

Brazil: A presidential election that will mark the immediate future of Latin America

written by Struggle - La Lucha
October 1, 2022



*Interview with Latin American political scientist and filmmaker **Micaela Ovelar** on the current scenario in the South American country and other defining issues ahead of the presidential election*

This Sunday, October 2, Brazil, Latin America's largest economy, will elect its president. This election is decisive not only for the South American country but also

for the entire region since its outcome will heavily influence the correlation of forces. Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva (progressive candidate of the Workers' Party)'s predicted victory would be a boost for the Latin America left and the rejection of neo-liberalism, which has strengthened in the last 3 years. Meanwhile, if Jair Bolsonaro (ultra-right and Trump supporter) wins, it would mean a retrenching for the right-wing to resist.

Regarding this election that carries such weight, Resumen Latinoamericano in English interviewed Micaela Ovelar Marquez, who is in Brazil directing a documentary on the current political electoral process of that country.

Gustavo Maranges (GM): *Micaela, first of all, I would like to talk about the internal context in which these elections will take place.*

Micaela Ovelar (MO): Extreme polarization is a good way to define Brazil's current social context. Brazilian society has become very political, like a few times before in its history. For example, issues deeply rooted in the culture, such as football, carnivals, and other major holidays, have taken a back seat to the fierce polarization of political debates.

The confrontation between the followers of president Bolsonaro followers and former PT president Lula has reached the whole society. We understand bolsonarism as an ultra-right and neo-fascist movement whose main figure is the current president Jair Bolsonaro. Meanwhile, Lulism is a progressive movement in its essence, even when it is made up of many social and political sectors ranging from some traditional right groups to social movements and leftist organizations. It is a confrontation between two completely opposite models. It is a very complex scenario involving the entire Brazilian society.

GM: *Taking into account the neo-fascist nature of bolsonarism and the fact that ultra-right forces have advanced internationally, especially in Europe and the States,*

could you comment on Bolsonaro's electoral base in Brazil and what he proposes?

MO: It is true that the ultra-right has advanced a lot in Europe and the United States. Bolsonaro, to some extent, is the result of this trend's influence in the region. For example, we cannot forget his affinity with Trump.

However, in Brazil, ultra-right forces' advances have different characteristics than in Europe. In 2018, the ultra-right comes to power not only because of the growth of its electoral base but also because of the performance of the Brazilian lawfare. There was a dirty campaign against the Workers' Party (PT), to the point of disqualifying Lula so that he could not run in the 2018 presidential elections. It does not happen like that in Europe.

Bolsonaro's electoral base is made up of middle and upper-middle-class sectors, which grew thanks to the economic prosperity generated by 13 years of PT governments. These sectors identify very much with Bolsonaro's main slogan: "God, homeland, family, and freedom". This describes very well what Bolsonaro's proposals are. "Freedom" refers to his economic program, which is deeply neoliberal. It is about giving all freedoms to agribusiness to cross over indigenous peoples, the conservation of the Amazon, and taking care of the environment. It is essentially social traditionalism and economic neoliberalism.

He basically proposes to maintain his current management strategy if re-elected, and it is one of Bolsonaro's weaknesses. He does not have any proposal for change or improvement, something that Brazilians know is needed.

If there is something that joins forces beyond ideology right now in Brazil, it is the environmental deterioration, especially its main ecosystem: the Amazon, the precarious living conditions of the poorest sectors, and the COVID-19 pandemic's effects. All of these are issues closely related to Bolsonaro's gloomy management of the country's natural resources, institutions, and productive capacities.

On the other hand, Bolsonarism counts on some groups which were favored by a law, which allowed them to buy and carry firearms with practically no requirements. It has not only pleased some sectors living outside the law but Bolsonaro's most radical followers, who became a sort of armed wing of his movement. Something that has cost some lives so far. For the first time in decades, there are politically motivated killings in Brazil.

This is a symptom of the polarization I mentioned before while working as a very subtle element of repression and coercion (since it is not exercised directly by the government), which has an inhibiting effect when it comes to showing opposition to the government by any means.

GM: This element of psychological and physical violence, together with the loyalty he claims to have within the Armed Forces, are two elements that make Bolsonaro feel confident enough to state he will not recognize the election results if he loses. Does the ultra-right president maintain this position, or have the international and institutional criticisms moderated his discourse?

MO: His position about this matter has been inconsistent and changing, nothing different from his mandate in general. Therefore, it is a bit difficult to be sure what he actually intends to do.

First, Bolsonaro went so far as to gather the diplomatic corp to tell them if he lost in October, there would be a coup d'état. This opened a confrontation between the executive and the judiciary, which controls the electoral processes in the country. Later, faced with the judiciary response, the president tried to cover his outburst with a speech on democracy protection. However, he recently assured if he did not win with 60%, it was only because of fraud.

I think it is a strategy to foster confusion and instability while opening an issue for him to exploit after a possible defeat. It is not something new. Donald Trump made it

in the United States and is still doing it and Keiko Fujimori did the same in Peru. The assault on Capitol Hill in Washington on January 6, 2021, a failed coup d'état, is the result of this kind of strategy, one that put the US's entire institutionalism under pressure. Meanwhile, in Peru, Keiko Fujimori almost prevented Pedro Castillo's victory.

This strategy has kept together and actively mobilized the ultra-right forces. The phantom of fraud has served as a justification to cover the real causes of the electoral defeat, which is the rejection of the model that the right wing has decided to carry out.

GM: Faced with this unstable scenario, what has been the response of Lula and the progressive movement he represents?

MO: Lula has bet on fostering broad political alliances and convincing the majorities. He is a born trade unionist and has gained strength thanks to collective leadership. Today he counts on the trade union movement, the Landless Movement (MST), defenders of the Amazon and the environment, indigenous peoples, defenders of peasants, LGBTQ+, and women's rights. That is to say, these are forces that see him as an option for progress and change, despite disagreeing in certain aspects with Lula's positions.

It is a not-ideologically homogeneous group, although united by the fact that they have all been trampled by Bolsonaro's administration. This is a setback since they have lost rights and spaces gained during the PT governments. For example, the PT managed to get Brazil off the hunger map, although today, over 30 million Brazilians are hungry while 50% of the population is not adequately fed.

It has been one of the main issues of Lula's electoral campaign, which focused on love, unity, and hope for positive change. Hence, it has not looked for direct confrontation with Bolsonaro, but channeled the dissatisfaction generated by his

mismanagement. Lula has exposed what is at stake if Bolsonaro wins, the social schism he has generated, and the instability he has brought to the country in all senses.

The government program presented by Lula is the result of the collective leadership he has built around him. It intends to settle the country's main needs, but above all, the demands of those movements backing him. It is a comprehensive and ambitious program that goes beyond rebuilding the country and strengthening public services and social assistance. It aims to put Brazil back on the path of development for the benefit of the people. In other words, it is not only to recover what has been lost but to continue building.

GM: This inclusive strategy is often questioned because of the risks it implies. For example, the appointment of Sao Paulo's former governor, Geraldo Alckmin as Lula's vice-president, was highly questioned. What criteria led to his addition, and how will it be read?

MO: Certainly, the vice-president appointment was very controversial and judged by some leftist sectors which stand for Lula. However, it is part of the strategy of creating alliances to ensure victory.

Brazil is the 12th largest economy in the world, with a very strong private business sector, which shapes political structures and institutions. We can't ignore Brazilian politics' peculiarities when making this type of decision. Likewise, it must be understood that Lula is anti-imperialist, but not anti-capitalist.

Lula's program is the most progressive among the candidates, but it is useless if he does not defeat Bolsonaro. That's why he has to unite and add up people.

The right-wing in the region is very organized and has a lot of economic and media power. Therefore, thinking that a chaotic tenure is enough to defeat it is a childish

reading. How long did it take Andres Manuel Lopez to become Mexico's president or Gustavo Petro to win the presidential elections in Colombia? What was their strategy?

The appointment of Alckmin responds to Lula's will to form a broad front against Bolsonaro, which is the very first step toward saving the country. On top of that, it shows an open-to-dialogue stance, especially with major political forces, even if there are disagreements on certain issues. It is not possible to campaign for unity if sectarianism prevails in practice.

Although the decision was indeed controversial at the time, today almost nobody questions it. All doubts disappeared after these months of the electoral campaign.

GM: *Finally, I would like to know which are Lula's weakest elements and his main challenges going into the October 2 election.*

MO: As for the weak points, I think they do not exist or have not been shown. Lula comes out of prison with tremendous moral strength and unequaled political capital. Logically, there are different criteria regarding the strategy, but this type of matter is very subjective. For example, some would say the current alliances or the non-confrontational tone are weaknesses, but I do not think that is the case. These are methods that have their pros and cons.

The challenges are great, but both he and those who follow him are aware of them. The first thing is to get Brazilians to vote since abstentionism is a significant factor in today's electoral processes. This affects progressive or leftist candidates more since the right wing is very militant and has a lot of organization, as I mentioned before.

All progressive forces understand that the main challenges will come after the elections. Implementing Lula's government program will not be easy, even if he wins

the elections in the first round. There are many obstacles to overcome within the government structures, which still resemble Bolsonaro.

A possible defeat at the polls does not mean that bolsonarism will disappear from society, especially if it has already prepared to act as opposition. Biden's current situation in the US, putting aside the differences, is a perfect example of how tough it is to deal with the extreme right and neo-fascist opposition.

Four years is not enough to rebuild a country, not one ravaged by a tsunami called Bolsonaro. A revolution is needed in education, health, and culture to recover what has been lost. Nevertheless, Lula's self-criticism shows a more resilient movement. Acknowledging past mistakes is a very positive step that predicts better management of social problems or political crises, such as the Dilma Rousseff impeachment in 2016.

GM: How has Lula dealt with the stigma of corruption, which is one of the main lines of attack against the left in the world, but especially against him, since he is probably the only left-wing president imprisoned because of it, albeit unjustly?

MO: It is indeed a stigma. It is a stamp that the judiciary and mainstream media have stamped on leftist movements in Latin America, especially in Brazil. Perhaps few have the real perception of how dirty and strong these campaigns are. There is constant harassment in all informative channels, and it is not a matter of months, but years, since the very beginning of the progressive decade. Today, when the scenario is more complex, these ideas, which have been carefully shaped by the right wing, do enormous damage.

Unfortunately, it continues to affect Lula, and it is going to impede better results. On the other hand, it is well known by him and his campaign team. I can assure you they have worked hard to reduce possible damage. No matter how much the courts say he is innocent, corporate media will continue to revive the ghost of corruption

against Lula.

GM: *Who do you think will win, and would it be possible to have a conclusive result in the first round?*

MO: Despite pollsters presenting Lula as the big favorite, even some of them dare to say he might win in the first round, it is very hard to predict anything. Bolsonaro is backed by very influential sectors with a lot of resources.

On the other hand, Lula's electoral campaign has been very comprehensive, and even some evangelical churches joined him. It is very positive since this is a sector that Bolsonaro controlled almost entirely in 2018.

Still, the opponent cannot be underestimated. Lula's victory in the first round seems very difficult, but it would be a beautiful surprise.

Micaela Ovelar is Argentine-Venezuelan and was one of President Hugo Chavez's foreign policy advisors. She has worked with the Venezuelan government for the last 15 years while currently living in Sao Paulo. Micaela specialized in film and TV direction at EMPA (Caracas) and worked as an archive researcher for the film "Silvio Rodriguez. My first calling". She was also the producer of "A as for Angicos," a film by Catherine Murphy and is currently a columnist for "Correo del Alba" (Bolivia), United World (Türkiye), and other international media.

Source: [Resumen Latinoamericano - US](#)



Cuba slowly begins to recover from devastating Hurricane Ian

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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September 29, 2022, from Havana

Cuba is slowly rising from the aftermath of Hurricane Ian, which left desolate images in the western part of the country. Fallen trees and power lines crossed in the streets are part of the scene of many of the communities that felt the force of its winds, especially Pinar del Río. It is also very common to see the same neighbors cutting down trees with axes in hand, sweeping the streets, piling up the leaves that are already beginning to dry on the pavement.

Cuba does not stop, despite the fact that one of Ian's after-effects was the almost total collapse of the national electrical grid. Cafeterias are opening their doors as long as daylight permits; people are traveling between municipalities to meet up with relatives; public transportation has resumed its service; the press reports uninterruptedly.

Since Wednesday afternoon and evening, some communities have been recovering their electricity, while authorities of the Union Electrica de Cuba (UNE) are working tirelessly to restart the country's thermoelectric plants, severely impacted by Ian, but also by the shortages and the technological obsolescence.

According to authorities, only 37 percent of Havana's customers had electricity at home as of midday today; that is, 316,000 of the 856,000 customers here in the capital.

The commercial director of the UNE in Havana, Leisy Hernández González, explained that most of the damages were caused by cracked poles and conductor cables, and damaged transformers. "One hundred-and-twenty-three of Havana's 285 electrical circuits have experienced breakdowns, while around 80 are in operation," she explained.

Hernandez added more data: only 13 of the 25 hospitals in the capital have electricity, and the municipalities most technically affected were Playa, La Lisa, and Boyeros.

The figures hurt. There are families who have been without electricity for more than 50 hours, and who have resigned themselves to throwing away their food because their refrigerators can no longer withstand being disconnected for many more hours. But, at the same time, there is no dismay.

Authorities are prioritizing repairs in those areas where hospitals, supermarkets, and the main food processing centers are located. Meanwhile, neighborhoods are pulling together; families and friends of those who haven't had their service restored yet, offer them any possible space inside their refrigerators to cool their food, or power sockets where they can charge their cell phones so that they are not left out of communication.

When Cubans believe that things cannot get worse, they do. For more than half a century we have been suffering from an economic blockade that prevents us from living in normal conditions, we have been living through an unprecedented pandemic that has left in its wake - along with the blockade - inflation, and shortages of food and fuel. For months we have been suffering from programmed blackouts due to failures in the main thermoelectric plants of the country. A devastating fire evaporated a good part of our crude oil reserves. And now not even two months later, one of the most powerful hurricanes of the season left two people dead and devastation and pain on the island.

But, once again, Cubans show that no matter how hard the circumstances are, solidarity, hope, and the will to overcome the impossible remain intact. For over 60 years we have lived through the most severe blockade in modern history and during that time we have learned to be resilient and to adjust to inconvenience, difficulties, and complications. Getting back up is part of our character and while Hurricane Ian has delivered us a powerful blow we will get through it together as we always do.

Source: [Resumen Latinoamericano - US](#)



El Huracán Fiona-Pierluisi-Luma

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El pasado domingo 18 de septiembre, justo cuando el país recordaba el 5to aniversario de la devastación del Huracán María, otro huracán, Fiona arrasaba la isla. Pero estos fenómenos no tienen comparación. María fue categoría 5 mientras Fiona alcanzó solamente el uno.

Lo que sí Fiona ha expuesto a quienes no querían verlo, es la completa incompetencia e indiferencia del gobierno colonial en defender los intereses del pueblo.

Si bien en pleno siglo veintiuno Estados Unidos sigue teniendo a Puerto Rico como colonia imponiéndole una Junta de Control Fiscal que ha destruido y empobrecido al pueblo, quitándole los recursos de sus servicios esenciales para dárselos a bonistas buitres en un proceso de cobro por una deuda ilegítima, también es cierto el desprecio del gobierno de Pedro Pierluisi a su pueblo.

Fiona ha devastado a gran parte del pueblo por la enorme cantidad de lluvia con las

consecuentes inundaciones que han provocado el colapso de estructuras, y un sinnúmero de desgracias, incluyendo la muerte de más de 20 personas. Además, la mayor parte del pueblo a casi dos semanas del fenómeno, aún no tiene luz, incluyendo hospitales y centros de cuido.

Y la culpa ha sido la inacción irresponsable del gobierno en mantener en buen estado la infraestructura de nuestro archipiélago propulsando así que embalses y ríos rebasen con facilidad sus límites y pongan en peligro las estructuras y las vidas de residentes circundantes.

Además, el gobierno, obedeciendo la Junta de Control Fiscal ha impuesto privatizaciones que han sumido a condiciones de mucho sufrimiento al pueblo, como la privatización de la energía bajo la compañía estadounidense-canadiense Luma Energy que ha probado que no tiene ni los saberes, ni la experiencia, ni la fuerza trabajadora suficiente para bregar con la infraestructura eléctrica del país. Gracias a la torpeza de Luma, la mitad del país se mantiene sin la electricidad suficiente para llevar a cabo sus labores esenciales.

Por eso, a pesar de la falta de luz, de agua y muchas veces de señal de comunicaciones, en todas las partes de Puerto Rico las comunidades se están manifestando en contra del gobierno y la privatizadora. Y ya se están organizando protestas masivas para principios de este próximo mes.

Y como dice el pueblo, ¡Fuera LuMafia! ¡Fuera Pierluisi!

Desde Puerto Rico para Radio Clarín de Colombia, les habló, Berta Joubert-Ceci.



Cuba will continue to raise its voice to reject domination and hegemonism

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Speech by Cuba's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bruno Rodríguez, at the United Nations General Assembly, Sept. 21, 2022

Delegates:

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed, as never before, the true essence of the unjust and unsustainable prevailing international order.

Humanity never had this formidable scientific-technical potential nor this extraordinary capacity to generate wealth and well-being, and yet, never before has the world been so unequal and inequality so profound.

Eight hundred and twenty-eight million people, 10% of the world's population, suffer

from hunger, and about 50 million children suffer from wasting, the deadliest form of malnutrition.

Unemployment will affect 207 million people in 2022, 21 million more than in 2019. In the middle of the fourth industrial revolution, 773 million human beings do not know how to read or write.

About 6.5 million people have died due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Vaccines to deal with it are inaccessible to a billion people in low-income countries. In 2021, pharmaceutical transnationals earned \$84,588 million.

The foreign debt has been paid several times, but it multiplies. Paradoxically, global military spending is growing rapidly and exceeds \$2 trillion annually for the first time.

There is no justification for humanity to continue to be threatened by the existence of almost 13,000 nuclear weapons. We advocate for the universality of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

How much more could we do if these resources were used to promote health and development? How many deaths from COVID-19 and other causes could have been avoided? How many children would be saved from hunger and preventable or curable diseases?

Mr. President:

Greenhouse gases recorded record concentrations in 2021, and it will be the same in 2022. The average sea level has reached a new high. The last seven years are the warmest ever registered.

We can't continue ignoring the alarms that warn about the imminent climate catastrophe. We have only one Earth, the only home of all, rich and poor. We have to

act without further delay.

The “philosophy of war and dispossession” and the irrational patterns of production and consumption of capitalism, denounced by President Fidel Castro, will lead to catastrophe.

International relations are on a very dangerous path. The American offensive aimed at subjugating States through economic, military and political-diplomatic threat and coercion, to subject them to an order based on their capricious rules, together with the expansion of NATO and the development of an aggressive doctrine and the fifth-generation unconventional war, inevitably lead to a climate of tension and conflict, the consequences of which are unpredictable.

Mr. President:

Cuba, a small island developing state, has paid a high price for defending its legitimate right to exist as a sovereign and independent nation.

For more than six decades we have resisted a ruthless and unilateral economic, commercial and financial blockade that has intensified to extreme extent, at unprecedented levels since 2019 and during the pandemic.

Thirty years after the first resolution of this Assembly against the blockade, the Government of the United States continues to ignore the almost unanimous demand of the international community to cease its illegal and cruel policy against Cuba.

The effort persists to generate material shortages, scarcity, suffering, sow discouragement, dissatisfaction and cause damage to the Cuban people.

The Government of the United States reinforces the pressures on governments, banking institutions and companies around the world interested in interacting with Cuba and obsessively pursues all sources of income and entry of foreign currency

into the country, to provoke economic collapse.

As a result, the Cuban economy has experienced extraordinary pressures, which are manifested in industry, the provision of services, the shortage of food and medicine and the deterioration of the level of consumption and general well-being of the population.

The human damage that this policy generates for all Cuban families, impossible to quantify, is enormous, cruel and immoral.

The blockade is an act of economic war in peacetime.

The current Government of the United States maintains the most aggressive pressure measures against our country adopted by President Donald Trump's government.

The unjustified inclusion of Cuba in the arbitrary and unilateral list issued by the State Department of countries that are supposed to sponsor terrorism continues.

This slanderous rating imposes a stigma on our entities and institutions and makes financial and commercial transactions extremely difficult and the possibilities of payments and credits.

Cuba, which has been a victim of state terrorism, never promotes and will never promote terrorism. On the contrary, we condemn it in all its forms and manifestations.

The United States Government deals with opportunism with high sensitivity issues such as terrorism, religion, democracy, justice, corruption and human rights.

Double standards, incoherence, selectivity, political manipulation damage the cause of human rights.

The previous speech of the Czech Foreign Minister, who does not dare to mention the crime of the blockade of Cuba, is a sad example.

We have clearly warned the Government of the United States that the factors that encourage irregular migration and cause loss of life must be solved, such as the failure on its part since 2017, of its obligation, according to the bilateral agreements in force, to grant no less than 20,000 visas per year for migrants; the existence of the Cuban Adjustment Act; privileged treatment with political motivation; restrictive pressures on regular transit countries; and the reinforced economic blockade.

Today's announcement that the processing of migrant visas will return to the United States Embassy in Havana is a positive step.

Cuba reiterates its willingness to move toward a better understanding with the Government of the United States and to develop civilized and even cooperative relations between the two countries, on the basis of mutual respect, sovereign equality and without prejudice to our independence and sovereignty, despite profound differences.

We highlight the valuable commitment and recent demonstrations by Cubans and descendants of Cubans in all latitudes and in this country, of respect for Cuba's sovereign rights and the rejection of the ruthless aggression of the United States, in particular the economic blockade.

I also deeply appreciate the statements of Heads of State and Government in this general debate, the historical support of this Assembly and the expressions of solidarity with Cuba by governments, personalities, political organizations and solidarity, social and popular movements around the world.

Today, that solidarity and support are still essential.

Mr. President:

Despite the enormous challenges, the Cuban people and government have not ceased in their efforts to advance in the construction of a more just, democratic, prosperous and sustainable socialist society.

We defeated COVID-19 with resources, our own vaccines and the strength of our Public Health and science system. We were able to collaborate modestly with the sending of 58 medical brigades, at the worst moment of the pandemic, to 42 countries and territories.

We work to recover the economic and social life of the country, support the transformation of our communities and sustain and expand social programs.

We continue to improve our legal system, of our socialist state of law and social justice, to ensure the full enjoyment of all human rights for all Cuban women and men and to enrich the social justice system that several generations have enjoyed.

On Sept. 25, after an extensive process of participation and popular consultation, the legislative referendum on a novel and inclusive Families Code will take place. It will be an exercise of genuine direct democracy and effective power of the Cuban people.

Mr. President:

The “unity in diversity,” proposed by then-President Raúl Castro, is possible in the countries of the South and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, which is becoming increasingly strengthened and is creating the conditions for our region to move toward higher forms of integration and cooperation, based on the postulates of the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace.

We appreciate the dignified position taken by several countries in our region in the face of arbitrary exclusions in hemispheric forums.

We renew our support and solidarity with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, its constitutional president Nicolás Maduro Moros and the civic-military unity of its people, in the face of attempts to destabilize and subvert the internal order of that sister country. We reject the application of unilateral coercive measures against Venezuela.

We denounce the imperialist attempts to destabilize the Government of Reconciliation and National Unity of Nicaragua. We reiterate our firm support for the sister Nicaraguan people and its president, Daniel Ortega.

We stand in solidarity with the Caribbean sisters and support their legitimate demand for reparation for the harmful effects of colonialism and slavery. They need and deserve to receive fair, special and differentiated treatment.

We reaffirm our historic commitment to self-determination and independence of the people of Puerto Rico.

Haiti needs a special contribution from the international community for its reconstruction and development. Humanity owes a debt to that founding Republic.

We support the legitimate claim of President Alberto Fernández and the people of the sovereignty of the Republic of Argentina over the Falkland Islands, South Sandwich and South Georgia and the surrounding maritime spaces.

We express our total solidarity with the Argentine vice president, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, who, victim of unjust and unfounded judicial and media harassment, recently suffered a vile assassination attempt.

We reiterate our firm commitment to peace in Colombia. The manifest readiness for peace of the current President Gustavo Petro and the parties concerned deserve the support of the region and the international community.

The necessary resources must be provided to support the Agenda 2063 of the African Union, which sets out the road map for the development of that sister continent.

We advocate the search for a peaceful and negotiated solution to the imposed situation on Syria, and we demand the cessation of external interference and full respect for its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We support a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the Middle East conflict, which guarantees the real exercise of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to build their own state within the pre-1967 borders, with their capital in East Jerusalem, and the end of the Israeli occupation of the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories.

We reaffirm our invariable solidarity with the Saharawi people.

We reject the unilateral coercive measures imposed on the Islamic Republic of Iran.

We condemn the imposition of unjust unilateral economic measures against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and external interference in its affairs.

We oppose interference in the internal affairs of the Republic of Belarus.

We reaffirm our rejection of the imposition of unilateral sanctions against the Russian Federation.

We condemn the unfounded campaigns of discredit against the People's Republic of China and the attempts to damage its territorial integrity and sovereignty. We reiterate our unwavering support for the One China principle.

We advocate a serious, constructive and realistic diplomatic solution to the current war in Ukraine, by peaceful means and in accordance with the rules of international

law, which guarantees the security and sovereignty of all.

Mr. President:

Cuba will continue to raise its voice to reject domination and hegemony, unilateral coercive measures, genocidal blockades and the intention to impose one culture and one model on the world.

We will never renounce the defense of the independence, sovereignty and self-determination of peoples, without foreign interference or intervention.

For our glorious past, for the present and future of the new generations of Cubans, with the leadership of President Miguel Díaz-Canel, we will resist creatively and fight tirelessly until we achieve our dreams of peace and development, with equity and social justice for Cuba and for the world.

Thank you very much.



China's 73 years of moving forward

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When the People's Republic of China was born on Oct. 1, 1949, the country was devastated by years of war. At least 20 million Chinese people were killed. Starvation stalked the land.

The Chinese Revolution swept that misery away. Seventy-three years after Mao Zedong declared that "China has stood up," look at what socialism has accomplished:

- [Life expectancy](#) has more than doubled to reach 77.3 years. That's a longer lifespan than in the U.S.
- Women moved forward with unbound feet. Chinese scientist Tu Youyou won the Nobel Prize in medicine in 2015. She discovered artemisinin and dihydroartemisinin, which are used to combat malaria.
- While 80% of China's people couldn't read or write in 1949, [illiteracy](#) has been virtually abolished. Thirty-seven million people [attend universities](#) compared with 117,000 before the revolution. More than 52% of college students were [women](#).
- China has become the workshop of the world. The People's Republic makes more than a billion tons of steel annually. China has built more miles of high-speed rail than the rest of the world combined.
- Even greater advances have been made by China's national minorities, whose languages and cultures flourish. One of the great victories of human rights was the abolition of serfdom in Tibet by the People's Liberation Army. The Chinese Revolution inspired oppressed people around the world, including Malcolm X.

None of these achievements would have been possible without a socialist revolution led by the Communist Party of China.

Two centuries of hate

These great advances have made China even more hated by the imperialists whose troops plundered China during a century of humiliation. British colonialists fought the Opium Wars to enslave Chinese people with drug addiction.

One of the biggest drug pushers was a Yankee merchant named Warren Delano. His family's dope fortune helped put his grandson, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in the White House.

Even before 1776, U.S. capitalists in seaports like Marblehead and Salem in Massachusetts dreamed of the riches of China. FDR got the U.S. ruling class into World War II with the prospect of grabbing all of China.

The Chinese Revolution stopped that colonial nightmare. The anti-communist witch hunt led by Senator Joe McCarthy demanded to know "who lost China?" It was "lost" to the Chinese people, led by their communist party.

Wall Street greeted the People's Republic of China by instigating the Korean War. As a result, millions of Korean people were killed. Koreans were burned alive by napalm and phosphorus bombs like those dropped later on the Vietnamese and Laotian people.

Thousands of Chinese volunteers died beside their Korean comrades, including Mao Anying, a son of Mao Zedong. U.S. General Douglas MacArthur wanted to drop dozens of atom bombs on both China and Korea

Today, the Pentagon's "Pivot to Asia" is aimed at the People's Republic of China along with thousands of U.S. nuclear missiles. President Biden says he will go to war

if China recovers Taiwan province.

Taiwan was stolen from China by the Japanese Empire in 1895. The U.S. invaded the Philippines three years later, killing a million Filipino people.

Both colonial conquests will be avenged. Taiwan will be reunited with China.

The big lies

Harry Anslinger, the first commissioner of the U.S. Treasury Department's Federal Bureau of Narcotics during the presidencies of Hoover, Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy, was a racist pig. He targeted jazz musicians, especially singer Billie Holiday after her 1939 song "Strange Fruit." Anslinger assigned a special agent to get Holiday; she died while being chained to a hospital bed under Anslinger's orders.

In the 1950s, Anslinger claimed that China was shipping tons of heroin to the U.S. This big lie was a cover-up for the CIA's "French Connection" drug ring.

It paved the way for the Pentagon to flood the Black and Latinx communities with heroin. (See "The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia" by Alfred McCoy.)

Just as China's socialist revolution fought drug addiction, the socialist revolution has allowed the country to defeat COVID-19. In the United States, over a million people have died of the pandemic. That's 90 times the number of deaths in China.

This success hasn't prevented the capitalist media from attacking China for its absolutely necessary public health measures. These have included closing entire cities for a time to stop the spread of COVID-19.

In contrast, big drug outfits like Pfizer and Moderna delayed supplying vaccines to developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. This accelerated the

coronavirus mutations.

Another big lie is that China is responsible for destroying millions of jobs in the United States. General Motors shut nine of its ten plants in Flint, Michigan. Not China.

Former Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder poisoned Flint's children with polluted water, not China. The same goes with Jackson, Mississippi's polluted water supply.

Our enemy is high rents, police brutality and mass incarceration. We need what China has: a socialist revolution.

Happy birthday to the People's Republic of China.

