

Cuba and the global struggle against imperialism

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New York City, Sept. 27 – Cuba's Foreign Minister spoke about his country's solidarity with the Palestinian struggle and against U.S. imperialist aggression against the broader Global South, including Venezuela. SLL photo: Sharon Black

Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, the Foreign Minister of Cuba, delivered a powerful message calling for "all human rights for all human beings," as the keynote speaker at "Cuba and the U.N.: A Fight for the Global South."

The event was held at the SVA Theater in New York City on Sept. 27. Rodríguez called for a new world order free of blockades and exploitation, both in Cuba and in Palestine. His speech echoed the words of Assata Shakur, "It is our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win. We must love each other and support each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains."

His speech began in solidarity with Palestine. Rodríguez strongly proclaimed that it is the U.N.'s duty to condemn the genocide committed by Israel. He continued that the global community cannot accept that the U.N. has no responsibility to the Palestinian people. The foreign minister further demanded that Palestine become a full member of the U.N., with the borders established before 1967. The opening speaker of the program also highlighted Cuba's continuous history of solidarity with Palestine. From when Cuban leaders took the first steps in the 1960s by visiting Gaza and establishing relations to this week, when Cuba opened in the U.N. by speaking of how 2.2 million people in Gaza face a blockade and genocide, Cuba has demonstrated solidarity with Palestine.

Rodríguez's speech continued with the struggle against imperialism by discussing the U.S. military presence in the Southern Hemisphere. Fighting drug trafficking is the excuse the United States uses to assert military rule and dominance as an imperial power in Latin America. Recently, U.S. naval forces have been deployed in

the Caribbean and have committed strikes on Venezuelan ships, killing civilians. The Cuban people and the Cuban government reject the U.S. militarization of the Caribbean and targeting of Venezuela.

Cuba has been a target of an asymmetrical war of attrition by the U.S., with an aim to conquer Cuba by isolating it with a blockade to cut off international trade. This year alone, the U.S. blockade on Cuba has cost the Cuban people 7.5 billion USD. The goal of the U.S. blockade is not hidden; in April 1960, a U.S. memorandum stated that the only means to stop Cuban support for Castro was to cause such great financial and life hardship that the people would turn against the government, so that it could be overthrown.

This blockade continues today, resulting in blackouts, threatening the water supply, and restricting access to essential health and medical supplies. The U.S. propaganda campaign asserts that Cuban socialism is the cause of these hardships, when in reality, the cause is the U.S. blockade. The blockade has not stopped Cuba from persisting; Cuba is investing in solar power to decrease the economic deficit and provide the people with energy.

Despite the U.S. propaganda campaigns against Cuban medical programs, Cuba will continue its commitment to medical cooperation. Currently, there are approximately 24,000 Cuban medical practitioners providing services in 56 countries worldwide. Rodríguez asserted that imperialism cannot erase Cuba's economic and social accomplishments.

The speech ended with a strong statement: Imperialism cannot cause Cuba to stray from the path of socialism. In a call to action, he concluded by speaking of how Fidel Castro believed a better world is possible, and that the only way to achieve this is for the oppressed and exploited to struggle. Together, no empire can hold back the change that is coming.

¡Cuba Sí, Bloqueo No!

