

*Cuba will defend its sovereign right to an independent, socialist future, committed to peace, sustainable development, social justice and solidarity*

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**Photo: Estudios Revolución.**

Speech by Cuban President and First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party, Miguel Díaz-Canel, at the XXIV Summit of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America-People's Trade Treaty (ALBA-TCP), in Caracas, Venezuela, on December 14, 2024.

Comrade Nicolás Maduro Moros, brother and president of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela;

Dear Nicolás. It is always pleasant and exciting to be in your beloved Caracas, and in the land of Chávez, eternal commander in the hearts of the Latin American peoples.

And it is doubly pleasant and exciting to be in these sacred places, together with the friends-brothers of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America, celebrating a transcendent moment in common history.

Dear Presidents and Brothers Commander Daniel Ortega Saavedra and Luis Arce Catacora;

Dear Prime Ministers Ralph Gonsalves, Roosevelt Skerrit and Gaston Browne;

Dear Representative of the Republic of Honduras, to whose President Xiomara Castro I send a fraternal embrace;

Friend Malki and representatives of the Palestinian State, to whom I reiterate the firmest solidarity of the Cuban people and Government; that solidarity that we offer every day to the hundreds of Palestinian students who are in Cuba;

Comrade Jorge Arreaza, Executive Secretary of ALBA-TCP;

Heads of delegations and representatives of the nations that make up the Alliance;

Guests, members of social movements, participants:

Twenty years have passed since the memorable evening of December 14, 2004, in Havana, when Fidel and Chávez sealed with an embrace the birth of ALBA, an emancipatory process that time has been transforming into an embrace of our peoples.

Five years later, ALBA-TCP would increase its international projection with the incorporation, first, of Bolivia and Nicaragua, and then of Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the first three countries of the English-speaking Caribbean to honor us with their participation.

With the subsequent incorporations of Saint Kitts and Nevis, Grenada and Saint Lucia, the Alliance strengthened its voice and regional reach until it became what it is today: a space of fraternity, solidarity, cooperation, respect, unity, of struggle for the interests of the dispossessed; voice of the voiceless; articulated defense of brothers in history against dependence and subordination to imperialism and regional oligarchies.

Today we are once again brought together by an ALBA-TCP summit, a milestone in the battle for the unity of Our America and in defense of social justice, for a better possible world that we all long for.

We have not missed a meeting, just as we will never miss the cause of American integration, which has so many dreams and projects pending, and this meeting, like the previous ones, never ceases to excite

us; dreams and projects that Fidel and Chávez promoted and realized like no one else since the time of Bolívar, to respond to the aspirations of millions of people. And it is up to those of us who follow in their footsteps to promote and realize with the same will, now, when times are no less challenging for our nations.

The road has not been easy. The iron will of each one of us to see ALBA-TCP advance was what allowed the Alliance to consolidate itself in an inclusive integration process, which is distinguished by the coordination of actions to confront common dangers, by always placing the well-being, development and prosperity of the peoples at the center of decisions.

Dear Heads of State and Government, friends:

The threats to the security and stability of several of our countries have given rise to numerous meetings of the Alliance this year to discuss the very complex international and regional scenario that we face.

As Army General Raúl Castro Ruz warned at the XV ALBA-TCP Summit: “We are at a crucial stage in our history, in which a setback on a regional scale would have very negative impacts on our peoples.”

Today the system of international relations suffers from the imbalances of an unjust, unequal and exclusive order. We are witnesses to the promotion of hate speech and violence, of blatant encouragement of extremism, and the return to old, but not overcome, mechanisms of imperialist domination. In addition to the attempts at coups d'état and persecution of leftist and progressive political figures, there is now a fierce communications machinery aimed at spreading terror and lies.

The Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny are not old theories from the 19th century. Their expansionist and hegemonic concepts are more relevant than ever in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Imperialism and the oligarchies have never renounced the perverse objective of dividing peoples, sowing enmity between the governments of the region, to limit the scope of public policies of a social nature, to appropriate the valuable natural resources of this fabulous geography and to undermine the progress of Latin American and Caribbean integration that would deepen independence.

They ignore with absolute contempt for developing nations international law and the most basic rules of coexistence, through unilateralism and blackmail.

A profound reform of the current international order is therefore required, so that solidarity and cooperation finally prevail over differences.

It is urgent to recover multilateralism in order to advance towards a new order in which the countries of the south participate on an equal footing in global decision-making.

Let the philosophy of plunder cease and the philosophy of war will cease, as Fidel said in one of his historic speeches at the United Nations. Colonialism, neocolonialism, growing fascism and any other manifestation that threatens international peace and security spring from this desire for possession and control, from the permanent attempt to deprive others of their lands, their property and even their lives.

The need for a new international financial architecture is increasingly evident, one that closes the abysmal gap that today separates the North and the South and provides fair treatment to developing countries in the decision-making process and in access to sources of financing.

Full respect for the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter is urgent, as never before, in particular the sovereign equality of States, the self-determination of peoples, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the rejection of the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

The unwavering will and effort of all is required for unity, integration and peace. In this regard, we reaffirm the absolute relevance of the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, in which we express our commitment to banish the use and threat of the use of force from the region forever.

The dramatic and precipitous events in Syria, which led to a change of power in that Arab nation, are part of a dangerous and risky remodelling of the Middle East region in the service of the interests of the United States, Israel and the West.

We make a firm call to preserve the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Syria and the unity of its people.

Dear Heads of State and Government, friends:

The growing tendency to apply unilateral coercive measures against countries that do not submit to imperial hegemony is extremely alarming, causing direct, intentional and politically motivated harm to the sovereignty and independence of the States against which they are directed. They violate the principle of non-interference in internal affairs and hinder the efforts of nations to promote the full enjoyment of human rights.

Once again, we demand the complete, immediate and unconditional elimination of all unilateral coercive measures, which is a historic demand of the international community reflected in resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and the Human Rights Council, as well as in numerous declarations of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of 77 and China, and the Group of Friends in Defense of the United Nations Charter.

For 62 years, the United States Government has imposed on Cuba the most severe and prolonged system of unilateral coercive measures ever applied against any nation.

It is a deliberate act of economic warfare by a powerful empire against a small developing nation. It constitutes a massive, flagrant and systematic violation of the human rights of all Cubans, and calls for the almost unanimous repudiation of the international community.

Since 2019, the blockade against Cuba has escalated to an extreme dimension, much more cruel and inhuman, which is not only expressed in very high costs in material and financial resources, but also burdens the daily life of our nation to unsustainable limits.

The prolongation of this policy over time has an incalculable psychological cost, which brutally impacts the Cuban family, fracturing, dividing and torturing it. And while they execute this policy, its designers and executors cynically accuse the Cuban government of harming the people with the shortages caused by the US government.

Its effects have been further reinforced by the arbitrary inclusion of Cuba on the State Department's unilateral list of alleged countries sponsoring terrorism. This is a designation without any basis, authority or international support, to try to justify and tighten the siege against the Cuban Revolution.

It is not enough to recognize that Cuba fully cooperates with the United States in the fight against terrorism, as the State Department recently admitted. The international community widely recognizes that Cuba is not a terrorist country. Cuba must be removed without further delay from this spurious unilateral list, a fallacy that has a suffocating impact on the economy.

We thank all the brother and sister peoples and governments represented here for their permanent support for the demand that the blockade against Cuba be ended and that we be excluded from the aforementioned unilateral list.

We also express our deep gratitude for the displays of solidarity towards the Cuban people, after the impact of the recent natural phenomena that have hit the island.

The scenario that is presented to us in relations with the United States has not been a surprise for Cuba, it was very probable and we had been preparing for it. But the policy of principles of the Cuban Revolution remains unchanged.

We reaffirm our willingness to engage in serious and responsible dialogue, to advance towards a constructive and civilized relationship, based on sovereign equality, mutual respect, and reciprocal benefit for both peoples, regardless of the deep political differences between the governments.

Cuba reaffirms its determination to defend its sovereign right to build its own future, independent, socialist, free from foreign interference and committed to peace, sustainable development, social justice and solidarity.

Dear sisters and brothers:

We reaffirm our commitment to defend the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, which ten years after its approval at the II CELAC Summit in Havana in January 2014, remains fully valid.

We reiterate our solidarity with the countries gathered here that have been the object of attempts at destabilization and external interference. In particular, we reiterate our firm support for the Bolivarian and Chavista Revolution, led with acumen by President Nicolás Maduro Moros, who remains determined to defend his people from unacceptable external pressures.

Questioning the institutions and laws of another country does not contribute to regional stability; it is up to the people of Bolívar and Chávez to define their future.

We reiterate our full support for Commander President Daniel Ortega Saavedra and his people. The destabilizing actions against the Government of Reconciliation and National Unity of Nicaragua must cease!

We express to the Plurinational State of Bolivia our support and solidarity in the defense of its sovereignty, over its natural resources and against destabilizing attempts.

We welcome the holding of the IV International Conference on Small Island Developing States in our sister and beloved Antigua and Barbuda. We recognize the results achieved and the adoption of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States, aimed at expanding cooperation, supporting debt sustainability and the means of implementation for these countries.

The Caribbean has and will always have a sister in Cuba, who accompanies them in their right to receive fair, special and differentiated treatment, essential to face the growing challenges derived from the prevailing unjust international financial system and climate change, as well as in their legitimate claim for reparations and compensation for the horrors of slavery and colonialism.

We cry out for a free Puerto Rico! And we maintain our solidarity with Haiti, and the Cuban doctors are there.

Distinguished colleagues:

The crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and apartheid committed by Israel and which have been taking place for 75 years against the Palestinian people, are currently taking on extreme proportions and must cease.

We reiterate our strong demand for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in the illegally occupied Palestinian territories.

Cuba also condemns the attacks perpetrated by Israel against friendly nations such as Lebanon, Syria and Iran.

The impunity with which the Government of Israel continues to act is only possible because of the complicit political, military, logistical and financial support provided to the occupying power by the Government of the United States, which acts cynically and perversely by presenting itself to the world as a mediator in the conflict, while preventing possible actions by the Security Council.

Cuba demands a comprehensive, fair and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on the creation of two States, which will allow the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination and to have an independent and sovereign State within the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and the return of its refugees.

Dear friends:

I would like to express my recognition to the Executive Secretariat, which has promoted more than 70 communiqués and numerous actions in this year that is ending to advance the ambitious, but necessary, Strategic Agenda 2030.

This has been a very challenging year for ALBA-TCP and for Cuba, but one in which we have always felt accompanied by the solidarity of all of you.

In the next few days the Cuban Revolution will turn 66 years old, and it will do so with the invariable willingness to face and overcome the greatest challenges that we learned in the school of Fidel, Raúl and the heroic Centennial Generation of José Martí that preceded us. In these 66 years, the Cuban people have more than proven that their mambí spirit has not diminished, that, as General Antonio Maceo said, “whoever tries to take over Cuba will collect the dust of its blood-soaked soil, if they do not perish in the fight.”

Cuba will not give in, just as ALBA-TCP will not surrender!

Let us make our collective effort and work a stronger and more united ALBA!

May ALBA-TCP continue to advance in constant search and realization of projects for the economic development and dignity of our America. We owe this to Bolívar and Martí, to the founding fathers of the independence of Latin America and the Caribbean. We owe it to Antonio José de Sucre, who led the victory of the Battle of Ayacucho 200 years ago. And we owe it especially to Fidel, to Chávez and to our people.

For these twenty years of solidarity and friendship, Long live ALBA-TCP!

Hasta la Victoria Siempre!

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<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/especiales/exclusivas/372104-cuba-will-defend-its-sovereign-right-to-an-independent-socialist-future-committed-to-peace-sustainable-development-social-justice-and-solidarity>



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