

*Former Colombian president  
confident in his country's vote  
against the blockade of Cuba*

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**A letter signed by 18 former presidents and former heads of state of Latin America and the Caribbean demanding the end of the blockade was addressed to Joe Biden**

Bogota, Nov 3 (RHC) Former Colombian President Ernesto Samper (1994-1998) expressed his confidence that the government of Gustavo Petro will vote today at the UN General Assembly in favor of the resolution against the blockade of Cuba.

Samper and Rafael Correa presented the day before, at the National Center of Historical Memory in Bogota, the letter addressed to Joe Biden signed by 18 former presidents and former heads of state and government of Latin America and the Caribbean demanding the end of the blockade against Cuba, and also that the island be removed from the list of countries sponsoring terrorism.

Regarding the new government of his country, the former Colombian president told Prensa Latina that Petro has been correcting a group of problems inherited from the previous administration.

"We all expected an end to that situation of conflict that had been created with Venezuela. Today relations are fully restored, borders are reopened, and trade and investment are moving again. On Tuesday there was the first Summit between Petro and Nicolás Maduro", explained the former governor.

"I sincerely hope that Colombia's vote is against the blockade, it would be expected from a government that is introducing a series of rectifications of positions that placed us on a side where we should never have been", he said.

The former president of Ecuador, Rafael Correa (2007-2017), who participated virtually in the presentation of the letter to Biden, criticized the 243 additional measures of the blockade against Cuba, dictated by former governor Donald Trump amid the Covid-19 pandemic, and that the current head of the White House does nothing.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, tourism, Cuba's most important source of income, collapsed, but "they are not going to be able to break the Cuban people, we know the Cuban and Venezuelan people," Correa stressed.

Trump's measures sought to undo what had been advanced by the government of Barack Obama and deepen the blockade against Cuba, he stressed.

"This is illegal, it goes against international law (...) The United Nations Assembly, every year practically unanimously rejects the blockade against Cuba," he responded to a question from Prensa Latina.

Trump's measures are a sign of abuse of power, of imperialism, of imposing absurd and illegal sanctions on a brotherly Latin American country, which must be withdrawn above all due to the most elementary demands of justice, respect for international law, and the sovereignty of countries,

in this case of an extremely worthy country: our beloved Cuba said, Correa.

On the other hand, Colombia expressed its support on Wednesday for the Cuban draft resolution presented before the UN against the blockade.

The Colombian ambassador to the multilateral organization, Leonor Zalabata, urged the full implementation of the text that calls for an end to that form of pressure.

The diplomat assured that the report presented before the plenary confirms the cost of this policy towards Cuba, "with substantial and unjustifiable damages that affect the welfare of the people".

Zalabata affirmed that her government supports the draft resolution "Necessity of putting an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba" and said she would vote in favor of it.

She highlighted the role of the island for 40 years in welcoming delegates from the Government of Bogotá and armed groups, "with the aim of dialogue and peace".

Cuba was the cradle - she recalled - of the 2016 final peace agreement with the former FARC-EP, "today considered an example for the whole world in the interest of building and consolidating peace". (Source: PL)

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