 años, el 11 de abril de 1898, el entonces Presidente de los Estados Unidos solicitó al Congreso autorización para intervenir militarmente en la guerra de independencia que por cerca de 30 años libraba Cuba en esos momentos, ya ganada prácticamente al precio de ríos de sangre cubana, y este —el Congreso americano— emitió su engañosa Resolución Conjunta, que reconocía la independencia de la isla “de hecho y de derecho”. Entraron como aliados y se apoderaron del país como ocupantes.

Se impuso a Cuba un apéndice a su Constitución, la Enmienda Platt —conocida así por el nombre del senador que la propuso—, que la despojó de su soberanía, autorizaba al poderoso vecino a intervenir en los asuntos internos y dio origen a la Base Naval de Guantánamo, la cual todavía usurpa parte de nuestro territorio. En ese período se incrementó la invasión del capital norteamericano, posteriormente hubo dos intervenciones

continúa en la página 26

¡Venceremos!

We Will Win!

OUR STRUGGLE

AROUND THE WORLD



Obama balks faced to union of peoples, admits that Venezuela is not a threat

Cuba to Export Cancer Vaccine to US, New York Governor Confirms

10 April, 2015 (Venezuelan National Radio RNV)

22 April 2015 (teleSUR English)

The President of the U.S., Barack Obama, admitted on Thursday in an exclusive interview with the EFE news agency, that Venezuela is not a threat to the national security of his country.

The New York government and business delegation to Cuba also hope to pressure the U.S. Congress to end its blockade on Cuba. The Cuban Immunology Center and the Roswell Park Cancer Institute of New York signed an agreement Tuesday for the U.S. to import a therapeutic vaccine against lung cancer developed by Cuba.

These are statements that contradict the decree signed last March 9 by the US president.

“Signing this agreement means we can immerse ourselves in clinical trials when we return to New York,” said Candance Johnson, director of the U.S.-based Roswell Park institute.

On the eve of the 7th Summit of the Americas in Panama, Obama began a diplomatic and media offensive that seeks to minimize the deep international condemnation that caused such imperialist claims about Venezuela.

The agreement was signed as part of a business delegation visit to Cuba headed by New York Governor Andrew Cuomo. “We are very excited to be able to bring the vaccine to the U.S. and to treat patients,” Candance said.

In this sense, the Bolivarian Revolution has become the hub of South American integration and which defends its full sovereignty and political and economic independence, which is at odds with the interests of the United States of appropriating the largest oil reserves in the world, which are located on Venezuelan soil.

Cuba created the vaccine in 2011 after 15 years of research. Brazil, Argentina and Colombia are currently applying to have access to the vaccine, while the U.K and Australia have already carried out their own clinical trials.

Pope describes Armenian WWI killings as 'genocide'

Apr 12, 2015 (PressTV)

Pope Francis has described as “genocide” the mass killings of Armenians during the Ottoman Empire era in World War I. “In the past century our human family has lived through three massive and unprecedented tragedies,” he said during a Sunday solemn mass in Saint Peter’s Basilica to mark the mass killings.

The business delegation also saw an agreement between New York company Infor, and a Cuban organization. “We are surprised by the level and experience that there is in Cuba in health and technology,” company representative Charles Phillips stated.

Referring to a statement signed by John Paul II and the Armenian patriarch in 2001, he added that “the first, which is widely considered ‘the first genocide of the 20th century’, struck your own Armenian people.”

Cuomo and Cuban First Vice President Miguel Diaz-Canel also talked about relations between Cuba and the U.S.

Ankara rejects the term “genocide” and instead says the 300,000 to 500,000 Armenians, and at least as many Turks, who perished between 1915 and 1917 were the casualties of World War I.

“Through a complete relationship we can have dialogue where we can discuss any issue and reach an agreement,” Cuomo said.

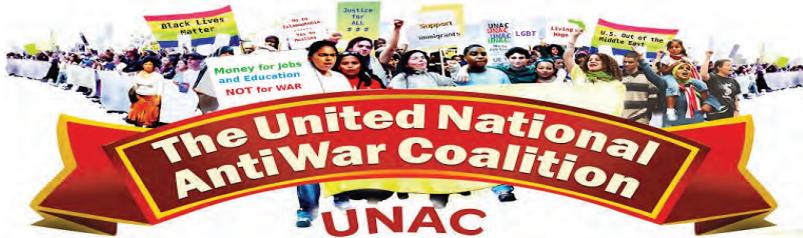
Armenia, however, says that up to 1.5 million of its people were killed and demands that their death must be recognized as genocide.

The visit by the governor and businesses represented the first state-based visit to Cuba after dialogue began between the two countries to normalize relations.

The 78-year-old head of the Roman Catholic Church added, “We recall the centenary of that tragic event, that immense and senseless slaughter whose cruelty your forebears had to endure.”

“It is necessary, and indeed a duty, to honor their memory, for whenever memory fades, it means that evil allows wounds to fester,” Francis said.

Armenia, Argentina, Belgium, Canada, France, Italy, Russia and Uruguay formally recognize the incident as genocide.



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"By Any Means Necessary..."



MALCOLM X SPEAKS

Excerpt from speech at the Ford Auditorium
 February 14, 1965

Malcolm delivered this speech on the night that his home in New York was firebombed.

Don't let the power structure maneuver you into a time wasting battle with others when you could be involved in something that's constructive and getting a real job done. Probably, one thing I should've pointed out to you, that once we formed our new organization, once we became identified with the orthodox Muslim world, we also formed a group known as the Organization of Afro-American Unity, which is designed to fight all the negative political, economic, and social conditions that exist in our neighborhood. It's a nonreligious organization to which anyone can belong who's interested in direct action.

And one of our first programs is to take our problem out of the civil rights context and place it at the international level, of human rights, so that the entire world can have a voice in our struggle. If we keep it at civil rights, then the only place we can turn for allies is within the domestic confines of America. But when you make it a human rights struggle, it becomes international, and then you can open the door for all types of advice and support from our brothers in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and elsewhere. So it's very, very important -- that's our international aim, that's our external aim...

...I say again that I'm not a racist, I don't believe in any form of segregation or anything like that. I'm for the brotherhood of everybody, but I don't believe in forcing brotherhood upon people who don't want it. Long as we practice brotherhood among ourselves, and then others who want to practice brotherhood with us, we practice it with them also, we're for that. But I don't think that we should run around trying to love somebody who doesn't love us.

militares y el apoyo a crueles dictaduras.

Cuando los cubanos, al comienzo del siglo XX, hicieron su proyecto de Constitución y se la presentaron al gobernador, autonombrado por su país, un general norteamericano, este les contestó que ahí faltaba algo, y al preguntar los cubanos constituyentistas, les respondió: Esta enmienda que presenta el senador Platt, que da derecho a intervenir en Cuba cada vez que sea considerado por los Estados Unidos.

Hicieron uso de ese derecho; por supuesto, los cubanos lo rechazaron y la respuesta fue: Muy bien, nos quedaremos aquí. Eso se mantuvo hasta 1934.

Hubo dos intervenciones militares, además, y el apoyo a crueles dictaduras en ese periodo mencionado.

Predominó hacia América Latina la “política de las cañoneras” y luego del “Buen Vecino”. Sucesivas intervenciones derrocaron gobiernos democráticos e instalaron terribles dictaduras en 20 países, 12 de ellas de forma simultánea. ¿Quién de nosotros no recuerda esa etapa bastante reciente de dictaduras por todas partes, fundamentalmente en Sudamérica, que asesinaron a cientos de miles de personas? El Presidente Salvador Allende nos legó un ejemplo imperecedero.

Hace exactamente 13 años, se produjo el golpe de Estado contra el entrañable Presidente Hugo Chávez Frías que el pueblo derrotó. Después vino, casi inmediatamente, el costoso golpe petrolero.

El 1ro. de enero de 1959, 60 años después de la entrada de los soldados norteamericanos en La Habana, triunfó la Revolución Cubana, y el Ejército Rebelde, comandado por el Comandante Fidel Castro Ruz, llegó a la capital, el mismo día, exactamente 60 años después. Esas son las incomprensibles ironías de la historia. El pueblo cubano, a muy alto precio, iniciaba el pleno ejercicio de su soberanía. Fueron seis décadas de dominación absoluta.

El 6 de abril de 1960 —apenas un año después del triunfo—, el subsecretario de Estado Lester Mallory escribió en un perverso memorando —y no encuentro otro calificativo que darle. Este memorando fue desclasificado decenas de años después—, cito algunos párrafos: “(...) la mayoría de los cubanos apoya a Castro... No hay una oposición política efectiva. El único medio previsible para restarle apoyo interno es a través del desencanto y el desaliento basados en la insatisfacción y las penurias económicas (...), debilitar la vida económica (...) y privar a Cuba de dinero y suministros con el fin de reducir los salarios nominales y reales, provocar hambre, desesperación y el derrocamiento del gobierno”. Fin de la cita. El 77% de la población cubana nació

bajo los rigores que impone el bloqueo, más terribles de lo que se imaginan, incluso, muchos cubanos, pero nuestras convicciones patrióticas prevalecieron, la agresión aumentó la resistencia y aceleró el proceso revolucionario. Eso sucede cuando se hostiga al proceso revolucionario natural de los pueblos. El hostigamiento trae más revolución, la historia lo demuestra y no solo en el caso de nuestro continente o de Cuba.

El bloqueo no empezó cuando lo firmó el Presidente Kennedy en 1962, que después haré una breve referencia a él por una iniciativa positiva de ponerse en contacto con el Jefe de nuestra Revolución para comenzar lo que ahora estamos empezando el Presidente Obama y yo; casi simultáneamente llegó la noticia de su asesinato, cuando se recibía un mensaje suyo.

Es decir que la agresión aumentó. Fue en el año 1961 la agresión a Playa Girón, una invasión mercenaria, apadrinada y organizada por Estados Unidos. Seis años de guerra contra grupos armados que en dos ocasiones abarcaron todo el país. No teníamos ni un radar, y aviación clandestina —no se sabe de dónde salió—, arrojando armamento en paracaídas. Miles de vida nos costó ese proceso; el costo económico no hemos logrado llevarlo con exactitud. Fue en enero de 1965 cuando concluyó, y lo comenzaron a apoyar a fines de 1959, unos 10 u 11 meses después del triunfo de la Revolución, cuando no habíamos declarado todavía el socialismo, que se declaró en 1961, en el entierro de las víctimas de los bombardeos a los aeropuertos el día antes de la invasión. Al día siguiente nuestro pequeño ejército en aquel momento y todo nuestro pueblo fue a combatir esa agresión y cumplió el orden del Jefe de la Revolución de destruirla antes de las 72 horas. Porque si llegan a consolidarse ahí en el lugar del desembarco, que estaba protegido por la más grande ciénaga del Caribe isleño, hubieran trasladado un gobierno ya constituido —con Primer Ministro y el nombramiento de los demás ministros—, que estaba en una base militar norteamericana en la Florida. Si llegan a consolidar la posición que ocuparon inicialmente, trasladar ese gobierno a Playa Girón era fácil. E inmediatamente la OEA, que ya nos había sancionado por proclamar ideas ajenas al continente, le hubiera dado su reconocimiento. El gobierno constituido en Cuba, basificado en un pedacito de tierra, hubiera pedido ayuda a la OEA y esa ayuda estaba sobre barcos de guerra norteamericanos a tres millas de la costa, que era el límite que entonces existía de las aguas territoriales, que como ustedes conocen ahora son 12.

Y la Revolución se siguió fortaleciendo, radicalizándose. Lo otro era renunciar. ¿Qué hubiera pasado? ¿Qué hubiera pasado en Cuba? ¿Cuántos cientos de miles de cubanos hubieran muerto?, porque ya teníamos cientos

de miles de armamentos ligeros; habíamos recibido los primeros tanques que no sabíamos ni manejar bien. La artillería, sabíamos tirar cañonazos, pero no conocíamos dónde iban a dar; lo que unos milicianos aprendían por la mañana, tenían que enseñárselos a los otros por la tarde.

Pero hubo mucho valor, había que ir por un solo itinerario, porque era una ciénaga por donde las tropas no se podían desplegar, ni transitar los tanques o vehículos pesados. Tuvimos más bajas que los atacantes. Por eso se cumplió la orden de Fidel: liquidarlos antes de las 72 horas.

Y esa misma flota americana fue la que acompañó a esa expedición desde Centroamérica, y estaba ahí, desde la costa se veían, a solo tres millas algunos de sus barcos. ¿Cuánto costó a Guatemala la invasión famosa en 1954?, que recuerdo bien porque estaba preso en el presidio de Isla de la Juventud —o de Pinos, llamada así entonces—, por el ataque al cuartel Moncada un año antes. ¿Cuántos cientos de miles de indios mayas, aborígenes y otros ciudadanos guatemaltecos perecieron en todo un largo proceso que durará años recuperar? Ese fue el comienzo.

Cuando ya habíamos proclamado el socialismo y el pueblo había combatido en Playa Girón para defenderlo, el Presidente John F. Kennedy —al que ya hice referencia hace un instante— fue asesinado precisamente en el mismo momento, el mismo día en que el líder de la Revolución Cubana Fidel Castro recibía un mensaje suyo —de John Kennedy— buscando iniciar el diálogo. Después de la Alianza para el Progreso y de haber pagado varias veces la deuda externa sin evitar que esta se siga multiplicando, se nos impuso un neoliberalismo salvaje y globalizador, como expresión del imperialismo en esta época, que dejó una década perdida en la región.

“La propuesta entonces de una asociación hemisférica madura resultó el intento de imponernos el Área de Libre Comercio de las Américas (ALCA), asociado al surgimiento de estas Cumbres, que hubiera destruido la economía, la soberanía y el destino común de nuestras naciones, si no se le hubiera hecho naufragar en el 2005, en Mar del Plata, bajo el liderazgo de los Presidentes Chávez, Kirchner y Lula. Un año antes, Chávez y Fidel habían hecho nacer la Alternativa Bolivariana, hoy Alianza Bolivariana Para los Pueblos de Nuestra América.

Excelencias:

Hemos expresado —y le reitero ahora— al Presidente Barack Obama, nuestra disposición al diálogo respetuoso y a la convivencia civilizada entre ambos Estados dentro de nuestras profundas diferencias.

Aprecio como un paso positivo su reciente declaración de que decidirá rápidamente



sobre la presencia de Cuba en una lista de países patrocinadores del terrorismo en la que nunca debió estar —impuesta bajo el gobierno del Presidente Reagan.

¡País terrorista nosotros! Sí, hemos hecho algunos actos de solidaridad con otros pueblos, que pueden considerarse terroristas, cuando estábamos acorralados, arrinconados y hostigados hasta el infinito, solo había una alternativa: rendirse o luchar. Ustedes saben cuál fue la que escogimos con el apoyo de nuestro pueblo. ¡¿Quién puede pensar que vamos a obligar a todo un pueblo a hacer el sacrificio que ha hecho el pueblo cubano para subsistir, para ayudar a otras naciones?! (Aplausos). Pero “la dictadura de los Castro los obligó”, igual que los obligó a votar por el socialismo con el 97,5% de la población.

Reitero que aprecio como un paso positivo la reciente declaración del Presidente Obama de que decidirá rápidamente sobre la presencia de Cuba en una lista de países patrocinadores del terrorismo en la que nunca debió estar, les decía, porque cuando esto se nos impuso resulta que los terroristas éramos los que poníamos los muertos —no tengo en la mente el dato exacto—, solo por terrorismo dentro de Cuba, y en algunos casos de diplomáticos cubanos en otras partes del mundo que fueron asesinados. Me aportan el dato ahora mis compañeros: en esa etapa tuvimos 3 478 muertos y 2 099 discapacitados de por vida; más otros muchos que fueron heridos.

Los terroristas eran los que ponían los muertos. ¿De dónde venía el terror entonces? ¿Quiénes lo provocaban? Algunos de los que incluso han estado por Panamá en estos días, como el agente de la CIA Rodríguez, que fue el que asesinó al Che y se llevó sus manos

cortadas para probar por sus huellas digitales, no sé en qué lugar, que se trataba del cadáver del Che, que después recuperamos por la gestión de un gobierno amigo en Bolivia. Pero, bueno, desde entonces somos terroristas.

Realmente pido disculpas, incluso, al Presidente Obama y a otros presentes en esta actividad por expresarme así. Yo a él mismo le dije que a mí la pasión se me sale por los poros cuando de la Revolución se trata. Le pido disculpas porque el presidente Obama no tiene ninguna responsabilidad con nada de esto. ¿Cuántos presidentes hemos tenido? Diez antes que él, todos tienen deuda con nosotros, menos el Presidente Obama.

Después de decir tantas cosas duras de un sistema, es justo que le pida disculpas, porque yo soy de los que pienso —y así se lo he manifestado a unos cuantos jefes de Estado y de Gobierno que veo aquí, en reuniones privadas que he tenido con ellos en mi país al recibirlos— que, según mi opinión, el Presidente Obama es un hombre honesto. Me he leído algo de su biografía en los dos libros que han aparecido, no completos, eso lo haré con más calma. Admiro su origen humilde, y pienso que su forma de ser obedece a ese origen humilde (Aplausos prolongados).

Estas palabras las medité mucho para decirlas, incluso las tuve escritas y las quité; las volví a poner y las volví a quitar, y, al final, las dije, y estoy satisfecho.

Hasta hoy, el bloqueo económico, comercial y financiero se aplica en toda su intensidad contra la isla, provoca daños y carencias al pueblo y es el obstáculo esencial al desarrollo de nuestra economía. Constituye una violación del Derecho Internacional y su

alcance extraterritorial afecta los intereses de todos los Estados.

No es casual el voto casi unánime, menos el de Israel y el propio Estados Unidos, en la ONU durante tantos años seguidos. Y mientras exista el bloqueo, que no es responsabilidad del Presidente, y que por acuerdos y leyes posteriores se codificó con una ley en el Congreso que el Presidente no puede modificar, hay que seguir luchando y apoyando al Presidente Obama en sus intenciones de liquidar el bloqueo (Aplausos).

Una cuestión es establecer relaciones diplomáticas y otra cuestión es el bloqueo. Por eso les pido a todos, y la vida nos obliga además, a seguir apoyando esa lucha contra el bloqueo.

Excelencias:

Hemos expresado públicamente al Presidente Obama, quien también nació bajo la política del bloqueo a Cuba, nuestro reconocimiento por su valiente decisión de involucrarse en un debate con el Congreso de su país para ponerle fin.

Este y otros elementos deberán ser resueltos en el proceso hacia la futura normalización de las relaciones bilaterales.

Por nuestra parte, continuaremos enfrascados en el proceso de actualización del modelo económico cubano con el objetivo de perfeccionar nuestro socialismo, avanzar hacia el desarrollo y consolidar los logros de una Revolución que se ha propuesto “conquistar toda la justicia” para nuestro pueblo. Lo que haremos está en un programa desde el año 2011, aprobado en el Congreso del Partido. En el próximo Congreso, que es el año que viene, lo ampliaremos, revisaremos

lo que hemos hecho y lo mucho que nos falta todavía para cumplir el reto.

Estimados colegas:

Debo advertirles que voy por la mitad, si quieren corto y si les interesa continuo. Voy a acelerar un poco (Risitas).

Venezuela no es ni puede ser una amenaza a la seguridad nacional de una superpotencia como Estados Unidos (Aplausos). Es positivo que el Presidente norteamericano lo haya reconocido. Debo reafirmar todo nuestro apoyo, de manera resuelta y leal, a la hermana República Bolivariana de Venezuela, al gobierno legítimo y a la unión cívico-militar que encabeza el Presidente Nicolás Maduro, al pueblo bolivariano y chavista que lucha por seguir su propio camino y enfrenta intentos de desestabilización y sanciones unilaterales que reclamamos sean levantadas, que la Orden Ejecutiva sea derogada, aunque es difícil por la ley, lo que sería apreciado por nuestra Comunidad como una contribución al diálogo y al entendimiento hemisférico.

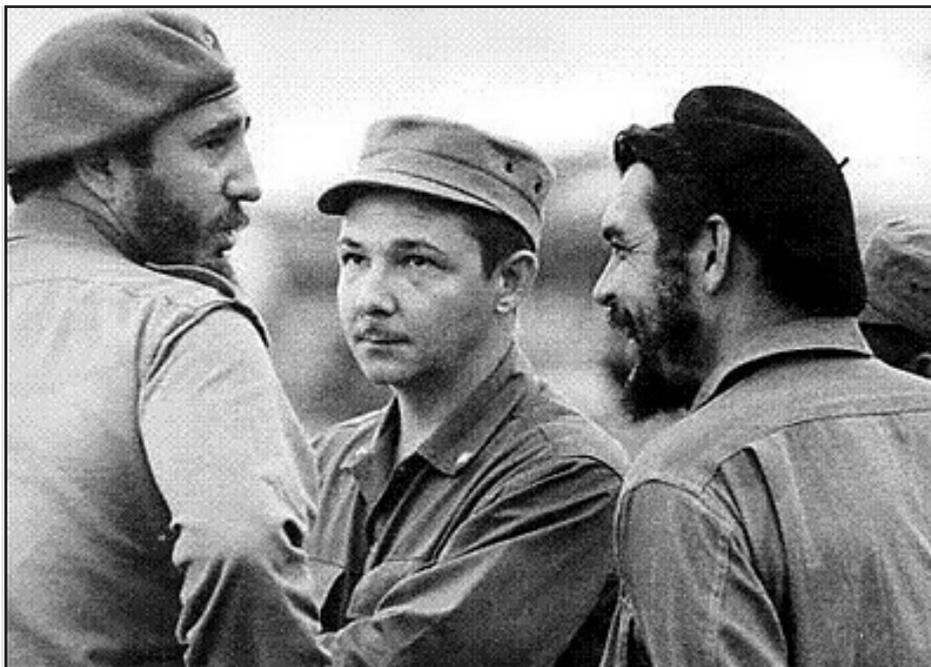
Nosotros conocemos. Creo que puedo ser de los que estamos aquí reunidos uno de los pocos que mejor conoce el proceso de Venezuela, no es porque estemos allí ni estemos influyendo allí y ellos nos cuenten todas las cosas a nosotros, lo sabemos porque están pasando por el mismo camino por el que pasamos nosotros y están sufriendo las mismas agresiones que sufrimos nosotros, o una parte de ellas.

Mantendremos nuestro aliento a los esfuerzos de la República Argentina para recuperar las islas Malvinas, las Georgias del Sur y las Sandwich del Sur, y continuaremos respaldando su legítima lucha en defensa de la soberanía financiera.

Seguiremos apoyando las acciones de la República del Ecuador frente a las empresas transnacionales que provocan daños ecológicos a su territorio y pretenden imponerle condiciones abusivas.

Deseo reconocer la contribución de Brasil, y de la Presidenta Dilma Rousseff, al fortalecimiento de la integración regional y

Raúl Castro con la presidenta de Argentina Cristina Kirchner



Fidel, Raúl & Che, circa 1960

al desarrollo de políticas sociales que trajeron avances y beneficios a amplios sectores populares, las cuales, dentro de la ofensiva contra diversos gobiernos de izquierda de la región, se pretende revertir.

Será invariable nuestro apoyo al pueblo latinoamericano y caribeño de Puerto Rico en su empeño por alcanzar la autodeterminación e independencia, como ha dictaminado decenas de veces el Comité de Descolonización de las Naciones Unidas.

También continuaremos nuestra contribución al proceso de paz en Colombia hasta su feliz conclusión.

Debiéramos todos multiplicar la ayuda a Haití, no sólo mediante asistencia humanitaria, sino con recursos que le permitan su desarrollo, y apoyar que los países del Caribe reciban un trato justo y diferenciado en sus relaciones económicas, y reparaciones por los daños provocados por la esclavitud y el colonialismo.

Vivimos bajo la amenaza de enormes arsenales nucleares que debieran eliminarse y del cambio climático que nos deja sin tiempo. Se incrementan las amenazas a la paz y proliferan los conflictos.

Como expresó entonces el Presidente Fidel Castro, “las causas fundamentales están en la pobreza y el subdesarrollo, y en la desigual distribución de las riquezas y los conocimientos que imperan en el mundo. No puede olvidarse que el subdesarrollo y la pobreza actuales son consecuencia de

la conquista, la colonización, la esclavización y el saqueo de la mayor parte de la Tierra por las potencias coloniales, el surgimiento del imperialismo y las guerras sangrientas por nuevos repartos del mundo. La humanidad debe tomar conciencia de lo que hemos sido y de lo que no podemos seguir siendo. Hoy” —continuaba Fidel— “nuestra especie ha adquirido conocimientos, valores éticos y recursos científicos suficientes para marchar hacia una etapa histórica de verdadera justicia y humanismo. Nada de lo que existe hoy en el orden económico y político sirve a los intereses de la humanidad. No puede sostenerse. Hay que cambiarlo”, concluyó Fidel.

Cuba seguirá defendiendo las ideas por las que nuestro pueblo ha asumido los mayores sacrificios y riesgos y luchado, junto a los pobres, los enfermos sin atención médica, los desempleados, los niños y niñas abandonados a su suerte u obligados a trabajar o a prostituirse, los hambrientos, los discriminados, los oprimidos y los explotados que constituyen la inmensa mayoría de la población mundial.

La especulación financiera, los privilegios de Bretton Woods y la remoción unilateral de la convertibilidad en oro del dólar son cada vez más asfixiantes. Requerimos un sistema financiero transparente y equitativo.

No puede aceptarse que menos de una decena de emporios, principalmente norteamericanos —cuatro o cinco de siete u ocho—, determinen lo que se lee, ve o escucha en el planeta. Internet debe tener una gobernanza internacional, democrática y participativa, en especial en la generación de contenidos. Es inaceptable la militarización del ciberespacio y el empleo encubierto e ilegal de sistemas



Barack Obama y Raúl Castro se reunieron durante el Cumbre

informáticos para agredir a otros Estados. No dejaremos que se nos deslumbré ni colonice otra vez. Sobre la Internet que es un invento fabuloso, de los mayores en los últimos años, bien pudiéramos decir, recordando el ejemplo de la lengua en la fábula de Esopo, que Internet sirve para lo mejor y es muy útil, pero a su vez, también sirve para lo peor.

Señor Presidente:

Las relaciones hemisféricas, en mi opinión, han de cambiar profundamente, en particular en los ámbitos político, económico y cultural; para que, basadas en el Derecho Internacional y en el ejercicio de la autodeterminación y la igualdad soberana, se centren en el desarrollo de vínculos mutuamente provechosos y en la cooperación para servir a los intereses de todas nuestras naciones y a los objetivos que se proclaman.

La aprobación, en enero del 2014, en la Segunda Cumbre de la CELAC, en La Habana, de la Proclama de la América Latina y el Caribe como Zona de Paz, constituyó un trascendente aporte en ese propósito, marcado por la unidad latinoamericana y caribeña en su diversidad. Lo demuestra el hecho de que avanzamos hacia procesos de integración genuinamente latinoamericanos y caribeños a través de la CELAC, UNASUR, CARICOM, MERCOSUR, ALBA-TCP, el SICA y la Asociación de Estados del Caribe, que subrayan la creciente conciencia sobre la necesidad de unirnos para garantizar nuestro desarrollo.

Dicha Proclama nos compromete a que “las diferencias entre las naciones se resuelvan de forma pacífica, por la vía del diálogo y la negociación u otras formas de solución, y en plena consonancia con el Derecho

Internacional”.

Vivir en paz, cooperando unos con otros para enfrentar los retos y solucionar los problemas que, en fin de cuentas, nos afectan y afectarán a todos, es hoy una necesidad imperiosa. Debe respetarse, como reza la Proclama de la América Latina y el Caribe como Zona de Paz, firmada por todos los Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno de NUESTRA AMÉRICA, “el derecho inalienable de todo Estado a elegir su sistema político, económico, social y cultural, como condición esencial para asegurar la convivencia pacífica entre las naciones”.

Con ella, nos comprometimos a cumplir nuestra “obligación de no intervenir directa o indirectamente, en los asuntos internos de cualquier otro Estado y observar los principios de soberanía nacional, igualdad de derechos y la libre determinación de los pueblos”, y a respetar “los principios y normas del Derecho Internacional (...) y los principios y propósitos de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas”.

Ese histórico documento insta “a todos los Estados miembros de la Comunidad Internacional a respetar plenamente esta declaración en sus relaciones con los Estados miembros de la CELAC”. Tenemos ahora la oportunidad para que todos los que estamos aquí aprendamos, como también expresa la Proclama, a “practicar la tolerancia y convivir en paz como buenos vecinos”. Existen discrepancias sustanciales, sí, pero también puntos en común en los que podemos cooperar para que sea posible vivir en este mundo lleno de amenazas a la paz y a la supervivencia humana.

¿Qué impide, a nivel hemisférico —como ya se refirieron algunos de los presidentes que

me precedieron en el uso de la palabra—, cooperar para enfrentar el cambio climático? ¿Por qué no podemos los países de las dos Américas, la del Norte y la del Sur, luchar juntos contra el terrorismo, el narcotráfico o el crimen organizado, sin posiciones sesgadas políticamente?

¿Por qué no buscar, de conjunto, los recursos necesarios para dotar al hemisferio de escuelas, hospitales — aunque no sean lujosos, un hospitalito modesto, en aquellos lugares donde la gente muere porque no hay un médico—, proporcionar empleo, avanzar en la erradicación de la pobreza?

¿No se podría disminuir la inequidad en la distribución de la riqueza, reducir la mortalidad infantil, eliminar el hambre, erradicar las enfermedades prevenibles y acabar con el analfabetismo?

El pasado año, establecimos cooperación hemisférica en el enfrentamiento y prevención del ébola y los países de las dos Américas trabajamos mancomunadamente, lo que debe servirnos de acicate para empeños mayores.

Cuba, país pequeño y desprovisto de recursos naturales, que se ha desenvuelto en un contexto sumamente hostil, ha podido alcanzar la plena participación de sus ciudadanos en la vida política y social de la nación; una cobertura de educación y salud universales, de forma gratuita; un sistema de seguridad social que garantiza que ningún cubano quede desamparado; significativos progresos hacia la igualdad de oportunidades y en el enfrentamiento a toda forma de discriminación; el pleno ejercicio de los derechos de la niñez y de la mujer; el acceso al deporte y la cultura; el derecho a la vida y a la seguridad ciudadana.

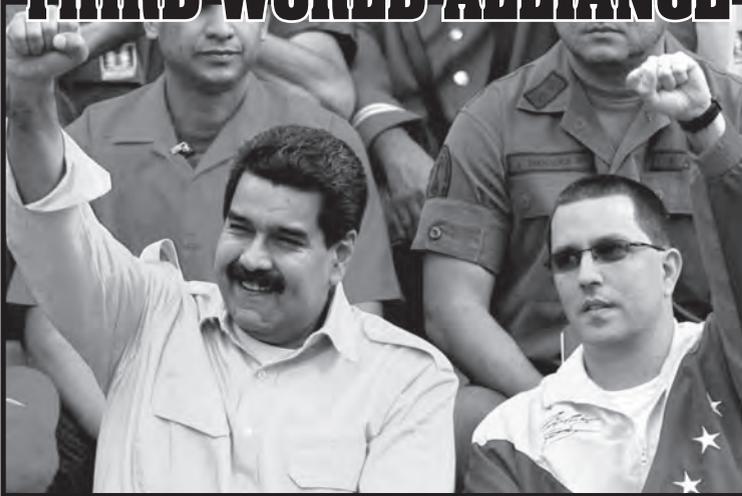
Pese a carencias y dificultades, seguimos la divisa de compartir lo que tenemos. En la actualidad 65 000 cooperantes cubanos laboran en 89 países, sobre todo en las esferas de medicina y educación. Se han graduado en nuestra isla 68 000 profesionales y técnicos, de ellos, 30 000 de la salud, de 157 países.

Si con muy escasos recursos, Cuba ha podido, ¿qué no podría hacer el hemisferio con la voluntad política de aunar esfuerzos para contribuir con los países más necesitados? Gracias a Fidel y al heroico pueblo cubano, hemos venido a esta Cumbre, a cumplir el mandato de Martí con la libertad conquistada con nuestras propias manos, “orgullosos de nuestra América, para servirla y honrarla... con la determinación y la capacidad de contribuir a que se la estime por sus méritos, y se la respete por sus sacrificios”, como señaló Martí.

Señor Presidente:

Perdón, y a todos ustedes, por el tiempo ocupado. Muchas gracias a todos (Aplausos).

VENEZUELA CALLS FOR THIRD-WORLD-ALLIANCE



Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro with Vice President Jorge Arreaza

Third world countries need to unite and fight against first world injustices, disrespect for international law, discrimination and wars. The third world countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America should form an alliance in order to “end imperialist domination,” according to the Venezuelan vice-president, Jorge Arreaza.

Arreaza made the proposal for a third world alliance during a speech at the Asia-Africa Summit in Indonesia Saturday. Speaking as a special Latin American representative, Arreaza told the audience that the alliance was necessary to overthrow imperialism and end the unipolar system imposed on southern nations throughout the years.

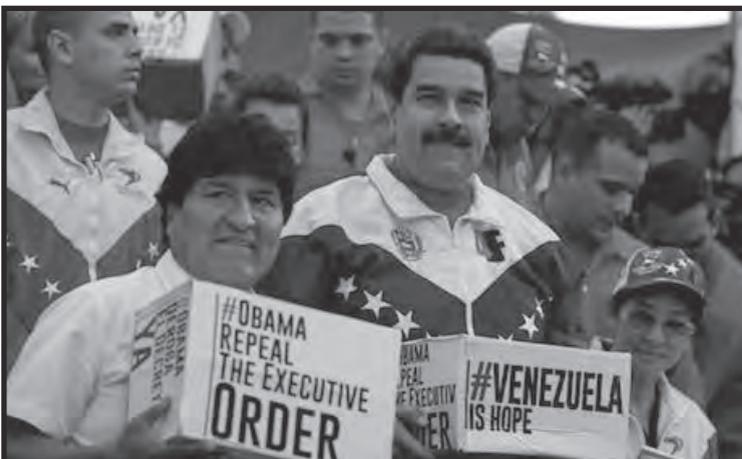
“The alliance between Asia, Africa and Latin America today is not only necessary, it is indispensable,” said Arreaza. “From the South, we will determine, freely, the future of the world for the people.”

The vice president also reminded the audience that former Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez also advocated strongly for a need for the three continents to unite in order to fight against harmful western policies and forms of control.

“Today is not, as then, simply about not being aligned with power and a sphere of influence. Today, the challenge is much greater... That is, to not be aligned with injustice, ... and to fight against wars, disrespect for international law, and to fight against colonialism in all its forms, combat hunger, to not be aligned with discrimination nor domination in all its forms,” said Arreaza.

As an example of third world unity, Arreaza reiterated Venezuela's solidarity with Palestine, which has experienced significant oppression under Israel's expansionist policies.

Source: TeleSUR English



Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro with Bolivian President Evo Morales

OUR HERITAGE



Rosa Luxemburg
Revolutionary leader

What Are the Origins of May Day? 1894

The happy idea of using a proletarian holiday celebration as a means to attain the eight-hour day was first born in Australia. The workers there decided in 1856 to organize a day of complete stoppage together with meetings and entertainment as a demonstration in favor of the eight-hour day. The day of this celebration was to be April 21. At first, the Australian workers intended this only for the year 1856. But this first celebration had such a strong effect on the proletarian masses of Australia, enlivening them and leading to new agitation, that it was decided to repeat the celebration every year.

In fact, what could give the workers greater courage and faith in their own strength than a mass work stoppage which they had decided themselves? What could give more courage to the eternal slaves of the factories and the workshops than the mustering of their own troops? Thus, the idea of a proletarian celebration was quickly accepted and, from Australia, began to spread to other countries until finally it had conquered the whole proletarian world.

The first to follow the example of the Australian workers were the Americans. In 1886 they decided that May 1 should be the day of universal work stoppage. On this day 200,000 of them left their work and demanded the eight-hour day. Later, police and legal harassment prevented the workers for many years from repeating this [size] demonstration. However in 1888 they renewed their decision and decided that the next celebration would be May 1, 1890.

In the meanwhile, the workers' movement in Europe had grown strong and animated. The most powerful expression of this movement occurred at the International Workers' Congress in 1889. At this Congress, attended by four hundred delegates, it was decided that the eight-hour day must be the first demand. Whereupon the delegate of the French unions, the worker Lavigne from Bordeaux, moved that this demand be expressed in all countries through a universal work stoppage. The delegate of the American workers called attention to the decision of his comrades to strike on May 1, 1890, and the Congress decided on this date for the universal proletarian celebration.

In this case, as thirty years before in Australia, the workers really thought only of a one-time demonstration. The Congress decided that the workers of all lands would demonstrate together for the eight-hour day on May 1, 1890. No one spoke of a repetition of the holiday for the next years. Naturally no one could predict the lightning-like way in which this idea would succeed and how quickly it would be adopted by the working classes. However, it was enough to celebrate the May Day simply one time in order that everyone understand and feel that May Day must be a yearly and continuing institution [...].

The first of May demanded the introduction of the eight-hour day. But even after this goal was reached, May Day was not given up. As long as the struggle of the workers against the bourgeoisie and the ruling class continues, as long as all demands are not met, May Day will be the yearly expression of these demands. And, when better days dawn, when the working class of the world has won its deliverance then too humanity will probably celebrate May Day in honor of the bitter struggles and the many sufferings of the past.

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