

Address by Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez at the UN General Assembly: “Cuba will continue to defend its sovereign right to independence and to build socialism”



The Cuban Foreign Minister brings Cuba's voice to the UN General Assembly. Photo: UN.

Address by Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez / United Nations General Assembly / Saturday, September 28, 2024

Ms. President:

Mr. Secretary General:

Let me first reaffirm Cuba's solidarity and support for the brother and sister Palestinian people, victim of more than 75 years of colonial occupation, of flagrant violations of their legitimate rights as a nation, subjected to cruelty, aggression, collective punishment and apartheid.

In the last eleven months, the Israeli army has killed more than 40 thousand civilians. More children have died in this indiscriminate and disproportionate massacre than men and women. They die with the complicity and weapons provided by the United States government, with the complicit silence of others. We pay tribute to the more than 220 workers of this Organization, also murdered.

Cuba's position is clear and unequivocal. President Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez has said, and I quote: "History will not forgive the indifferent. And we will not be among them."

It is a wound in the human conscience.

The genocide against the Palestinian people must cease, unconditionally and without delay!

Israel, with the complicity of the United States, has placed the world before the imminent danger of a large-scale conflagration. The irresponsible aggression against Lebanon, Syria, Iran, and the peoples of the Middle East will have consequences that are difficult to estimate.

Excellencies:

Seventy-nine years after the founding of this Organization, the continuous violations of the Charter of the United Nations and International Law, the aggressions, the interference in the internal affairs of States, and the imposition of unilateral coercive measures for political ends, occur as daily events.

Aggressive military doctrines of domination, expansionism and supremacy, alarmingly undermine international Peace and Security.

The danger of a nuclear holocaust is real and immediate. For the ninth consecutive year, global military spending is increasing, reaching a record \$2.44 trillion in 2023, including the development of nuclear weapons.

It has been pushed back despite the enormous efforts of the States, Parties and Signatories of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and of clear-headed and broad sectors of international society.

There will be no "peace without development" either.

Developed countries, inhabitants of the same planet, blindly refuse to invest even minimally in their own prosperity and security, and fail to meet their ever-insufficient commitments to Official Development Assistance. This selfish figure, boastfully promised in 2023 and quickly forgotten, represents less than 0.37 percent of national income.

The illusion of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals has vanished.

According to Forbes, in the last four years alone, the combined wealth of the world's five richest people has grown by \$423 billion, while five billion people remain in poverty.

Oxfam estimates that the richest 1% have almost twice as much wealth as the rest of the world's population. With a wealth tax on billionaires and multi-millionaires, two billion people could be lifted out of poverty.

The crises are structural, determined by the imperialist system and the international order imposed on us. No problem will be solved by undermining the intergovernmental nature of the United Nations, as some claim, or by weakening its essential role in promoting sustainable development for all.

Climate change is advancing inexorably. It is an irrefutable fact.

In July 2024, scientists announced that there had been 13 consecutive months of record-breaking temperature levels.

If the irrational and unsustainable patterns of production and consumption of capitalism are not changed urgently and significantly, the increase in global average temperature will not be able to be contained to below 1.5 °C, with respect to pre-industrial levels.

Responsibilities are shared, but differentiated; they are not the same for everyone, nor could they be fair.

However, a positive step could be taken at the COP 29 Conference of the Parties in Azerbaijan and the adoption of the New Collective Financing Target. The countries of the North would have another opportunity to begin to close the gap in climate financing. Those of us in the South would have to design a sufficient target that responds to the needs, with guarantees for development and social justice, in the face of the enormous obstacles and challenges we face. The solution will inevitably have to include the cancellation of the foreign debt, already paid several times over.

Excellencies and Delegates:

All this confirms the 1992 thesis of President Fidel Castro Ruz: "An important biological species is at risk of disappearing...: human beings."

Only overcoming imperialism and capitalism can definitively save it, and in that process, the founding of a new international order.

A fair and democratic international order, which guarantees peace and "the balance of the world," the exercise of the right to development by all States; on conditions of sovereign equality, which broadens and strengthens the participation and representation of developing countries in the processes of governance, decision-making and policy formulation at the global level; provides for the common good and prosperity of all peoples, in harmony with nature and the sustainable management of natural resources, and ensures the exercise of all human rights for all people.

A new civilized coexistence among nations where solidarity, international cooperation, integration and the peaceful settlement of disputes prevail, as alternatives to the "philosophy of plunder," war, the use or threat of use of force, aggression, occupation; to cultural, political, financial, technological and military domination and hegemony or any other manifestation that threatens the peace, independence and sovereignty of States. An order without blockades or unilateral coercive measures, based on multilateralism and with full respect for the Charter of the United Nations and International Law.

Ms. President:

The United States government continues to clearly demonstrate its impossible but pernicious determination to determine and control the destiny of Cuba. It is an old ambition anchored in the Monroe Doctrine, which defines the imperialist, dominant and hegemonic nature of U.S. policy towards Cuba and towards the region of Our America.

The economic, commercial and financial blockade is also political, technological and communicational.

It has been conceived as one of its main weapons of aggression to destroy the Cuban economy. It seeks to prevent the country's financial income, cause the collapse of the economy and generate a situation of political and social instability. The damage is visible and indisputable. It has repercussions on the lives of all Cubans.

It is accompanied by the most ferocious campaign of disinformation and slander, by perennial attempts to interfere in our internal affairs and by the complicit tolerance of groups that organize violent and terrorist acts against Cuba from the territory of the United States.

These actions violate International Law. They contravene the purposes and principles of this Organization and numerous resolutions adopted by the General Assembly.

The siege thus conceived has been reinforced by the inclusion of Cuba on the arbitrary list of countries that are supposedly sponsors of terrorism by the U.S. State Department.

This is a fraudulent designation, without moral authority or any international mandate. By virtue of it, retaliatory actions against Cuba are unleashed, which, in an extraterritorial manner, go beyond the framework of the sovereign jurisdiction of the United States and are manifested in and against any country.

Last May, the State Department itself recognized that Cuba fully cooperates in the fight against terrorism. This mere recognition of the truth, universally known, has not made the coercive measures of the blockade more flexible, but it does make Cuba's presence on this illegitimate list even more incongruous, confusing and unjustifiable.

There will soon be new presidential elections in the United States, a matter that concerns only the Americans. Only them, despite the nefarious and historical habit of the government of that country of interfering in the elections and internal affairs of all the Member States of the United Nations, even its allies.

History has shown us that, regardless of the result of these elections, the anti-Cuban politicians and sectors that have made aggression against Cuba a lucrative business will continue to have a voice and influence. They are those who have learned to manipulate the American political system based on a narrow and hostile agenda, very particular, only of interest to a small elite segment.

They do not represent the will of the majority of the people of the United States, nor of the Cubans who live there.

Whatever the electoral result, Cuba will continue to defend its sovereign right to independence and to build socialism, as we Cubans have decided, without foreign interference. We will also continue to advocate for a respectful and constructive relationship with the United States.

Ms. President:

In 2014, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) decided in Havana to proclaim our region a Zone of Peace. That historic commitment gains greater validity every day.

We defend peace and multilateralism against unilateral coercive measures that seriously harm Syria, Belarus, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Zimbabwe, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran, Russia, Cuba and other nations.

We strongly reject any attempt to undermine the legitimate constitutional order in our countries through coup methods. This already happened in Bolivia in 2019 and on June 26th, and it is intended to happen again in Honduras.

We denounce the attempts to generate violence and destabilization in Venezuela. We reiterate our firm support and solidarity with the Bolivarian, Chavista government and the civic-military union of the Venezuelan people, led by President Nicolás Maduro Moros. The calls to ignore the election results are irresponsible and disrespectful of the popular will and its legitimate institutions.

The destabilizing actions against the Government of Reconciliation and National Unity of Nicaragua must cease. The brotherly people of Sandino will continue to have our full support.

We reiterate our support for the legitimate right to self-determination and independence of Puerto Rico.

The Caribbean countries deserve fair, special and differentiated treatment to face their challenges. We support their fair claim for reparation for the damage caused by colonialism and slavery.

We welcome the efforts of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to find a sustainable solution to the dramatic situation in Haiti, which respects the independence and sovereignty of that sister nation.

The international community has a historical debt to Haiti, protagonist of the first independence and anti-slavery revolution on the continent.

We support the legitimate right of sovereignty of the Argentine people over the Malvinas, South Sandwich and South Georgia Islands and the surrounding maritime spaces.

We reaffirm our support and commitment to the peace efforts in Colombia, to which Cuba will continue to contribute in every way possible in its capacity as Guarantor.

Africa, the cradle of humanity, can always count on Cuba in its efforts to advance on its path to development.

We reaffirm our unwavering solidarity with the Sahrawi people and the exercise of their self-determination.

Cuba expresses its firm rejection of actions aimed at harming the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the People's Republic of China, condemns interference in its internal affairs and reiterates its unwavering support for the principle of "One China" in accordance with the decision of this General Assembly in its historic resolution 2758, recognizing the People's Republic as the sole and legitimate representative of the Chinese people.

We advocate a serious, constructive, realistic diplomatic solution through peaceful means to the current war in Ukraine in accordance with International Law that guarantees the security and sovereignty of all. In this context, Cuba supports the joint proposal presented by China and Brazil for the political solution to this crisis.

Ms. President:

Let us join forces to achieve the effectiveness of multilateral institutions and ensure that they respond to the interests of the humble, the poor, the needy and the exploited, who are the vast majority, on the basis of fair equality, the exercise of human rights by all human beings and respect for the sovereign rights of each nation.

Thank you very much.

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