

Why is the U.S. fueling the November 15 Cuba protests?

written by Rosa Miriam Elizalde
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Marching in support of the revolution. Photo: Bill Hackwell

On September 20, letters began to arrive at eight Cuban municipal or provincial government headquarters announcing the [holding](#) of “peaceful” marches on November 15 by a group called [Archipiélago](#). The motivation for these marches was a call for change. The letter was not a formal request to occupy the busiest streets of some cities in Cuba, but rather a notification by the group that they would do so and they also demanded that the authorities provide them with security for these marches. By virtue of Cuban laws and obsessive American support for the marches, the Cuban government [denied](#) permission for holding the protests.

Almost two months have passed since these letters were sent, but there are few indications that the march will take place in Cuba. Florida’s propaganda machine assures the opposite and adds that [similar](#) marches will take place across more than a hundred cities in the world, a third of them in the United States.

On November 10, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez [warned](#) the diplomatic corps accredited in Havana that the Cuban government “will not tolerate an opposition march” and further said that “Cuba will never allow actions of a foreign government in our territory, trying to destabilize the country,” while referring to the U.S.’s support of these marches. The provocation follows the [plot](#) seen many times before. Meanwhile, this march, which has been scheduled for November 15, is not what many hope it will be: a movement for change in Cuba.

The march is not autonomous

Two days after the delivery of the first letter to the authorities, a string of [statements](#) by the U.S. officials and members of Congress began pouring in on September 22. Until November 10, there had [been](#) several public interventions from Washington or Florida with all kinds of demands and threats to the island’s authorities. No other issue in the U.S. domestic politics, in recent weeks, has

received so much attention or been the case of such obsession before these marches.

The spokesman for the U.S. State Department Ned Price issued a statement on October 16 [condemning](#) the denial of permission by the Cuban government to hold the march. Meanwhile, U.S. Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) extended his support for these anti-government protests [soon after](#) the news about these marches began circulating, while a couple of top advisers from the Biden administration have [threatened](#) more sanctions on the Cuban government for denying permission to hold the march on November 15.

As if that were not enough, more money has been raining in for such efforts against the Cuban government. In September 2021, the Biden administration [gave](#) almost 7 million dollars to 12 organizations that almost daily publicize the “[civic march for change](#)” in Cuba. Many analysts see the hidden hand of the “color revolutions” in this, which were exported by the West to the Russian periphery.

In addition to “moral,” political and financial support, the U.S. diplomats offer support in many ways to the anti-government movement in Cuba and occasionally [serve](#) as chauffeurs to the opposition. The only thing missing in terms of interference is a show like that of the U.S. Under Secretary of State Victoria Nuland, who [distributed](#) food to anti-government protesters in Independence Square, in the capital of Ukraine, Kiev, in 2013.

The march is not disconnected from other processes

The march is just another episode in a more comprehensive strategy. The Biden administration has interpreted the combined effect of the pandemic, the global crisis and the economic blockade—plus the 243 [additional](#) measures imposed by the former U.S. President Donald Trump—as exceptional conditions that have hit Cuba even harder. No spies are required to realize that there are more queues, inflation and shortages in a country that has been managing shortages for 60 years, but it is

also important to understand that the march does not have popular support within the country. Cuba is returning to normalcy with the opening of flights, families reuniting after being separated for two years, the return of students to schools and the revival of the national economy.

The group organizing the march is not peaceful

The private Facebook group listed as the march organizer, [Archipiélago](#), is anything but moderate. A large number of publications by the group support symbolic violence and political disqualification of those who defend the socialist project or celebrate some social achievements in Cuba. The debate in these spaces is not to modify opinions, but to stir up prejudices, instill hatred among Cubans as an exclusive source of legitimacy for a government that has led the country under very difficult conditions.

The repertoire is an unbridled McCarthyism and an inordinate impulse to indulge in stigmatization that are very common communicative practices in the current political climate of the United States, but alien to the political, cultural and idiosyncratic character of Cubans. Cuba's Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez, on November 10, [assured](#) that Facebook could be sued for supporting the "dissident movement " in Cuba, according to Reuters.

The marches are not synchronous

There is talk of the synchronization of the marches inside and outside of Cuba to promote change. But there is no such thing. In Cuba, there is definitely no atmosphere to support these marches, while the organizers of Florida speak of the participation of people from a hundred cities in the world on November 15, they have not specified the number of people who will do so.

In reality, those willing to participate in this type of anti-Castro chaos are usually

few, but that does not matter. On April 30, 2020, an individual [opened fire](#) at the Cuban Embassy in Washington with an assault weapon, which led to the recalling of the foreign minister. On the night of July 27, two individuals [threw](#) a Molotov cocktail at the Cuban Embassy in Paris.

It's not what they say

The conservative ghost of the far-right that travels the world and arrives in Cuba is not what it seems or what is visible to the naked eye. Behind the “non-violent march” mantra is the long shadow of the life-long reactionaries who now combine economic ultra-liberalism, conservative morality, empty concepts, and creative use of social media. They dream of ending the Cuban Revolution no later than November 15, while leaving a moral question unanswered: How is it possible to talk of a civil, peaceful and independent protest, if Washington is lubricating the route plan of the protest with threats and dollars?

*This article was produced by [Globetrotter](#). Rosa Miriam Elizalde is a Cuban journalist and founder of the site Cubadebate. She is vice president of both the Union of Cuban Journalists (UPEC) and the Latin American Federation of Journalists (FELAP). She has written and co-written several books including *Jineteros en la Habana* and *Our Chavez*. She has received the Juan Gualberto Gómez National Prize for Journalism on multiple occasions for her outstanding work. She is currently a weekly columnist for *La Jornada* of Mexico City.*

