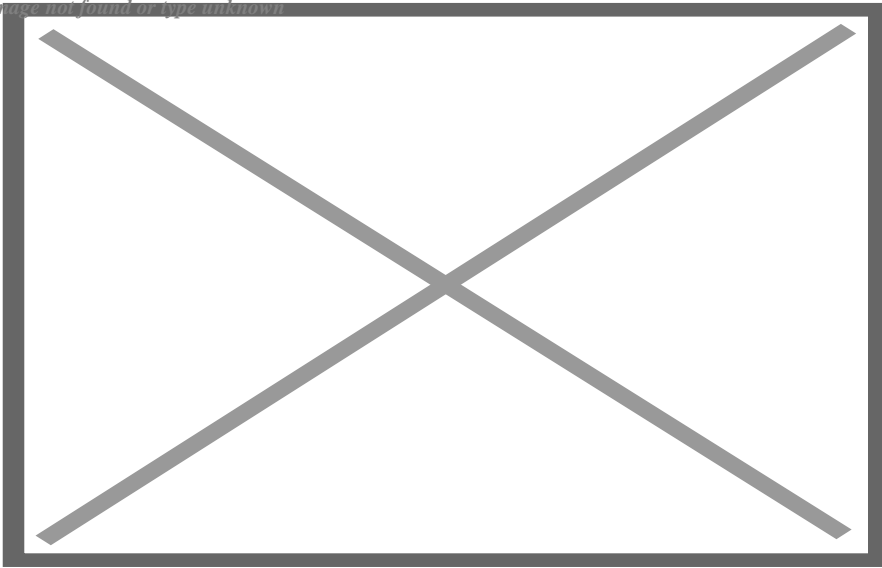


# *Cuba defends the rights of the South at the United Nations*

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By María Josefina Arce

The claims of the global South were once again heard loudly at the United Nations. As president pro tempore of the Group of 77, Cuba defended the right of developing nations to advance towards their socioeconomic progress, a goal that is hindered by an unjust international economic and financial order that generates inequalities.

At the Sustainable Development Goals Summit in New York, the first speaker was Cuban President Miguel Díaz Canel, who made an assessment of how these goals are progressing, from which, he emphasized, the world has deviated.

With data, such as the number of poor and hungry people in the world today, he demonstrated that at this rate none of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals can be met.

The burden that the foreign debt represents for developing nations was denounced by the President, as the historical leader of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro, did on several occasions.

This was one of the many battles waged by Fidel and which the Cuban president has now brought back to the UN, since the situation has changed little. At present, the poorest nations continue to allocate substantial resources to the payment of debts, which could be channeled towards their progress.

Another obstacle to the advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals is unilateral coercive measures. Cuba and other member nations of the Group of 77 are an example of the limitations imposed by these arbitrary policies, which threaten the well-being of their peoples.

But in his speech, Díaz Canel also referred to the commitment and political will of the concertation mechanism chaired by Cuba to achieve the goals adopted in 2015.

The recent Summit held in Havana has been an example of the commitment of the 134 nations of the bloc in this regard. The final declaration recognizes the role of science, technology and innovation in the development and welfare of its citizens.

It reflects the commitment to strengthen their national systems in these areas and to hold regular meetings of ministers and high authorities of Science, Technology and Innovation.

The bloc, under Cuba's leadership, is working to increase and accelerate the implementation of concrete, innovative, transformative and ambitious actions and measures to ensure the achievement of the SDGs.

But this must be a worldwide effort, in which solidarity and cooperation prevail, so that, as the Cuban president stated at the UN, "no one is left behind" and to overcome one of the most complex crises facing humanity.

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