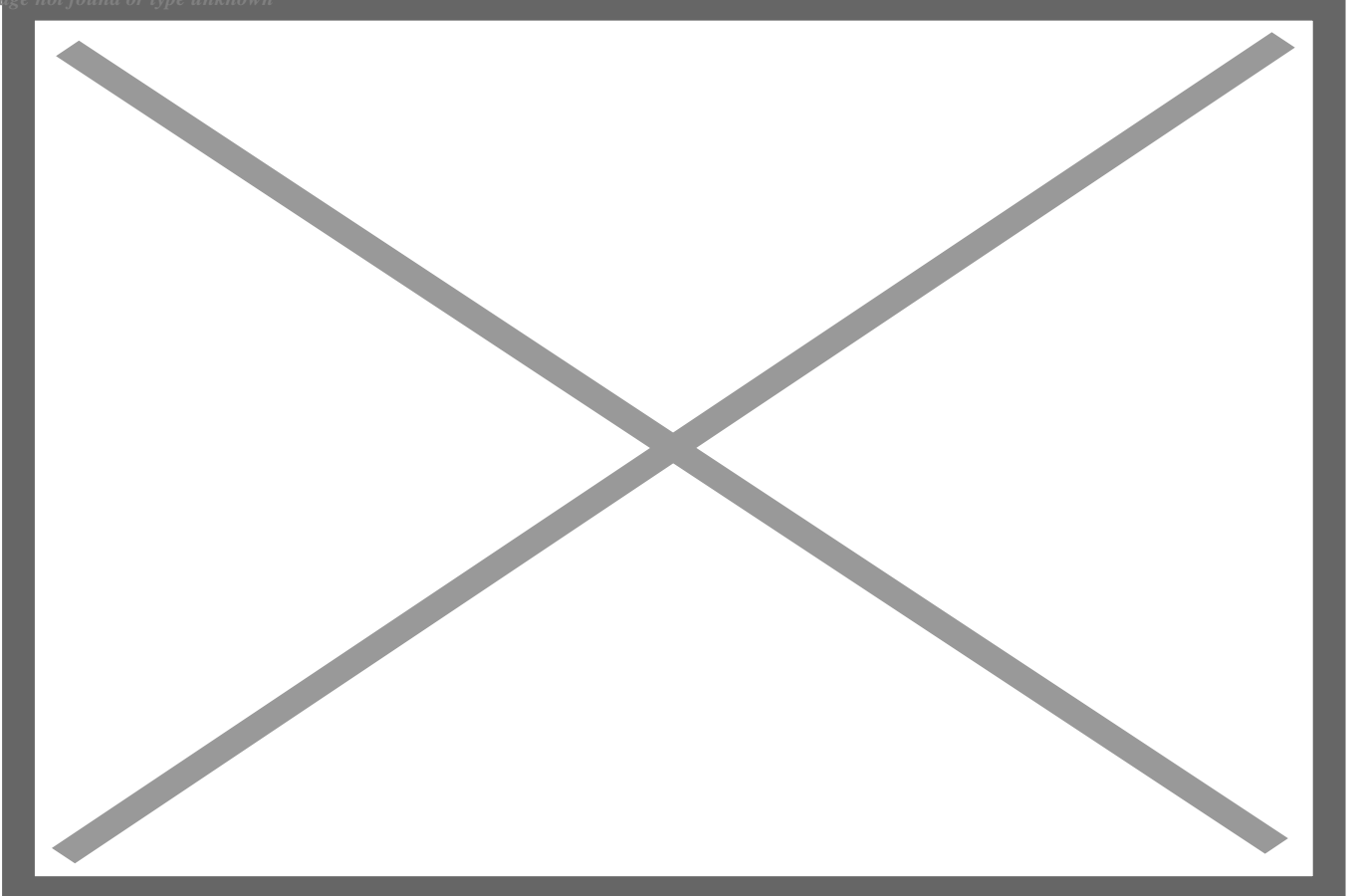


Díaz-Canel: Cuba lives under U.S. pressure but will overcome challenge

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Havana, October 16 (Prensa Latina) -- Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel assured that his country is living today a situation of maximum pressure and economic asphyxiation by the United States to fracture national unity and make the revolution collapse.

In an exclusive interview with journalist Arlín Rodríguez, the Cuban leader blamed the blockade policy of successive U.S. governments against the island, which has lasted for more than six decades.

The economic siege, the financial persecution and the enormous campaign of disinformation and subversion promoted by the White House make the life of Cubans much more complex in the midst of the conflictive international scenario, the president explained.

Despite the persistence of the Yankee blockade, in the first half of 2019, the economy was functioning more comfortably, he recalled, but everything began to change with the application of more than 240 coercive measures of the government of former U.S. President Donald Trump (2016-2020).

A few days before Trump's term expired, he included Cuba in the spurious list of countries that, according to his unilateral approach, sponsor terrorism, which cut off all forms of financing and access to energy resources, the president commented.

In arguing for the continuity of that policy by the current tenant of the White House, the Cuban president highlighted the cruelty of its application in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, whose effect on the economy was devastating.

In this context, he highlighted the prowess of the scientists and the health system, together with the people who were able to save lives by creating vaccines, medicines and national medical equipment, before the impossibility of accessing them in the world market.

During the dialogue with the journalist of the television program Mesa Redonda, Díaz-Canel referred to the complexities of the national economy marked by the lack of foreign currency, which prevents the acquisition of raw materials to stimulate industries, produce medicines, agricultural products and import the necessary foodstuffs.

He acknowledged that, although some economic measures have not had the desired impact, the current inflationary spiral cannot be attributed to the decisions adopted in the so-called "Tarea Ordenamiento", applied a few months before the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The world is experiencing inflation with destabilization of economies and markets, which is made more complex by the confrontation between Russia and Ukraine, the head of state explained.

The Cuban president argued that the government management on the island takes into consideration the opinions of academics, experts and the population and that the decisions adopted are being studied to continue correcting deviations in the economic policy.

Regarding the impact on the national economic scenario of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), the President praised the contribution they make in terms of supplying goods and services that today cannot be assumed by the socialist state enterprise and the Government.

Likewise, he praised the productive chains that are generated between the MSMEs and the state management, which is conceived in the economic policy and the nation's guiding political documents.

However, the Cuban leader agreed with the criticisms of the population to many private actors who sell at very high prices, which, he assured, will be ordered and improved, establishing clearer and more precise rules. The private and cooperative sector is recognized in Cuba and this is endorsed by the last congresses of the Communist Party of Cuba, "those who are in the MSMEs are not enemies or are against the revolution, nor do they want to defeat it; that is a desire of the US government that politicizes the issue," he said.

In spite of the complexities of the national economy, it is possible to revert the problems and apply the concept of creative resistance for which there are potentialities in the saving of resources and the efficient use of the few foreign currencies available, said the President.

"It is possible to turn setbacks into victories, to overcome adversities and challenges, this has been taught to us by the history of Cuba, Fidel Castro and Raúl Castro, because this country does not renounce to make its dreams come true", he emphasized.

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