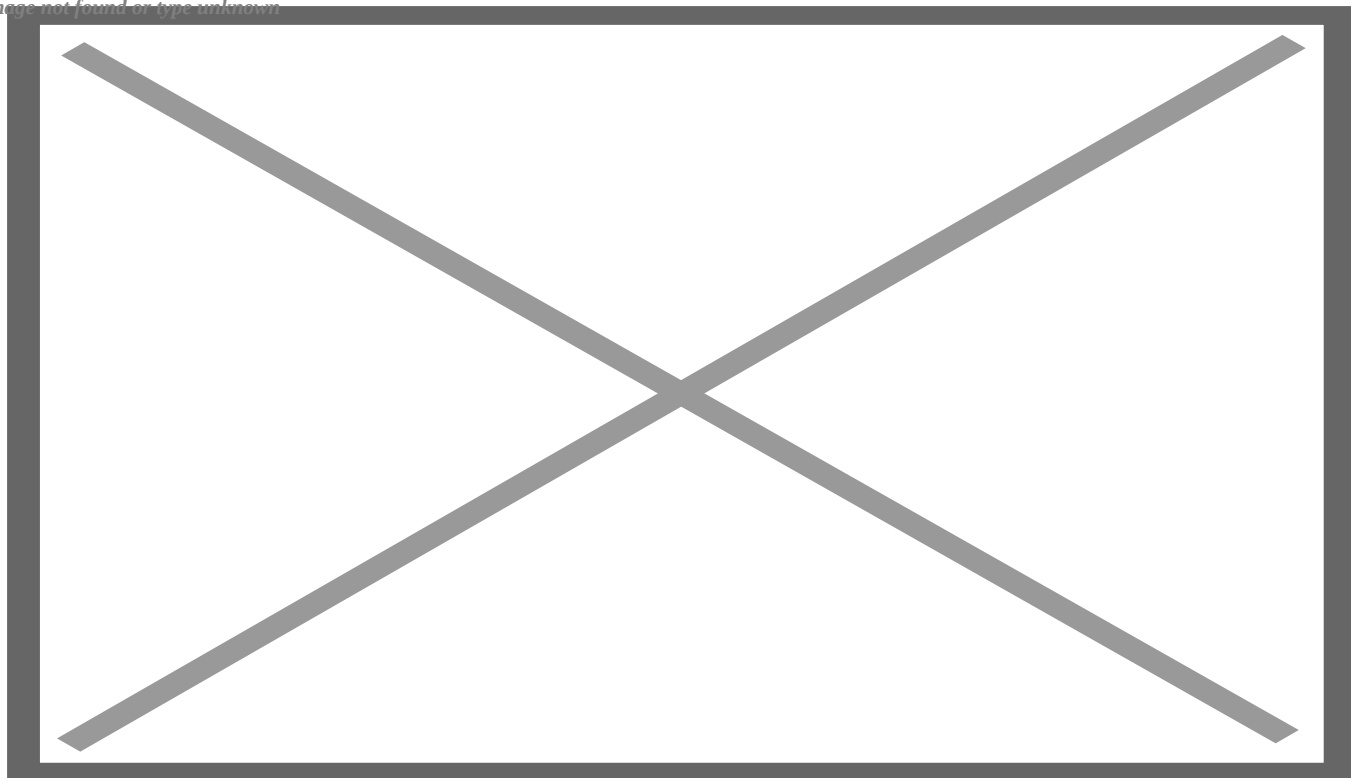


Cuba: One of the great absentees

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Exclusion of Cuba from the Summit of the Americas

By María Josefina Arce

Cuba is one of the great absentees of the misnamed Summit of the Americas, which opens its doors in the U.S. city of Los Angeles, surrounded by multiple criticisms and condemnations from governments and peoples for the exclusion of nations that are an indissoluble part of the region.

The government of President Joe Biden returns to the old arbitrary practice of excluding the Greater Antilles, as happened in the first six editions. In response to the clamor of the countries of the area, it participated in the Seventh and Eighth Summits, in Panama and Lima, the Peruvian capital.

A meeting that should include everyone to coordinate joint actions in the face of common challenges, has become, since its convocation, an event dominated by the interests and political sympathies of the United States.

And although it would like to pretend otherwise, cooperation is not an objective of the Ninth Summit of the Americas, since Cuba could contribute a lot about its experiences in various areas, especially in health, after a little more than two years of global health emergency due to the COVID 19, still present, and other

diseases.

Cuba's health system is internationally recognized, as it allowed for an adequate response to the virus, because although at a certain moment, as in the rest of the countries, it hit us hard, the number of infected and dead people were never among the highest in the world.

Recently, within the framework of the seventy-fifth World Health Assembly, held at the end of May in Geneva, the response of the Caribbean nation to the disease caused by the new coronavirus was highlighted.

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General of the World Health Organization, in a meeting with the Cuban Minister of Health, José Angel Portal, congratulated our country for its response to COVID 19 and the high level of immunization of its population.

But Cuba also cooperated with other nations in the fight against the virus, despite the fact that the difficulties generated by the pandemic were compounded by the obstacles caused by the reinforcement of the U.S. blockade.

Cuban health personnel went to various states, including developed ones such as Italy. The many lives saved and the gratitude of the citizens were the greatest satisfaction for these professionals, who, far from their families, did not hesitate to put their lives at risk.

Cuba's health solidarity for almost six decades has made a difference in many parts of the world. Cuban doctors have reached the most remote places and the most vulnerable populations.

In addition, Cuba has been the only country in the so-called Third World to create its own vaccines, of proven safety and efficacy, given the high level reached by biotechnology, thanks to the preparation of its scientific community and the political will of the government. It was also the first to immunize its pediatric population.

These are undoubtedly experiences and advances to be taken into account, but which the United States prefers not to recognize in its usual arrogance, just as it ignores the demands that the right of all to participate be respected. It will be a summit that will not take into account the real needs of the peoples, but the hegemonic interests of the neighbor to the North.

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