

International Reaction Grows to Passing of Cuban Revolution Leader Fidel Castro



Havana, November 27 (RHC)-- World leaders continue to send messages of condolences and solidarity on the passing of Cuban Revolution leader Fidel Castro.

Mexican president Enrique Peña Nieto tweeted that "Fidel Castro was a friend of Mexico, promoting bilateral relations based on respect, dialogue and solidarity."

Rubén Berríos Martínez, longtime leader of the Puerto Rican Independence Party, called Fidel Castro the "largest and most influential Latin American of the 20th century, whose verticality, vision and passion has always served as an inspiration for those who aspired to a more just, free and dignified Latin America."

Brazil's former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said on his Facebook page that Fidel Castro was his "friend and companion" and the "greatest of all Latin Americans." Lula added that Fidel Castro was like an "older brother -- an irreplaceable companion. He encouraged dreams of freedom, sovereignty and equality."

A statement from the Spanish government hailed the late Cuban leader as "a figure of enormous historical importance." The statement said: "As a son of Spaniards, former president Fidel Castro always maintained close relations with Spain and showed great affection for his family and cultural ties."

Turkey's foreign ministry commended the "legendary leader of the Cuban Revolution" for "instituting many deep reforms in his country from health care to education, art to science."

"The struggle to which he dedicated his life echoed not just in Cuba but across the world, and has awakened respect even in other political camps," the Turkish foreign ministry said. "His words 'another world is possible' reflect the shared longing of billions of people from Latin America to Asia, from the Middle East to Africa."

Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras tweeted: "Goodbye, Commandante. Until the peoples' eternal victory."

Ammar al-Moussawi, who is in charge of international relations for Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group, lauded Fidel Castro as "a historic symbol whose life was a lighthouse to all revolutionaries around the world."

Guyanese Prime Minister Moses Nagamootoo said Fidel Castro shared his island's resources with any nation that dared ask for help. The Cuban government has sent thousands of doctors and nurses to work in remote Caribbean areas where local and other foreign medical personnel had refused to go, Nagamootoo said. "His and Cuba's contribution to humanity and the Caribbean is unmatched by any other nation in terms of brotherly and sisterly relations. He was an international gift to humanity."

The Nelson Mandela Foundation, established to carry on the work of the late anti-apartheid leader who would go on to become South Africa's president, recounted the close relationship Mandela forged with the Cuban leader.

When Mandela became president in 1994 he was criticized by some in the West for his ties to Fidel Castro. Mandela replied that anyone who objected could "jump in the pool." Mandela said: "The first country we approached (for assistance in battling apartheid) was the United States of America. We could not even succeed to come close to the government, and they refused to assist us," Mandela said in a 1990 interview. "But Cuba, the moment we appealed for assistance they were ready to do so and they did so."

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau joined with his condolences, calling Castro "a legendary revolutionary and orator" and a "remarkable leader." Trudeau said: "Both Mr. Castro's supporters and detractors recognized his tremendous dedication and love for the Cuban people who had a deep and lasting affection for "el Comandante."

And former U.S. President Jimmy Carter said he and his wife Rosalynn "remember fondly our visits with him in Cuba and his love of his country." The couple visited Cuba in 2002, long after Carter left the White House.

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