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# Cuba's message: 'Learn the truth about our struggle and end imperialist punishment'

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Cuban Deputy Foreign Minister Carlos Fernandez de Cossio. SLL photo: Sharon Black

On February 28, Cuban Deputy Foreign Minister Carlos Fernandez de Cossio delivered a speech at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C., to provide an update on the current state of U.S.-Cuba relations from Cuba's perspective. C-Span's video of the broadcast event is available at: [Cuban Official Discusses U.S.-Cuba Relations | C-SPAN.org](https://www.c-span.org/video/?/10000-1/2015-02-28/cuban-official-discusses-u-s-cuba-relations) The event was co-sponsored by the Latin American Working Group and Black Alliance for Peace.

In a concise but clear presentation, de Cossio explained the root issue in U.S.-Cuba relations is "the consistent failure by the government of the United States of

understanding and accepting that Cuba is and has the right to be a sovereign nation with the right to self-determination. That the U.S. has no right to govern Cuba and we do have the right to govern ourselves and defend ourselves and to provide for our people in the way that as Cubans we feel is appropriate."

After eight years of "maximum pressure" initiated during the first Trump administration and continued under Biden, "the current government has come in - at least from the State Department point of view and for the people that are in State Department - with a declared commitment to make life for Cubans, all Cubans, even more difficult than it is today. The commitment to mobilize the full power of the United States which is very overwhelming and has an impact all over the world to make sure that this punishment is presented upon the people of Cuba with the aim of cutting all the remaining sources of income, to be able to cut our access to technology, to markets, to financial institutions," de Cossio said, likening it to a medieval siege.

The U.S. will fail at its aim to defeat Cuba's revolutionary independence as it has over the 65 years since Lester Mallory wrote the infamous State Department April 6, 1960, secret memo. The memo outlines the continued U.S. strategy to alienate support "through disenchantment and disaffection based on economic dissatisfaction and hardship." It specifies that "as adroit and inconspicuous as possible, make the greatest inroads in denying money and supplies to Cuba, to decrease monetary and real wages, to bring about hunger desperation and overthrow of government." (<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v06/ch10>)

At this meeting, the Deputy Foreign Minister discussed Cuba's role on the international stage. The government of Cuba views the current world order, that of U.S. hegemony, as unsustainable and damaging to world peace. They also believe in a world order based on multilateralism, which is differentiated from a multipolar world order that can seem reminiscent of old colonialism.

The Cuban people have not shied away from their mission to help those of oppressed communities all around the world. Even with U.S. agreements frozen, and the country put back on the “State Sponsor of Terrorism” list, there will still be Cuban doctors working to give life-saving medical care all around the world.

This good faith by the Cuban people is returned on the international stage where since 1992 the majority of countries vote with Cuba in the United Nations General Assembly calling for the U.S. to end its illegal siege and occupation of the island. In 2023 and 2024, 187 out of 193 UN member countries urged that Cuba be removed from the U.S. State Department unilateral list of “State Sponsors of Terrorism” and called on the U.S. to end the blockade.

The audience left the gathering with a clear objective. The objective is to counteract media disinformation by sharing the truth about Cuba with the larger population within the United States. It is the Cuban government’s stance that if the people of the United States knew the true horrors of U.S. imperialism on Cuba, they would work by any means necessary to end the U.S. campaign to intentionally impose hunger and hardships on the Cuban people.

Whether it is fighting the information war or the economic siege, the victories can only be won through continued international solidarity and channeling the Cuban people’s revolutionary fighting spirit and resistance into everything we do.

