

Speech by the Head of the Cuban Delegation to the XVI BRICS Summit

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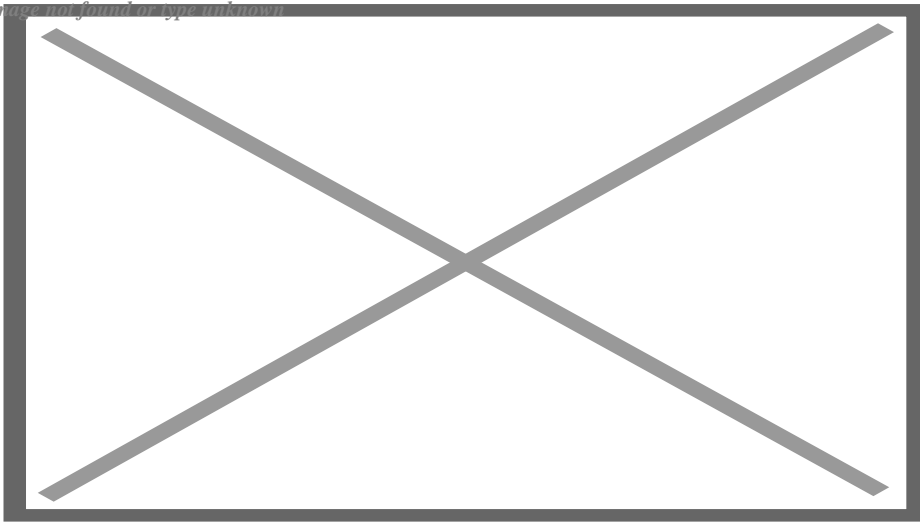


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Speech of the Head of the Cuban Delegation to the XVI BRICS Summit
Kazan, Russia 22-24 October 2024

His Excellency Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation

Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government

Distinguished Heads of Delegation and Delegates:

The complicated electric power contingency and the simultaneous impact of a hurricane in our country have prevented the presence of Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel Bermudez at this important forum as it was planned.

For the last five days, the country has suffered a massive blackout of the national electricity system, caused firstly by the lack of fuel and the paralysis of the generating stations, and secondly by the technological difficulties in restoring the system due to the breakdowns and precarious state of the power stations.

It is a direct consequence of the extreme economic warfare measures implemented by the US government since 2019, specifically designed to prevent the supply of fuel and parts for technical maintenance and investment, against suppliers, transporters and insurers. In one year alone, the US government sanctioned 53 ships and 27 companies.

The deprivation of financial resources and the obstacles to our bank transfers due to the blockade and the list of countries suspected of supporting terrorism, as well as the difficult weather conditions for ship-to-ship navigation and unloading, which are often imposed on us, created the conditions for the disruption of the supply chain.

Thanks to the selflessness of the 52,000 electrical workers, engineers and managers, the conscious participation and mobilization of the people in support of the recovery, the understanding and complete calm of the citizens and the effective leadership of the government, the consequences were not more serious.

I would like to express my gratitude for the many expressions of solidarity and offers of cooperation, for which we are so grateful and which we need.

For Cuba, it is an extraordinary honor to participate in this meeting of Heads of State and Government in the expanded format of BRICS, successfully held in the multicultural and hospitable city of Kazan. On behalf of the Cuban President and people, I would like to thank the President of the Russian Federation for his generous invitation.

Because of their political, economic and demographic weight, the BRICS have become a fundamental actor of growing relevance, authority and leadership in the global geopolitical scenario, and a real hope for the countries of the South in their complex path towards achieving a more just, democratic, equitable and sustainable international order.

From this podium, we reiterate Cuba's firm rejection of any attempt to impose a so-called "rules-based" international order as an alternative to international law, on whose norms and principles international relations are based.

We particularly appreciate the Group's contribution to the path towards the urgent and profound reform of the international financial system, which is outdated, unfair, speculative and exclusive.

For its part, the BRICS New Development Bank is playing an increasingly decisive role as an important alternative for the countries of the South to access financial resources on fairer terms.

With the launch of the broad-based foreign reserve mechanism and the establishment of credit lines in local currencies, the BRICS are helping to shape a new, necessary and inclusive international financial architecture.

Its extension to other countries would help to mitigate the effects of the current unfair and unbalanced international monetary system and reduce the influence of the US dollar, which is often used as an instrument of pressure that has a very negative impact on the quality of life of many of our peoples.

Excellencies:

Cuba shares similar views to those expressed in the Declaration of this XVI BRICS Summit in Kazan, as well as in the Joint Communiqué of the Foreign Ministers of June 20-24.

We note with satisfaction that the BRICS have among their priorities the confrontation with the current world food and energy crisis, with very positive experiences, the results of which have been confirmed in many of its member states, including the increased use and production of renewable energy in development projects,

issues of vital importance for all the nations of the South.

My country has historical relations with all BRICS member countries, as well as with the nations invited to this important meeting, with which it has shared positions and proposals in numerous events organized by the group.

We have successfully joined many of the initiatives promoted by the group's member countries, such as the Belt and Road Initiative and the Global Development Initiative proposed by China, as well as the Eurasian Economic Union, which we joined as an observer.

Cuba's presence in Kazan today is the expression of our will to deepen this path, not only in the search for cooperation and mutual benefits, but also, as we have formally requested of the Russian Federation in its capacity as pro tempore President of the Group, to become a "Partner Country", for which we hope to count on your support.

We have also come to share with you our experience and results in various fields such as the biomedical-pharmaceutical industry, health, education, science and innovation.

Our country has an important infrastructure and highly qualified human resources that favor the development of cooperation in various productive and investment sectors, supported by policies and regulations that make them increasingly favorable.

Cuba, which is considered the key to the Gulf due to its strategic location in the Caribbean Sea, can facilitate BRICS countries' access to important markets in Latin America and the Caribbean and establish strategic partnerships for the benefit of our countries.

Your Excellencies:

For more than 60 years, Cuba has had to face a ferocious economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by successive US administrations, which has been intensified in an extreme, unprecedented and cruel manner since 2019, including during the COVID pandemic, and aggravated by the infamous and unfounded inclusion of our country in the false list of countries that allegedly sponsor terrorism, which has had a very negative impact on the quality of life of all Cubans, causing serious humanitarian damage, shortages and suffering.

The dignified, victorious and creative resistance of the Cuban people has received the encouragement and support of many of the countries gathered in this room and the backing of the international community, a gesture for which we are deeply grateful.

Excellencies:

Like the BRICS, Cuba shares the deep concern and condemnation of the genocide in Palestine and the escalation in the Middle East as a result of the aggressiveness and impunity with which the State of Israel acts, with the military, logistical, financial and political support of the United States government.

In order to achieve peace in the Middle East, there is an urgent need for a comprehensive, lasting and just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including the creation of a sovereign and independent Palestinian state on the pre-1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital and guarantees for the return of refugees. Palestine's immediate accession to full membership of the UN must also take place.

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Excellencies:

Cuba also reiterates its support for the joint proposal presented by China and Brazil to find a serious, constructive, realistic and peaceful diplomatic solution to the current conflict in Ukraine, in strict compliance with international law and with guarantees of security and sovereignty for all parties involved. We oppose the behavior of NATO, which has been dragged by the US administration into direct involvement in the conflict, which threatens international peace and security, with devastating consequences.

The proliferation of unilateral coercive measures against Russia and the supply of arms and funds to fuel the war must stop.

Likewise, Sandinista Nicaragua and President Commander Daniel Ortega receive Cuba's solidarity support against interference in their internal affairs.

Excellencies:

I wish to express full and profound solidarity with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the leadership of Constitutional President Nicolas Maduro Moros in the face of unilateral coercive campaigns and measures.

I am pleased to reiterate to the Russian Federation our best wishes for the success of this Summit and for its attentive hospitality.

Thank you very much.
(CUBAMINREX)

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