

"We are realists...we dream the impossible" - Che

"The truth must not only be the truth...it must also be told" - Fidel



# FIRE THIS TIME



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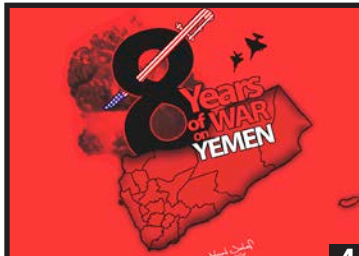
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**8 Years of  
Devastating War on  
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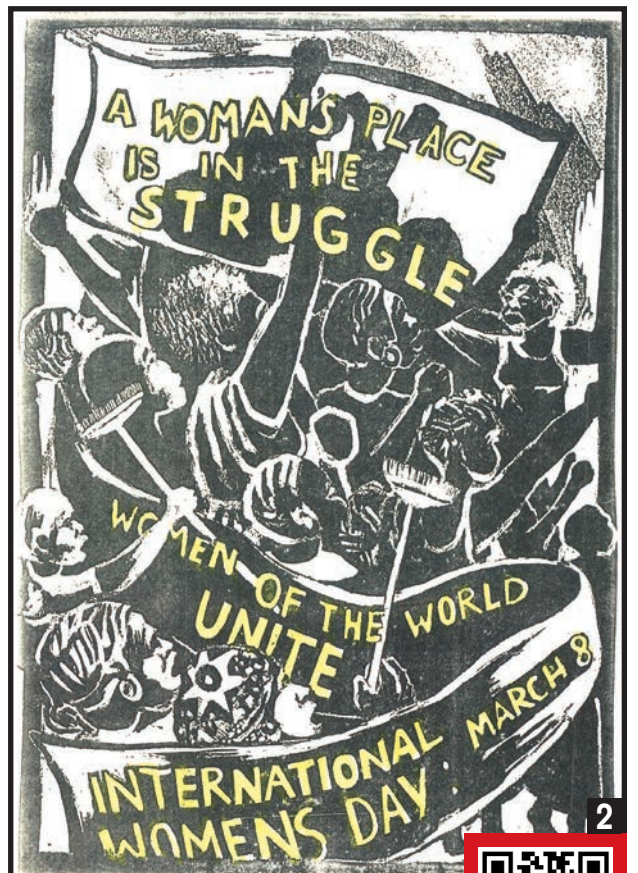
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# International Women's Day 2023: The Struggle for Equality & Rights for Women in Canada Continues!

*By Alison Bodine*

International Women's Day (IWD) was first proposed in 1910 by the revolutionary Clara Zetkin at the second International Conference of Working Women in Copenhagen, Denmark. IWD was a day for women to unite in the struggle for their fundamental rights and equality, and from the very beginning, it was also deeply rooted in the struggle against the imperialist war.

Today, over 110 years later and International Women's Day continues to be a necessity. Women around the world still face misogyny, discrimination, legal and economic inequality, femicide, violence and injustice because they are women.

Fighting these injustices is a challenge, not only because of systemic sexism and inequality but also because of the divisions that are imposed on all people by the capitalist system which the majority of the world lives under. Racism, sexism, ageism, xenophobia, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, and other forms of systemic discrimination are all ideologies that separate women from recognizing their common interests and working together for their rights. International Women's Day is a reminder and a call to action for this united struggle.

## **The Government of Canada is Not a "Feminist" Government**

The Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, claims to be a "feminist," but Canada's foreign and domestic policies destroy, not promote, women's rights.

Internationally, the government of Canada stands with the U.S. government and their allies in wars and occupations that, in only the last 20 years, have destroyed the lives of the people of Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Haiti. Canada sells arms to the government of Saudi Arabia, which has carried out a ruthless war on the people of Yemen since 2015 and supports the criminal Israeli occupation of Palestine. The Trudeau Liberal government also joins

the United States in the imposition of brutal sanctions on countries from Iran and Syria to Venezuela and Nicaragua. These are just a few examples of the government of Canada's complicity in U.S.-led wars, occupations, and attacks on people around the world. As women are at the centre of families and societies, women's lives are the most destroyed and uprooted by the wars and occupations that Canada has participated in with the U.S. since 2001, when the new era of war and occupation military campaign began.

Within Canada, lives for women have been made especially more difficult in the last three years of the Covid-19 pandemic.



**Women's Memorial March in Vancouver, Canada, February 14, 2023**

Women, trans and non-binary people have been the most negatively impacted by job losses and the economic hardships imposed by government mismanagement of the health crisis. Over the last 36 months, women have faced increasing rates of domestic violence, higher rates of job loss, as well as a larger burden of the care of children and families because of the pandemic. Black, Indigenous, and immigrant women and their communities shoulder a disproportionate share of this burden.

The Trudeau Liberal government has failed to provide affordable childcare and housing for women who need

it, end, or even decrease, violence against women in Canada, improve access to abortion for women in rural communities or eliminate the wage gap. On average, a woman in Canada makes 89 cents for every dollar a man makes. For Indigenous, Black, and racialized women, this number is just 60 cents to every dollar (Statistics Canada 2022, The Gender Pay Gap).

## **Violence Against Women in Canada is Increasing**

During the Covid-19 pandemic, around the world, violence against women became known as a "shadow pandemic." As UN Women, the United Nations agency dedicated to women's issues, reports internationally, "Since the outbreak of COVID-19, emerging data and reports from those on the front lines, have shown that all types of violence against women and girls, particularly domestic violence, has intensified."

Statistics Canada has confirmed this horrible trend. In October 2022, Statistics Canada released a report that concluded that incidents of police-reported family violence have continued to increase since 2017. Women and girls are 69% percent of the victims in these cases – and these are just in the reported incidents. The government of Canada's failure to support people's needs during the pandemic, combined with skyrocketing rent and housing costs, has forced more women to continue to live with their abusers or face being homeless.

The Femicide Observatory reports that, on average, a woman or girl in Canada is killed every other day. Once a week, a woman somewhere in the country is



killed by her male partner. According to Statistics Canada, in 2021 police reported sexual assault increased to its highest point since 1996 – a number that is likely a gross under-estimate as studies cited by Statistics Canada itself have shown that only 6% of sexual assault cases are reported to the police. Women in Canada, most often Indigenous and racialized women, are also often the victims of harassment and brutality by the police themselves.

### **Women's Right to Choose is Also Under Attack**

In June 2022, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe vs. Wade*, unleashing a wave of abortion bans and more restrictive abortion laws across U.S. states. This defeat for women's rights in the United States also brought the discussion about women's right to choose to the forefront in Canada. Although abortion is legalized in Canada, women, trans and non-binary people continue to face significant barriers in accessing abortions even where legal, including racism and discrimination.

In Canada, only one out of every six hospitals has abortion services, according to Options for Sexual Health. People who live in Northern and Indigenous communities have practically no right to choose. In remote and rural communities, the costs to receive care are also compounded by the need to travel, take time off work, and to provide for the care of children or elderly dependents in their absence.

The right to bodily autonomy and reproductive choice are fundamental human rights and essential to the struggle for all women's equality and liberation. In Canada, the struggle continues for trans-inclusive abortion services, an end to the forced sterilizations of Indigenous and immigrant women, and free and universal access to sex education, birth control, and abortion services.

### **Canada is a Dangerous Place to be an Indigenous Woman**

In 2019, the National Inquiry into

Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls (NIMMIWG) published its final report. Importantly, the report called the ongoing neglect by the government of Canada towards murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls for what it is – “an ongoing genocide.” The report further explains, “The truths shared in these National Inquiry hearings tell the story — or, more accurately, thousands of stories — of acts of genocide against First Nations, Inuit and Métis women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA people. [...] This genocide has been empowered by colonial structures, evidenced notably by the Indian Act, the Sixties Scoop, residential schools, and breaches of human and Inuit, Métis and First Nations rights, leading directly to the current increased rates of violence, death, and suicide in Indigenous populations.”

Between 1980 and 2012 alone, the Native Women's Association of Canada estimates that 4,000 Indigenous women and girls were murdered or went missing. The national inquiry also found that Indigenous women and girls are 16 times more likely to be murdered or to go missing than white women.

Four years later and Canada is still a very dangerous place to be an Indigenous woman or girl. Indigenous women face higher rates of domestic violence, abuse, assault, police brutality and homicide. Public Safety Canada reported that about half of human trafficking victims in Canada are Indigenous women. Between 2015-2020, 24% of all female homicide victims were women, alarming statistics given that only 5% of Canada's population is Indigenous (Statistics Canada).

In 2022, it was reported that for the first time since being recorded, that over 50% of women held in Federal prisons were Indigenous, while Aboriginal females make up 4% percent of the total female population in Canada. These extremely disproportionately high incarceration rates were also explored in the NIMMIWG inquiry, which found that Indigenous women were most often imprisoned for crimes related to poverty.

There are also many other inequalities Indigenous women and girls face, such as lower life expectancy and unequal access to education, healthcare, adequate housing, and social services. As just one

example of this stark inequality, Prime Minister Trudeau pledged to end all long-term (more than 1-year) drinking water advisories in place in Indigenous reserves in Canada when he was first elected in 2015. Today, in February 2023, there are still 29 long-term advisories in place and an additional 33 short-term drinking water advisories (which doesn't account for any advisories in place in British Columbia, Yukon, Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, or the parts of Quebec that are North of the 60th parallel). Access to clean drinking water is fundamental to health and well-being. It is shameful and criminal that a government as wealthy as Canada is unable to provide this basic right to all people.

### **Women Are Fighting Back!**

On February 14, 2023, thousands of people came together in Vancouver's Downtown East Side for the 32nd annual Women's Memorial March, demanding justice for the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

Since December 2022, for more than 50 days in the harsh Winnipeg winter, members of the community have camped outside of the Brady Road landfill, demanding that police search the landfill for the remains of four Indigenous women, victims of an accused serial killer. They are fighting for justice for Morgan Harris, Mercedes Myran and Rebecca Contois, and an unknown victim who has been given the name Mashkode Bizhiki'ikwe (Buffalo Woman) by the community, and they are refusing to back down.

In many different ways, women have continued to organize and fight back in the face of continued attacks on women's basic and fundamental human rights. This is the importance and legacy of International Women's Day.

The reason women have the right to vote is that women struggled. The reason women have the right to abortion in Canada is that women struggled. The reason same-sex marriage is legal in Canada is that the 2SLGBTQIA+ community struggled. The reason Canada had a National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls is that Indigenous women struggled. Society has never gifted women with their rights, they have always had to unite and fight for their rights.

Fighting for women's rights is not only a women's struggle, but a struggle for all humanity, and it will take the unity of all poor, working, and oppressed people to win!

*Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette*







*By Azza Rojbi*

March 26, 2023, marks 8 years since the start of the Saudi-led coalition war on Yemen. The coalition airstrikes have destroyed houses, schools, roads, markets, hospitals, water tanks, sanitation facilities, mosques, and other vital infrastructure in the country. Almost 400,000 people have been killed because of the war. Those that were fortunate to survive are living amid a humanitarian catastrophe. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), around 23.7 million Yemenis, 77% women and children, need humanitarian assistance. Of those, 7.4 million – some 25% of the population – suffer from malnutrition, including 2 million children.

The suffering and destruction are shared by millions of Yemeni families who have been mourning loved ones and struggling to survive. Since the start of the Saudi-led U.S.-backed coalition-led war in 2015, Yemen has only seen death and destruction. The United Nations (UN) referred to the situation in the country as “the world’s worst humanitarian crisis”.

The Saudi-led coalition also imposes a naval, aerial, and land blockade on Yemen. The blockade has caused medicine, fuel, and food shortages, aggravating an already disastrous situation. Despite the loosening of some restrictions by Saudi Arabia, the blockade continues to persist, impeding the flow of goods to Yemen.

On January 6, 2023, mass rallies took place across Yemen under the slogan “siege is war”. Protesters carried signs against the Saudi-led military intervention in their country and demanded the full lifting of the blockade. A statement released by the protesters reads, “The Coalition is preventing the entry of goods through the port of Hodeidah, and whatever

# 8 Years of Brutal & Criminal War Against Yemen

## All Foreign Troops Out of Yemen Now!

oil we receive is only small quantities deliberately doubled in price with long and unnecessary inspection procedures. The Saudi-American Coalition seeks to impose dire living conditions upon the Yemeni people to make our lives harder. To prevent us from travelling abroad and to strangle us.”

### Who’s behind the war?

Since the first day of the start of the military intervention in Yemen, Saudi Arabia and their primary accomplice, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), enjoyed full political and military support from the United States. In addition, the U.S. and their imperialist allies, such as the U.K., France, Germany, Italy and Canada, made billions of dollars in arms sales and training contracts with Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Armed and trained by the U.S. and their allies, the Saudi-led coalition intervened in an internal dispute in Yemen to serve their interests and the interests of their imperialist masters. Yemen occupies a very strategic location in the Middle East. Yemen’s coast borders the Bab el-Mandeb strait, which connects the Red Sea with the Gulf of Aden and the Indian

Ocean. This narrow strategic waterway represents one of the world’s most active and important maritime shipping routes. Dominating Yemen is vital for the United States and imperialists to expand their military and economic hegemony of the region, including East Africa, the Indian Ocean, and West Asia.

After 8 years of wars and destruction, the US-backed Saudi-led coalition has failed to crush the Yemeni resistance to foreign domination and impose a puppet regime on the country. Saudi Arabia and the UAE have funnelled billions of dollars, weapons and foreign mercenaries to fight their dirty war in Yemen and serve their regional interests.

The Emiratis have established a military presence on Socotra island in the Indian Ocean, which was occupied by UAE in 2015. And, as reported in Responsible Statecraft, “according to a recent article in Breaking Defense, they are considering expanding that presence by putting missile defense sensors on the island, which would support a nascent, U.S.-led alliance made up of Israel and several Arab states.”

Saudi Arabia is also pursuing a strategy



#CanadaStopArmingSaudi protest in Vancouver, March 26, 2022.

to establish its own direct military presence on Yemeni soil. An article published on the Huffington Post on February 23, 2023, titled “Americans Are Quietly Supporting A Saudi Land Grab In Yemen,” uncovers a “Saudi takeover of strategic transport facilities in Yemen’s eastern Al-Mahra province, and the establishment of a string of Saudi military bases there”.

Al-Mahra is the second largest province in Yemen by size, it borders Oman to the east and Saudi Arabia to the north. In the past few months, several U.S. and British military personnel visited Al-Mahra under the pretext of coordinating to combat smuggling and fight terrorism. The latest visit was that of Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, the U.S. Navy’s top commander in the Middle East, on March 2, 2023. Controlling Al-Mahra would give Saudi Arabia and their imperialist masters direct access to the Indian Ocean and further expands their hegemonic control of maritime shipping routes in the region.

### Canada’s complicity & hypocrisy in the war

Since the start of the Saudi-led coalition war on Yemen, Canada has increased their sales of weapons and military equipment to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Saudi Arabia is the largest non-U.S. export destination of Canadian military goods. As reported by Project Ploughshares, “in 2022, Canada exported a further \$709 million in Light Armoured Vehicles to Saudi Arabia.” This is a small portion of Canada’s \$15 billion agreement to export these armoured vehicles to the Kingdom.

According to the 2021 Exports of Military Goods Report, Canada also exported rifles to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The report also shows that in addition to selling weapons directly to Saudi Arabia and the UAE, the government of Canada has been issuing brokering permits for selling them arms through other countries such as Brazil, the United States, and the Netherlands. Canada was named twice in a list of countries fueling the war on Yemen by continuing weapons sales to Saudi Arabia by a United Nations’ panel

of independent experts. The Trudeau government has no shame in continuing to profit from the brutal war and destruction against the Yemeni people.

The Trudeau government claims to be a champion of Human Rights but quietly continues to expand its

economic and political relationships with Saudi Arabia and the UAE while disregarding the suffering and plight

Emergency Travel. One wonders why Yemeni refugees aren’t welcomed in such a way! Where are the resources to help the millions of Yemenis internally displaced inside of Yemen and the hundreds of thousands stranded in transit countries?

Canada is ignoring the misery of Yemenis and the humanitarian crisis in Yemen while continuing to profit from fueling the war in Yemen. This is Canadian human rights, Trudeau style!

### #YemenCantWait

Enough is enough! As peace-loving people in Canada, the U.S. and around the world, it’s imperative that we continue educating, organizing and mobilizing against the imperialists’ war on Yemen and call for the full lifting of the land, sea, and air blockade on Yemen by the Saudis, UAE and the U.S. We need to continue exposing and protesting the complicity of our respective governments and holding them accountable for continuing to fuel the war.

We need to keep fighting and demanding that they end all arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the UAE and that they open the borders to Yemeni refugees.

We must build a united front to organize, educate and mobilize against imperialist meddling in Yemen and defend the self-determination of the Yemeni people. The first step is to demand all foreign troops end their occupation and leave Yemen immediately. Let’s join the brave Yemeni people in fighting for peace, freedom, and sovereignty without imperialist military interventions, occupation, and war.

*Follow Azza on Twitter: @Azza\_R14*



Protest against the Saudi blockade on Yemen in Washington, DC, April 3, 2021.

of the Yemeni people. Once a year, Canada ceremonially contributes to the United Nations’ fundraising efforts for humanitarian relief in Yemen to wash off some of the blood that’s on its hands. According to the government website, Global Affairs Canada, since the start of the war in 2015, Canada has committed over \$411 million in humanitarian funding to Yemen. In contrast, only in one year, in 2022, Canada made \$709 million in weapons sales to Saudi Arabia!

The Trudeau government has recently shown that it can implement quick resources to welcome and help settle refugees when it opened the door for Ukrainian refugees and created the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for

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By Azza Rojbi

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# Stop the Genocide of Palestinians!

## Israeli Regime Panicked by Domestic Discontent and Palestinian Resistance



(L to R): A protester carries a sign reading “Palestinian lives matter” in Paris, France - February 4th, 2023; Palestinians from Hebron protesting the Ibrahimi mosque massacre - February 24, 2023

On March 2, 2023, a 15-year-old Palestinian child named Muhammad Nidal Salim was shot in the back and killed by Israeli forces in the Palestinian West Bank town of Azzoun, along with two others who were wounded including a child in critical condition. This brutal killing is the latest in an escalation of Zionist Israeli attacks and raids against the people of Palestine. On January 26 an Israeli assault on the Jenin refugee camp killed 10 Palestinians including two children, and on February 22 an Israeli raid on the Palestinian city of Nablus killed 11 Palestinians, the largest Palestinian death toll in a single Israeli military operation since 2005. Near daily killings of Palestinians at the hands of racist Zionist Israeli settlers and Israeli forces have brought the death toll to 72 Palestinians killed in the West Bank in the first two months of 2023, as reported by the New York Times on March 7.

Alongside raids by Israeli military forces, mobs of racist Zionist Israeli settlers have carried out at least 300 attacks on Palestinian villages in the West Bank. These rampages have been described as “pogroms”, and have including shootings, violent and deadly beatings, and the vandalizing and burning down of Palestinian homes, stores and cars. These attacks on Palestinians by Zionist settlers have occurred while Israeli forces stand by and allow them to happen. During the February 26 attack on the village of Zaatara, the Israeli army protected racist settlers who shot Samih al-Aqtash, a 37-year-old Palestinian father of five, who later died from his wounds. Al-Aqtash had returned home the previous

week after volunteering to help earthquake survivors in Turkey.

Attacks by Zionist Israeli forces and Zionist settlers against Palestinians are not new but have been happening since the occupation of Palestine began in 1948 continuing until today, 75 years later. 2022 was already the deadliest year for Palestinians in the West Bank, with 152 Palestinians killed by Zionist Israeli forces. For 11 days in May 2021, 259 people, including 65 children across Gaza and the West Bank, were killed by Israeli forces. On May 11, 2022, Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh was assassinated by an Israeli military sniper while reporting on an Israeli raid in the Jenin refugee camp.

The genocidal policies of Israel are funded and supported by imperialist governments around the world, led by the United States. From 1948 until today, Israel is a manufactured state on Palestinian land, existing only with U.S. funding and weapons and the diplomatic cover, political support, and aid that they receive from imperialist governments such as Canada. Each year, the United States gives \$3.8 billion in direct military aid to Israeli occupation forces. During the May 2021 assault on Gaza, the U.S. Biden Administration approved a \$735 million weapons sale to Israel. Israel would not be able to exist for even one week if not for the massive diplomatic, financial, and military support of the United States. Israel is a puppet regime of the U.S., manufactured to suppress and control the West of Asia. The state of Israel is not a secure land for Jewish people, but was and is a war machine state to divide and suppress

the West of Asia on behalf of imperialist powers.

In the face of merciless attacks and ethnic cleansing, the people of Palestine continue to fight for their right to land and self-determination. Despite 74 years of suffering and hardship, since 1948 they have not given up the struggle for their rights and their land, including their right of return. No amount of violence by the state of Israel has ever been able to change that. Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice fiercely denounces the Zionist Israeli attacks against Palestinians and stands with the people of Palestine in their continued struggle against the brutal Israeli occupation.

Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice stands with the brave people of Palestine in their continued struggle for dignity and self-determination against the racist, Zionist, and colonial state of Israel. We call on all peace-loving, working-class, and oppressed people around the world to stand up and be consistently active in the ongoing fight for the liberation of Palestine! Palestinian liberation from Israeli racist Zionist occupation is liberation for us all.

Israel/USA Hands Off Palestine!  
Stop Bombing and Killing Palestinians!  
Self-determination for Palestine!  
End the Israeli Occupation of Palestine Now!  
Long Live Palestine! Long Live  
International Solidarity!

*Statement by the Fire This Time Movement for  
Social Justice  
March 7, 2023*

# Comandante Chavez remembered as an antiwar, anti-imperialist and a revolutionary leader★

*By Andrew Barry*

As an antiwar and socialist organizer, it is useful to make a couple of reflections on the life of Comandante Hugo Chávez as we approach the 10th anniversary of his passing. When Chávez passed away in 2013, it was almost ten years after the U.S. invasion and war on Iraq began in March 2003. At that time, I did not know much about what was happening in Venezuela. But, a few years later, I came to know about Venezuela and who Hugo Chávez was, what he was representing and what he was standing for. I found out he was standing for a better world, a world without imperial and colonial domination from the Western imperialist powers, especially the United States.

Looking back at what Hugo Chávez said, and what he did, he was very reflective of what every antiwar and anti-imperialist activist in the world demands. When we look back at war in Afghanistan in the months after the September 11th, 2001, attacks in the United States, we know that the United States began an inhumane, indiscriminate bombing campaign, murdering thousands of civilians in Afghanistan. The U.S. imperialists had started a new era of war and occupation that continues today. And it was Hugo Chávez immediately who stood up and said, this is wrong. You cannot do this. You cannot kill civilians in Afghanistan for this. And it was in an atmosphere where here in Canada, in North America, that kind of criticism was unheard of. But Hugo Chávez stood up for what was right and what was moral. It was such a brave and important thing that, looking back on history, there were very few voices saying that at the time. And he was the president of a country, President of Venezuela.

Two years later, he was saying the same thing against the U.S. War in Iraq, condemning that brutal invasion and occupation that killed over 2 million people. Hugo Chávez went to Port au Prince in Haiti with people in Haiti who were against the U.S./Canada/France/UN occupation of Haiti in 2004. He went with in solidarity with the poor people to Port au Prince, and he was treated so well by people in Haiti. President Chávez condemned the coup in Honduras

in 2009, immediately recognizing it for what it was and not recognizing the coup regime installed by the United States on the people of Honduras.

Hugo Chávez has been an inspiration for the antiwar movement around the world and for poor and oppressed people around the world. So much so, that it was vital for



Andrew Barry speaking at a Fire This Time Movement For Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign picket in front of the U.S. Consulate in Vancouver, Canada. November 9, 2019.

the United States to try to do what they could to take him out. But I think it's very important that what Chávez was able to do was to lay the groundwork for people in Venezuela to take over the leadership. And I think what President Nicolas Maduro, Diosdado Cabello, and other leaders in Venezuela have done under such brutal sanctions and blockade imposed by the United States is something that is very historically significant.

Venezuela has survived an all-out economic war. Up to 40,000 people were killed in one year alone due to the sanctions that the United States has imposed on Venezuela. But people in Venezuela have been able to stand up, and continue to fight for their sovereignty, for their independence.

It's very significant that if Venezuela did fall during those years, I think we would have seen the fall of Bolivia. I think we would not have seen such a movement of progress that's happening across Latin America, in

places like Colombia and Mexico, where you have progressive governments. I think that the United States would have had such a huge victory if they were able to topple Venezuela. And it was because of the leadership of President Nicolas Maduro, Diosdado Cabello, and others that Venezuela has been able to continue on and to provide an example for humanity.

The United States has tried to sabotage Venezuela everywhere possible, but there are still voices of resistance throughout the world that are supporting the revolutionary process that began under President Hugo Chávez and is continuing under President Nicolas Maduro. The United States has done everything in its power to stop, sabotage and slow it down. And the kidnapping of Alex Saab is the latest example of that. People in Venezuela and the solidarity movement around the world will continue to fight and continue to support the legacy of Comandante Chávez and the Venezuelan process. Free Alex Saab! Viva Chávez!

*Andrew Barry is a long-time socialist organizer and a labour union member in Vancouver. He is the coordinator of publicity, distribution, and subscriptions for the Fire This Time newspaper.*

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# DEMANDS TO PROTECT OLD GROWTH & STOP THE TMX AND CGL PIPELINES ECHO ACROSS BC!

## CLIMATE CONVERGENCE CONTINUES TO ORGANIZE AND MOBILIZE FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

*By Alison Bodine*



On February 25, thousands of people from all walks of life marched in the streets of Victoria, British Columbia, to demand that B.C. NDP Premier David Eby takes immediate action to save old-growth forests. In the lead-up to this important “United for Old Growth” action, over 200 organizations across the province signed on to a common declaration. This declaration calls out the BC NDP government for failing to act on the recommendations of the 2020 Old-Growth Strategic Review (OGSR) panel, reading in part:

“While we are in a Code Red global climate crisis, this is a dangerous failure. Healthy forests are essential to maintaining safe, sustainable communities, critical water ecosystems, biodiversity, salmon habitat, and so much more. With more extreme weather, wildfires and flooding, the failure to protect vital forest ecosystems is already life-threatening and has decimated some communities in B.C.”

Since 1990, over four billion cubic metres of wood volume have been logged in Canada (Natural Resources Canada). Because the forests in Canada are so vast, it is difficult for most people to grasp just how much logging has occurred – and how little of the forests have been regrown – but the wood lost and not replaced would be enough to build four homes for each person in Canada, as explained by Barry Saxifrage in a recent article in the National Observer.

As the United for Old Growth Declaration outlines, this destruction has a significant impact on vital coastal and interior forest ecosystems in British Columbia. The

BC government knows this, yet they have continued with a business-as-usual approach to logging, taking only small steps to preserve some new areas or putting a temporary moratorium on specific sections of old growth. The government has many excuses for why they have not taken the steps necessary to protect old growth, but the provincial budget released in 2023 is clear – the necessary funding is not there to implement the steps outlined in the Old-Growth Strategic Review (OGSR) – and logging of old growth will be allowed to

makes the climate crisis worse. And they say it’s all happening with the support of B.C. Premier John Horgan’s NDP government, long criticized for being too close to the forestry industry.” This same support has continued under Premier David Eby.

Commercial logging for profit, for biomass pellets and other products alike, is not only bad for the planet, but it is also bad for workers and their families. This extraction industry operates just the same as the oil and gas industries, putting workers through a horrible cycle of “boom and bust” that

leaves big corporations with billions in profits and workers with no jobs when the industry crashes. In B.C., the impacts of this cycle can be seen in towns across the province suffering from recent pulp and paper mill closures.

All of this climate destruction and hardship, the government of BC continues to stall on taking action to simultaneously support workers, protect the old-growth forests and uphold the rights of Indigenous nations to stewardship of their territories.



**Save Old Growth Rally at City Hall in Downtown Victoria, British Columbia, Canada - February 25, 2023**

continue.

The CBC’s Fifth Estate has reported on the green-washing of aspects of this climate-destroying industry, stating, in reference to the wood pellet mills in BC, “Drax [a UK-based power utility] catapulted a small industry it says is green into an investor-driven, international operation dependent on logging in areas that include B.C.’s old growth and primary forests...Activists, scientists and environmentalists argue that far from being green, wood pellet production generates few jobs and actually

### Stand Up, Fight Back for People and Planet!

The united action held in Victoria on February 25 was an important step forward in the struggle to pressure Premier Eby and the BC NDP government into taking action to protect old growth. Climate Convergence Metro Vancouver organized car-pooling from Vancouver and joined the action, in addition to being one of the over 200 organizations that signed on to the United for Old Growth Declaration.



At the rally, Climate Convergence signs and banners stating, “United for People and Planet,” “Defend Indigenous Rights,” and “People and Planet Before Profit – Protect Old Growth!” joined with hundreds of other signs, banners and beautiful works of art dedicated to BC’s biodiversity. We handed out hundreds of TMX Out Now! buttons and brochures about our work that day as well, making the important connection between the environmental destruction brought on by different sections of Canada’s resource extraction industry.

Although this rally didn’t bring out Premier Eby, who choose to be on the mainland of BC that day to make other announcements, it did bring out world-famous musician Neil Young, who joined the call to protect old growth by singing two songs to the surprised crowd.

### **Actions Continue Demanding Drop All Charges Against Land Defenders and Water Protectors!**

On February 21, Climate Convergence supported Secwépemc Solidarity Rally action in defense of land defenders. This time, eight people were due to be sentenced in Kamloops for holding the Indigenous ceremony and peacefully protesting the TMX pipeline in October 2020. The lively rally outside of the Vancouver Law Courts in Downtown Vancouver was held simultaneously with a rally in Kamloops, where Hereditary Chief Saw Ses, Secwepemc Matriarchs Miranda Dick and April Thomas, Nlaka’pamux land protector Billie Pierre and four allies; Romilly Cavanaugh, Heather Lamoureux, Susan Bibbings and Laura Zadorozny were due to be sentenced. Following two days of hearings, six of the eight water protectors were sentenced to one month in jail, and two, Billie Pierre and April Thomas, await their sentencing at a later date.

This unjust sentencing followed the sentencing, and subsequent jailing, of two other land defenders in January. Maya Laframboise and Emily Kelsall, both young women activists, spent two and three weeks in jail, respectively, for protesting the TMX pipeline. Outrageously, they were also ordered to pay a total of \$1,240 in



Rally for Secwépemc Land Defenders - Vancouver Law Courts; February 21, 2023



Climate Convergence info table at the Old Growth Rally at the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, Victoria - February 25, 2023

restitution to Trans Mountain, the crown corporation that is building the pipeline using the money of tax-payers in Canada.

These land defenders and water protectors should never spend even one minute in jail for peacefully protesting to stop the TMX pipeline and defending Mother Earth. The government of Canada and their billionaire bosses are real criminals! We demand, Drop All Charges Against Land Defenders!

### **Continued Protest Actions on the Streets**

The first two months of 2023 were an important time for taking action on the streets against the Trans Mountain expansion pipeline (TMX) and the Coastal GasLink (CGL) pipeline. On January 25, Climate Convergence held a successful banner drop against the dirty-tar sands pipeline in New Westminster/Coquitlam. Participants at the action joined together to drop banners over the Highway 1 overpass and a busy intersection near the Braid Skytrain station. There was a lot of support and honks from people passing by, and we were able to draw attention to the destruction from TMX pipeline construction that is happening in the area, as well as a nearby “Land Back” protest camp.

Throughout January and February, Decolonial Solidarity protests to demand that RBC Bank divest from CGL held across the Lower Mainland also continued. These actions bring people together to take a stand against the CGL pipeline and in solidarity with Wet’suwet’en land defenders, whose territory is being crossed by the destructive project in Northern BC.

Then, on February 10, Climate Convergence joined with others to organize a “Show Your Love for the Climate” action at Vancouver City Hall to let the Vancouver City Council and Mayor know that there is support for a strong Climate Emergency Action Plan. The action was

organized by For Our Kids Vancouver, Fridays for Future Vancouver, Force of Nature Vancouver, Climate Convergence Metro Vancouver, Babies for Climate Action - Vancouver, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment - BC, and Shake up the Establishment. Climate Convergence central organizer Alison Bodine was an emcee of the rally alongside Neelam Chadha from Fridays for Future Vancouver. There was a dynamic program of speakers and interactive performances from the Solidarity Notes Choir, the Acapella Laboratory and the Choral Conspiracy. Altogether, it was a spirited and colourful action that also attracted a lot of support from the commuters passing by.

### **Join the Struggle for Climate Justice!**

In the face of continued climate destruction in BC, Canada and around the world, we have no choice but to stand up and fight back. We must work to build a mass movement for climate justice and Indigenous rights that recognizes that to reverse the terrible impacts of climate chaos, we have to get rid of this rotten capitalist system that puts the interests of profits before people and the planet. There are many ways to get involved. Visit [www.climateconvergence.ca](http://www.climateconvergence.ca) and find out about upcoming online organizing meetings and public actions.

*Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette*



Climate Convergence at the Old Growth Rally at the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, Victoria - February 25, 2023

# A Legacy of Canadian Intervention in Haiti, 20 Years On

*By Jean Saint-Vil*

In January 2003, Haitians were in the midst of planning celebrations for their bicentennial liberation from the white slavers of Spain, Britain, and France. Famous Black actors, activists, and intellectuals like Danny Glover, Dr. Molefi Asante, and South African President Thabo Mbeki, together with progressive minds of all shades and origins, were making plans to travel to Haiti. At the same time, a group of white women and men gathered with very different plans at a Canadian government resort.

Adding to a long history of foreign conferences on “fixing Haiti” with catastrophic consequences, the Ottawa Initiative on Haiti (OIH) took place near my hometown on January 31-February 1, 2003. At the invitation of Prime Minister Jean Chrétien’s Liberals, the event brought together officials from the United States, France, and the Organization of American States (OAS) to discuss ousting Haiti’s democratically elected president, establishing a Kosovo-like trusteeship, and reinstating the U.S.-subservient Haitian armed forces. As Canada and the United States now



**Haitians Protesting Government Corruption - July 1, 2020**

consider another round of foreign intervention in Haiti, remembering the OIH’s immense impacts and legacy is crucial. As a result of those talks, the people of *By Alison Bodine* went from having 7,000 duly-elected officials 20 years ago, to none today.

In his March 2003 article, “Haiti put under U.N. Tutelage?,” Michel Vastel described how parliamentarians of former colonial powers present at the OIH framed their

plans in terms of a “Responsibility to Protect” (R2P). Thirteen months later, on February 29, 2004, while Canadian soldiers stood guard over Toussaint Louverture International Airport, U.S. officials forced Haiti’s president and first lady into an airplane. According to renowned African American author and activist Randall Robinson, President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and his wife Mildred were effectively abducted against their will.

Soon after the brutal coup, a UN force known as MINUSTAH launched an occupation of the Caribbean nation that continued for 13 years. MINUSTAH engaged in widespread sexual misconduct, carried out extrajudicial killings, and, through reckless sanitation practices, introduced cholera to the country, which killed as many as 50,000, according to scientific studies. The documentary film *Haiti: we must kill the bandits* by journalist Kevin Pina is essential educational material for this period of history.

Barbaric as it was, the 2004 coup’s brazen act of terrorism was unique only in its details. Black Haitians form a nation which is permanently under attack by white arsonists dressed as firefighters. As activist Véline Charlier said at a U.S. hearing on Haiti in September 2022:



**Haitians Protesting Canada in Haiti - August 4, 2021**



“When we have boots on the ground, we get raped, we get cholera...There are honest Haitians with integrity, who are competent to run our country, but we never get the chance because the U.S. keeps its hand on the scale, supporting corrupt governments and making it impossible for a Haitian solution to emerge.”

I arrived in Ottawa with my parents in mid-April 1983. Two days later, an excited teenager experiencing beautiful falling snow for the first time, I attempted to describe for former school mates, now pen pals in Haiti, the concept of living under “below zero” temperatures. Forty years later, Haiti appears to have reached its own “below zero.” There are no legitimate elected officials at the helm and no evident plan to organize credible elections in the UN-occupied country. Meanwhile, gangs of kidnappers and their foreign-appointed political allies claim all powers.

### Fixing Black Haiti: A White Obsession

At the end of January, mayhem engulfed the streets of Port-au-Prince. Police officers who have seen several of their comrades killed by government-allied paramilitary bandits (aka gangs) are angry. But, to whom might they address their just grievances? The de facto prime minister, Ariel Henry, is no more accountable than Police Chief Frantz Elbe. Members of the international community in Haiti, known as the Core Group, make all key decisions about Haiti’s future but shoulder zero accountability for any resulting mess.

The 2003 OIH was a precursor to the Core Group, which is made up of ambassadors of the United States, Canada, France, Brazil, Spain, and Germany as well as representatives of the European Union, United Nations, and Organization of American States. Functioning as de facto overlords, since 2004, the Core Group has propped up successive regimes of illegal “rulers” in Haiti. Presidents Jovenel Moïse and Michel Martelly, both of the Haitian Tèt Kale Party (PHTK), were selected through fraud and violence in 2017 and 2011, respectively.

More recently, following the brazen assassination of Moïse on July 7, 2021, the Core Group anointed Henry as prime minister, despite calls from Haitian civil society to organize a transition government with different leadership. The PHTK, including Henry, has failed to organize elections, leaving the country

with no elected officials after the terms of the last 10 senators expired in early January. Moïse had been ruling by decree for more than a year at the time of his assassination due to the lack of legislative elections.

Time and again, Haitians chose visionary leaders like founder Jean-Jacques Dessalines (1804), Lysius Salomon (1879), Dumarsais Estimé (1946), Daniel Fignolé (1957), and Aristide (1990). Yet these leaders were each viciously attacked and Haiti’s treasury ransacked, subjected to outrageous ransoms collected by invaders. For instance, the sum France collected between 1825 and 1947 as an “indemnity” for freedom from slavery represents well over \$100 billion, even if calculated at minimal interest rates. This was just one of many episodes of gun-boat diplomacy against Haiti, which together with a history of white solidarity among the colonial powers, deprived Haiti of its precious resources.

In a recent article discussing how to “fix Haiti,” author Bertrand Laurent writes: “To have long term effect, a winning strategy would target not only the gangs but also corrupt business forces and the high-level corrupt politicians in Haiti along with their international enablers, money launderers, and weapons suppliers.” We must probe who these forces are and what has rendered them untouchable all these decades.

### Foreign Intervention Revisited

In October, Henry appealed to the international community to militarily intervene in Haiti. Canada has since sent two shipments of armored vehicles

to Haiti, while a fact-finding mission is assessing Ottawa’s next steps. Canada’s UN Ambassador, Bob Rae, who is advising the Canadian government on the situation in Haiti, told CBC: “We are not interested in repeating the mistakes of the past.” Yet Rae has expressed support for re-mobilizing the defunct Forces Armées d’Haiti (FAdH). This position, notes author and activist Yves Engler, is blind to Haitian history.

“Originally established during the US occupation of 1915–34, FAdH was created to crush resistance to the US presence,” Engler writes. “The army, notes Haitian historian Michel-Rolph Trouillot, ‘never fought anyone but Haitians.’” During the 1957 military coup against leftist president Fignolé alone, the FAdH killed as many as 500 people in the Port-au-Prince neighborhoods of La Saline and Bel Air for protesting.

The real motivation to resurrect the FAdH is plain and simple. Imperialist forces and their allies on the island require forces of repression to maintain the established “dis-order”—that is, keeping the Black masses in check under socio-economic racial apartheid.

On December 5, 2022, with much fanfare, Canada announced sanctions against Haitian billionaire Gilbert Bigio and fellow businessmen Sherif Abdallah and Reynold Deeb over links to gangs. Previously, Ottawa sanctioned former presidents Martelly and Laurent Lamothe, and others, for the same reason. Yet the sanctions announcements are a mere smokescreen. As I told CBC News (although my comments were not



Haitians Protest against United Nation Forces - Sep. 23, 2011

aired) in response to the PHTK regime's purchase of armoured vehicles from Canadian manufacturers, the risk that these Canadian death machines end up in the hands of the very people—gang warlords—that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau claims to hit with sanctions is very high.

### A Call for Sovereignty and Solidarity

The historical record demonstrates that the foreign, white supremacist intervention that is sporadically proposed as a potential means to “fix” Haiti is, in fact, the primary ill plaguing my beleaguered native country. Instead of making amends by paying long-overdue reparations, imperialists press on with the OIH playbook.

As it stands in Haiti, no election has been called, the streets are reputedly too dangerous for schools to operate, yet PHTK-allied politicians like former acting prime minister Claude Joseph have been campaigning.

Whenever the racist undertones of their actions b e c o m e

problematic, imperialists are prone to resort to Black enablers. In recent months, African and Caribbean leaders have been actively courted to join another invasion of Haiti, charged with an obviously inadmissible goal: salvaging an established neocolonial disorder or, as dubbed in popular Haitian lingua, “Sistèm nan” (The System).

What ought to be done, now? As often expressed by Solidarite Québec Haiti, the PHTK is a terrorist organization of which any current and past leader, minister, or accomplice is considered collectively and individually suspect of multiple blood crimes, financial crimes, crimes against humanity, and/or crimes of high treason against their nation. They must be arrested and judged accordingly.

The people of Haiti deserve, need, and demand global solidarity to help prosecute and convict all warlords and their associates, regardless of skin color

and nationality. If found guilty, all assets of actors like Martelly, Lamothe, Bigio, Deeb, Abdallah, and others must be nationalized. With the recuperated stolen assets, the nation could establish a Haiti Building Fund that legitimate Haitian governments could, henceforth, access for the national budget.

Canada, the United States, European Union, OAS, and UN must finally normalize their dysfunctional relationship with Haiti. This means in plain English respecting Haitian nationhood and treating Black Haitians as they do white Europeans.

Finally, as Bloc Québécois member of



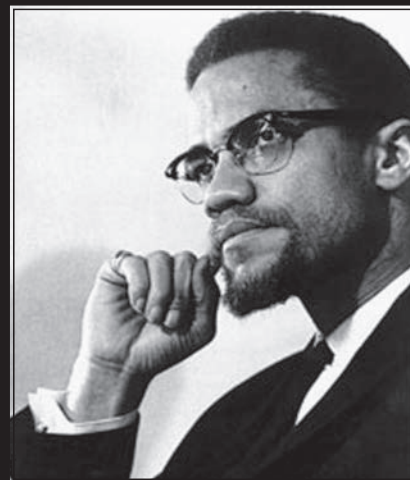
**Police confront protesters at the Canadian Embassy in Port-au-Prince, Haiti - Oct. 24, 2022**

parliament Mario Beaulieu presented by petition in the House of Commons on March 22, 2021, Canada must finally publish all (uncensored) documents relating to the Ottawa Initiative on Haiti, including its link to the Core Group. The government's dismissive response to the request was both unacceptable and shameful.

At the end of the 19th century, as it conspired to steal Haiti's Mole St-Nicolas, the U.S. Government briefly called upon famous abolitionist Frederick Douglass to serve as “U.S. Ambassador to Hayti.” Two years later, in July 1891, Douglass resigned in disgust at U.S. policy. By his dignified behaviour, Douglass taught us that, whereas taming the wickedness of racist imperialists might be beyond our individual powers, behaving honourably towards one's ancestors and people remains forever a sacred duty.

*Originally published by NACLA  
www.nacla.org*

## “By Any Means Necessary...”



### MALCOLM X SPEAKS

But it's something that you have to look at and answer for. Because they are American planes, American bombs, escorted by American paratroopers, armed with machine guns. But, you know, they say they're not soldiers, they're just there as escorts, like they started out with some advisers in South Vietnam. Twenty thousand of them—just advisers. These are just “escorts.” They're able to do all of this mass murder and get away with it by labeling it “humanitarian,” an act of humanitarianism. Or “in the name of freedom,” “in the name of liberty.” All kinds of high-sounding slogans, but it's cold-blooded murder, mass murder. And it's done so skillfully, so you and I, who call ourselves sophisticated in this twentieth century, are able to watch it, and put the stamp of approval upon it. Simply because it's being done to people with black skin, by people with white skin.

*“Not Just an American Problem, But a World Problem” – Rochester, New York  
– February 16, 1965*



# Free Alex Saab, Imprisoned Venezuelan Diplomat

## *Delegation meets imprisoned Venezuelan diplomat Alex Saab, urges his release*

"A Nuclear Bomb would be better. At least with a Nuclear Bomb we die quickly. With the U.S. Sanctions we die every day." – Alex Saab

Members of the National Lawyers Guild and International Association of Democratic Lawyers met with Venezuelan special envoy and political prisoner Alex Saab this week in the Federal Detention Center-Miami. Audrey Bomse, a member of the NLG's International Committee, and Suzanne Adely, NLG President and IADL Bureau Member, met with the imprisoned Saab to convey the support and solidarity of progressive lawyers in the U.S. and internationally and the growing movement for his freedom.

Saab is only receiving legal visits, no visits from family or friends. Most outrageously, in violation of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, Saab has not been allowed contact with officials from Venezuela. According to Article 36 of the VCCR, which the U.S. has signed, "consular officers shall be free to communicate with nationals of the sending State and to have access to them." Foreign nationals who are arrested or detained must be given notice "without delay" of their right to have their embassy or consulate notified of that arrest, and "consular officers shall have the right to visit a national of the sending State who is in prison, custody or detention, to converse and correspond with him and to arrange for his legal representation."

"Saab is a victim of U.S. imperialism. He is being criminalized for challenging

U.S. Economic Coercive Measures on Venezuela. The case against him has raised dangerous precedents of judicial abuse by the U.S. in enforcing these policies, applying U.S. laws extraterritorially in an attempt to violate the sovereignty and trade relations of independent nations," said Adely.

Saab's role in challenging Sanctions on Venezuela has made him a target of the U.S. government.

According to the New York Times, "Saab [was] widely believed to be the architect of the economic deals that [were] keeping the Maduro government afloat." His role

of Iranian fuel headed to Venezuela on the high-seas to block these two sovereign nations from engaging in peaceful trade, thus evading the illegal American economic sanctions.

Saab was intercepted and seized unlawfully in Cape Verde as his plane was refueling on June 12, 2020, on his way to Iran in his role as special envoy for Venezuela. He was arrested without a warrant, with an Interpol red notice received only after his arrest on a series of charges related to violation of U.S. sanctions. He remained in this tiny island nation, where he was subjected to torture for over a year.

During the visit, Saab was unable to talk about what had been done to him, other than to say that he had been held in a small dark cell. He compared his torture to what went on in Guantanamo.

The purpose of his long detention and inhumane treatment in Cape Verde was, again according to the NYTimes, to get him to cooperate with U.S. authorities to "help untangle Mr. Maduro's economic

web of support and assist the authorities in bringing charges against other allies of the Venezuelan government." Saab refused to cooperate and was eventually extradited to the U.S., although there is no extradition treaty between Cape Verde and the U.S. In an agreement with Cape Verde, the U.S. agreed to drop seven of the charges against once he was extradited to the United States.

Saab's case has deep implications for the respect for diplomatic status everywhere

The United States has consistently ignored



as "special envoy" for Venezuela to Iran, another nation targeted by unlawful U.S. sanctions, was to trade crude oil and gold for food, medicine, fuel and other material to keep the Venezuelan productive economy running despite the devastating effects of U.S. unilateral coercive economic measures (UCMs). Such UCMs are unlawful and acts of war under the UN Charter and International Law and Conventions. Despite this clear prohibition, the U.S. has gone as far as seizing millions of barrels

Saab's diplomatic status arguing that he was not acting in the capacity as special envoy for Venezuela, despite evidence. The federal court in Miami went further, ruling in a highly alarming decision that even if it could be established that Saab was acting as a special envoy, he would not be recognized as such because the U.S. does not recognize the legitimacy of the Venezuelan Government. The court stated:

"Only the President may determine which governments are legitimate in the eyes of the United States and which are not[.].. It is clear that the United States does not recognize the Maduro regime to represent the official government of Venezuela. Instead, [t]he United States recognizes Interim President Juan Guaid[ó] and considers the 2014 democratically elected Venezuelan National Assembly, which he currently leads, to be the only legitimate federal institution, according to the Venezuelan Constitution.... Maduro's regime has been deemed 'illegitimate.' Accordingly, any claim to diplomatic immunity asserted by a representative of the Maduro regime must also be considered illegitimate."

The December ruling is a clear example of a legal decision grounded not in the law nor in principles of fairness and justice, but instead motivated by U.S. imperialist policies. The United States has no legitimate authority to dictate the policies of the government of Venezuela, nor to imprison diplomats by unilaterally declaring the governments of sovereign nations to be illegitimate. The U.S. Government has made it clear that one of its top foreign policy priorities is to depose the democratically-elected government of Venezuela and to replace it with one that will open Venezuela's vast oil reserves to exploitation by US transnational oil companies.

In 2000, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela submitted a referral to the International Criminal Court, asking it to investigate U.S. sanctions against their country as a Crime Against Humanity. The referral pointed out the enormous economic impact of these policies on the civilian population of the country. However, unsurprisingly for the ICC, which has almost exclusively focused on African war criminals and is now focusing on Russia, no progress has been made in this matter.

Senior U.S. officials have openly admitted that they were aware of the devastating impact of the sanctions on the civilian population and yet continued to implement

the Unilateral Coercive Measures against Venezuela in order to cause social unrest and facilitate regime change. This is seen as "collateral damage", much like the deaths of half a million Iraqi children as a result of sanctions leading up to the U.S. regime change in Iraq.

The National Lawyers Guild and the International Association of Democratic Lawyers reaffirm their position: Washington must drop the charges against Alex Saab, respect his diplomatic status, free him from detention and lift the sanctions on Venezuela. It is imperative that progressive people in the U.S. continue to support freedom for Alex Saab and reject the judicial abuse of our courts which are acting as agents of U.S. imperialism. It's equally imperative that we challenge the U.S. sanctions on Venezuela and the economic coercive measures imposed on nations throughout the Global South.

January 26, 2023

Originally published: <https://iadllaw.org>

## Battle of Ideas Press

### Revolution & Counter Revolution in Venezuela



#### By Alison Bodine

Writer and researcher on Venezuela. She is a member of the Fire This Time Newspaper Editorial Board and is the coordinator of the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign. Alison Bodine is an electrical designer based in Vancouver, Canada.

October 2017, paperback, \$10.00  
190 pages, illustrated, ISBN 978-0-9864716-5-0  
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## MOTHER OF ALL STRUGGLES!

### Indigenous struggle against colonialism



Howard Adams (Métis)  
1921 - 2001

*Revolutionary Métis Marxist scholar and professor Howard Adams grew up in a Métis community in Saskatchewan. He was a leader in the struggle for Indigenous rights, self-determination, and socialism.*

Racism is one of the most serious problems that faces us. Since it is part of the capitalist system, we will always be discriminated against as long as this kind of society is in power. It is impossible in every way to be integrated into the white mainstream society of Canada. A racist society can not integrate Native people into the mainstream, even if the white people want integration. As far as Canadian society is concerned, Halfbreeds are Indians. We are only kidding ourselves by thinking because we are half white that we are half way into white mainstream society. As Halfbreeds, we are discriminated against, and shut out from the white society just as seriously as any Indian.

As a result of these conditions, it is quite impossible for Native people to obtain any real success in the white man's capitalistic society, that is, in terms of getting control of our reserves and communities, of being free from discrimination and racism, of getting full employment or a decent standard of living, or of being free and equal people. Therefore, our struggle is to change the capitalist system, and thereby get rid of the conditions that control and oppress us.

*Excerpt from "The Need for a Revolutionary Struggle" in New Breed Magazine (1972)*



# FREE ALEX SAAB NOW! US/CANADA HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!

*By Janine Solanki*

For 24 years, the Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela, with the leadership of former President Hugo Chávez and now current President Nicolás Maduro, has been developing a society to benefit poor, working and historically oppressed people in Venezuela. However, the U.S. government has tried to defeat the Bolivarian Revolution through failed coup attempts, economic warfare including sanctions and blockade, and even the kidnapping of Venezuelan diplomat Alex Saab.

On June 12, 2020, Venezuelan diplomat Alex Saab was en route to Iran to negotiate a deal to alleviate the effects of U.S. sanctions, enabling Venezuela to receive much needed fuel, food and medical supplies. During a refuelling stop in Cape Verde, Alex Saab was abducted and arbitrarily imprisoned at the command of the U.S. government and over a year later was illegally extracted by the U.S. from Cape Verde, bypassing his diplomatic immunity. Alex Saab is currently being unjustly held in a Miami jail. On December 23, 2022, U.S. Federal District Court Judge Robert Scola released his decision not to recognize the diplomatic status of Alex Saab. This decision, and Alex Saab's continued detention in a Miami jail, is a further violation of international law and a continued injustice against Alex Saab and the people of Venezuela.

For two years, Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign, the Venezuela Peace Committee in Winnipeg, and Just Peace Advocates have organized monthly online picket actions in defense of Venezuela, demanding an end to U.S./Canada sanctions and freedom for Alex Saab. These actions have received the support of Venezuela solidarity organizations and individuals across Canada, and for the first action of 2023, the U.S.-based organization CODEPINK joined to co-organize the action.

The first Venezuela picket action for 2023 on January 31 included a workshop session to write letters of support and solidarity for Alex Saab, as well as special guest Camilla Saab, wife of Alex Saab. Camilla Saab gave a heartfelt speech about Alex Saab's case from Venezuela. Camilla Saab also shared a voice message from Alex Saab, in which he thanked Fire This Time, CODEPINK and participants of the action for their work in solidarity with Venezuela and for his freedom. He emphasized that he is a "prisoner of an unconventional war that the United States has unilaterally declared" on Venezuela. Alex Saab's full message is also printed on this page.

Other speakers at the January 31 action included William Camacaro, US-Venezuelan organizer with the Alliance for Global Justice (AFGJ), founder of the Alberto Lovera Bolivarian Circle and Senior Research Fellow at the Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA), and Roger Harris, board member of the Task Force on the Americas, who was present at Alex Saab's Miami courtroom hearing in December 2022.

The action was chaired by Alison Bodine, coordinator of the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign and author of "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Venezuela." (Battle of Ideas Press, 2018) and Michelle Ellner, CODEPINK Women for Peace Latin America Campaign Coordinator. Michelle and Alison lead participants in a letter-writing session to Alex Saab, and also encouraged participants to sign the CODEPINK petition demanding that U.S. President Biden drop charges against Alex Saab, which can be signed at [www.codepink.org/alex\\_saab](http://www.codepink.org/alex_saab)

The next action on February 27, 2023, marked two consecutive years of consecutive monthly online picket actions. The action also marked 10 years since the passing of the former President of Venezuela, Comandante Hugo Chávez, on March 5, 2013. Participants commemorated

the leader of the Bolivarian revolution whose legacy continues today in Venezuela and among social justice fighters worldwide.

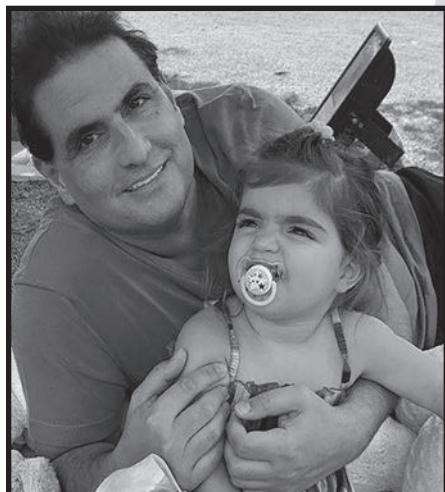
The action started with an exciting music video, "Free Alex Saab" from Venezuelan Hip Hop artist FullVida MC. The action also included speakers: Indhriana Parada, Venezuelan lawyer, member of the Free Alex Saab Movement and author of the new book, "The Kidnapping of Alex Saab: A Legal Analysis"; Suzanne Adely, President of the National Lawyers Guild in the United States and Bureau Member of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers; and Nino Pagliccia, Venezuelan-Canadian activist and political writer based in Vancouver. A special greeting was also shared by Professor Luis Acuña, Charge d'Affaires of the Venezuela Embassy in Canada, speaking from Venezuela.

As with every action over the last two years, after the main speakers, the virtual microphone was handed to representatives from groups and individuals in solidarity with Venezuela across Canada and Quebec to share their greetings. Every month the event concludes with participants turning on their video cameras and holding picket signs, Venezuelan flags and fists in the air for the group photo while chanting together, "Hands Off Venezuela!" "Free Alex Saab!"

During the February 27 action, webinar chair Alison Bodine also launched the new "Free Alex Saab" postcard campaign, initiated by Fire This Time Venezuelan Solidarity Campaign. The postcards are addressed to U.S. President Biden and express the demand that Alex Saab is released immediately.

It is the responsibility of peace-loving people in the U.S., Canada, and around the world to fight for the freedom of Alex Saab and stand with the people of Venezuela who struggle every day in defense of Venezuela's sovereignty and self-determination. Check for updates and how you can join the next virtual picket action in solidarity with Venezuela by visiting <http://www.firethistime.net>

*Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki*



## VOICE MESSAGE FROM DIPLOMAT ALEX SAAB HELD UNJUSTLY IN U.S. JAIL:

"I want to thank Code Pink and Fire This Time for the support they have given me and my family. It's been almost a thousand days since I was illegally detained, I am a political prisoner, there is no doubt about it. A prisoner of an unconventional war that the United States has unilaterally declared against us, imposing criminal sanctions that have caused terrible damage to the people of Venezuela. The United States must retake the path of peace, Venezuela is not an enemy. Political differences should not prevent us from maintaining diplomatic and economic relations between our nations. The government of our President Nicolas Maduro has already extended his hand several times with the aim of reestablishing cordial relations with the United States based on mutual respect. It's time to leave those mistakes in the past and move forward. I call for peace and reconciliation, it is time to shake hands."



# Commemorating Black History Month 2023

## OUR LEADERS WHO HAVE INSPIRED THE WORLD FOR LIBERATION!

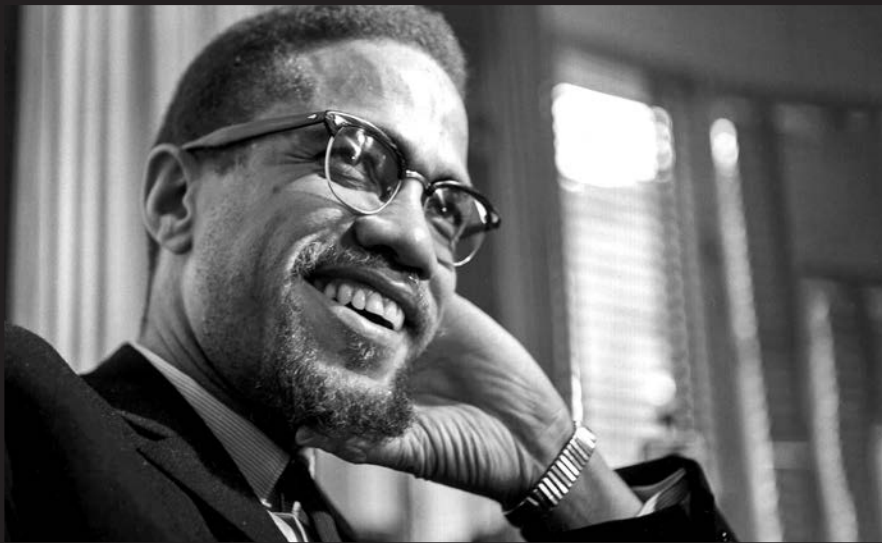
**"THE REVOLUTION AND WOMEN'S LIBERATION GO TOGETHER. WE DO NOT TALK OF WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION AS AN ACT OF CHARITY OR BECAUSE OF A SURGE OF HUMAN COMPASSION. IT IS A BASIC NECESSITY FOR THE TRIUMPH OF THE REVOLUTION. WOMEN HOLD UP THE OTHER HALF OF THE SKY."**

**Thomas Sankara**  
1949-1987



**"WE DECLARE OUR RIGHT ON THIS EARTH... TO BE A HUMAN BEING, TO BE RESPECTED AS A HUMAN BEING, TO BE GIVEN THE RIGHTS OF A HUMAN BEING IN THIS SOCIETY, ON THIS EARTH, IN THIS DAY, WHICH WE INTEND TO BRING INTO EXISTENCE BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY."**

**Malcolm X**  
1925-1965



**"ONE DAY WE MUST ASK THE QUESTION, "WHY ARE THERE FORTY MILLION POOR PEOPLE IN AMERICA?" ...WHEN YOU ASK THAT QUESTION, YOU BEGIN TO QUESTION THE CAPITALISTIC ECONOMY."**

**Martin Luther King Jr.**  
1929-1968



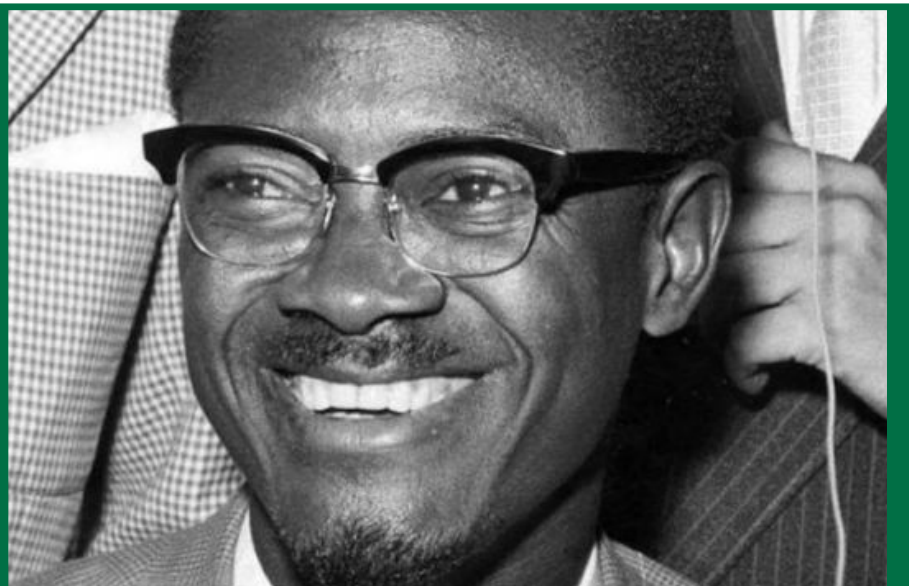
**"WHEN WILL IMPERIALISM LEARN? YES, THEY CAN KILL OUR BODIES BUT THEY CAN NEVER KILL THE SPIRIT OF A PEOPLE FIGHTING FOR THEIR LIBERATION, THEY CAN NEVER KILL THE SPIRIT OF A PEOPLE FIGHTING FOR THEIR COUNTRY AND FIGHTING TO PUSH THEIR COUNTRY FORWARD."**

**Maurice Bishop**  
1943-1983



**"THE DAY WILL COME WHEN HISTORY WILL SPEAK. BUT IT WILL NOT BE THE HISTORY WHICH WILL BE TAUGHT IN BRUSSELS, PARIS, WASHINGTON OR THE UNITED NATIONS. IT WILL BE... TAUGHT IN THE COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE WON FREEDOM FROM COLONIALISM AND ITS PUPPETS. AFRICA WILL WRITE ITS OWN HISTORY AND... IT WILL BE A HISTORY OF GLORY AND DIGNITY"**

**Patrice Lumumba**  
1925-1961





# THE LEGACY OF COMANDANTE HUGO CHÁVEZ CONTINUES ON IN THE INTERNATIONAL STRUGGLE IN DEFENCE OF VENEZUELA AND FOR A BETTER WORLD!



*By Alison Bodine*

March 5, 2023, marks 10 years since the passing of Comandante Hugo Chávez. Comandante Chávez was a giant in the worldwide working class struggle; an anti-capitalist, an anti-imperialist, a strong defender of the sovereignty and self-determination of oppressed peoples, and an internationalist leader and fighter. His legacy lives on not only as an inspiration to social justice and anti-capitalist fighters but as a continuous call for unity in action for the international movement against imperialism and for the liberation of all oppressed people.

In 1994, Hugo Chávez, a young revolutionary leader, visited Cuba for the first time. While speaking at the University of Havana, he clearly stated his intention to not only bring fundamental change to poor, oppressed and working people in

Venezuela, but he also declared that the revolutionary movement that he led is “determined to raise an ideological flag that is relevant to and beneficial for our land of Venezuela, for our Latin American lands: the Bolivarian flag.”

10 years later, President Chávez, who had been elected by the people of Venezuela in 1998, and Cuban President Fidel Castro announced the founding of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA). To follow were the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), alongside dozens of other projects and agreements aimed at strengthening Latin American unity in the

struggle to end U.S. imperialist hegemony on the continent. Since then, Cuba and Venezuela continue to lead the way in showing the people of Latin America and the world that there is an alternative to staying under the domination and pressure of the United States.

The leadership and vision of Comandante Chávez, together with Cuba, in building Latin American anti-imperialist unity is one of the main reasons that the democratically elected government of President Maduro and the Bolivarian revolutionary process are now the biggest threat to the hegemony of the United States, after Cuba, in the Western Hemisphere.

The United States government understands this all too well. And in return, they have imposed a brutal and inhuman blockade on the people of Venezuela. U.S. imperialism is attempting to bring about the overthrow of the Bolivarian revolutionary process and

*Continued on page 31*

## ¡Continúa el legado del comandante Chávez en la lucha internacional en defensa de Venezuela y por un mundo mejor!

*\* EN ESPAÑOL \**

*Por Alison Bodine*

El 5 de marzo de 2023 se cumplen 10 años de la siembra del Comandante Hugo Chávez. El Comandante Chávez fue un gigante en la lucha mundial de la clase obrera; en la lucha anticapitalista y antiimperialista. El fue un férreo defensor de la soberanía y autodeterminación de los pueblos oprimidos, y un líder y luchador internacionalista. Su legado sigue vivo no solo como una inspiración para la justicia social y los luchadores anticapitalistas, sino como un llamado continuo a la unidad en acción del movimiento internacional contra el imperialismo y por la liberación de todos los pueblos oprimidos.

En 1994, Hugo Chávez, un joven líder revolucionario, visitó Cuba por primera vez. Mientras hablaba en la Universidad de La Habana, expresó claramente su intención no solo de traer un cambio fundamental a los humildes, oprimidos y obreros de Venezuela, sino que también declaró que el movimiento revolucionario que encabezó estamos “empeñados en levantar una bandera ideológica pertinente y propicia a nuestra tierra venezolana, a nuestra tierra latinoamericana: la bandera bolivariana”.

10 años después, el presidente Chávez, elegido por el pueblo de Venezuela en 1998, y el presidente cubano Fidel Castro anunciaron la fundación de la Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra



América (ALBA). Le siguieron la Unión de Naciones Suramericanas (UNASUR) y la Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños (CELAC), junto con decenas de otros proyectos y acuerdos destinados a fortalecer la unidad latinoamericana en la lucha por acabar con la hegemonía imperialista estadounidense en el continente. Desde entonces, Cuba y Venezuela siguen marcando el camino para mostrar a los pueblos de América Latina y el mundo que existe una alternativa a permanecer bajo el dominio y la presión de los Estados Unidos.

*continúa en la página 31*

# President Maduro and the War in Ukraine

*By Arnold August*

As many heads of state and prime ministers ponder the war in Ukraine, I call attention to one head of state, Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro. In a January 1, 2023 interview with Franco-Spanish journalist and author Ignacio Ramonet, President Maduro said, “The war in Ukraine is part of the labor pains of a world that will emerge.” Here is his full commentary on the international situation:

“The world is undoubtedly in a very difficult situation, we are experiencing the pains of giving birth to a different world. We have always advocated the construction of a pluripolar, multicentric world, with different poles of development, power, centers that accompany all regions of the world. The old world of the 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th centuries, of colonialism, then of the neo-colonialism of the 20th century, must be abandoned for good. No one can believe that from two or three metropolises, one can govern the world, one can subdue the peoples. There are already very strong regions, such as Asia, the Pacific, Africa itself, Latin America and the Caribbean, we are blocks of countries that are becoming poles of world power. Do we have to give up our rights to peace, to development, to scientific and technological progress, to our own cultural models, to our own political models? Do we have to give them up? No. Should we take for granted the unipolar



**Venezuelan President Nicholas Maduro speaks with Spanish Journalist Ignacio Ramonet**

domination of a metropolis that claims to dictate to the world? No. It is the time of a new world, of new geopolitics that redistributes power in the world. The war in Ukraine is part of the labor pains of a world that will emerge.”

## **Labor Pains**

What can one make of Maduro’s assertion that “the War in Ukraine is part of the labor pains of a world that will emerge,” coupled with his very positive assessment of Chinese President Vladimir Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin? Is it a call for “peace” in the abstract? No. Can it be interpreted as an unconditional encouragement of the Russian Special

Military Operation without taking into account valid peace initiatives for a political resolution of the conflict? No. In my view, it is above all a call for reflection in these dangerous times for all peoples and governments, regardless of their current options on the Ukraine conflict.

China’s Position on the

## **Political Settlement of the Ukraine Crisis**

No other head of state in the world, unless someone corrects me, has packed so much progressive depth on the crisis into just sixteen words. My own reflection, although I am not fully aware of Maduro’s intentions regarding “labor pains,” or in the same interview, “the pains of giving birth to a different world,” is this: what is happening in Ukraine is disastrous; however, the horrors of war were provoked by NATO and, in this second year, this provocative Western project has not yet receded. Thus, until there is a peaceful solution, or “the right to peace” that Maduro also calls for in the January 1 interview quoted above, that takes into account the legitimate security concerns of Russia and the Russian-speaking republics and Crimea, the labor pains cannot be stopped.

However, this outcome will lead to the realization of the “right to peace.” Moreover, in Maduro’s words, the new “pluripolar, multicentric world, with different poles of development [against] unipolar domination of a metropolis” will emerge.

Proof that Maduro and Others are Right

Do these two statements by Maduro still stand the test of time? Illustrating just





three of the many examples allows readers to assess both Maduro's apprehension of U.S. hegemony and to expect the inevitable excruciating, but desired, birth of a new pluripolar world of which Latin America is a part.

Against the backdrop of the January 2023 Maduro statement, in December 2022 statements, firstly, former German leader Merkel admitted that the Minsk agreements were intended to buy time for the Ukrainians to prepare for conflict with Russia, and Putin. Then, former French President François Hollande confirmed Merkel's remark, the "Minsk agreements let Kiev build up military muscle." Even though these revelations should have changed the international game plan by naming NATO as the sole culprit of the war, they did not make NATO budge one iota toward peace. Thus, the painful reality of war has been further implanted in the NATO-Ukraine-Russia geopolitical landscape.

Since Maduro's two statements of January 2023 cited above, the German Foreign Minister has admitted that Europe and thus NATO is at war with Russia.

In addition, General Laura J. Richardson, Commander of the U.S. Southern Command, is proving Venezuela and other countries in the region – indeed almost the entire Global South – right. Here are some excerpts from her January 21, 2023 statement, in which she does not hide

U.S. imperial ambitions, but flaunts them as if it were as natural as American apple pie for the U.S. to claim Latin American and the Caribbean as its own.

"If I talk to my number two adversary in the region, Russia, I mean I've got, of course the countries, Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua with Russia relationships... 60% of the world's lithium is in the Lithium Triangle, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile..."

War and Peace and the Bolivarian Factor  
When the Maduro government, like Hugo Chávez before him, claims Bolivarianism

as their political guide, they are true to their word. For example, Simón Bolívar in a letter to one of his generals, Francisco de Paula Santander, during the break in the



war against Spain, wrote:

"Peace will be my port, my glory, my reward, my hope, my joy and everything that is precious to me in this world... If we want peace, we must prepare for war."

Also, at a time when there is so much

in which he described Europe as an idyllic "garden" of prosperity and the rest of the world as mostly a "jungle." He apologized, but it remains the vision steeped in the old, decaying European colonialism. They should instead look to the "jungle," Venezuela, and its tradition, as opposed to the evil "garden" that is Europe.

After another provocation against Venezuela, Commander Hugo Chávez titled his November 16, 2009 article "If you want peace, prepare for war."

Before concluding, let me anticipate a criticism of this article by some who might accuse me of not addressing the threat of nuclear weapons. First of all, it is not the main issue. Furthermore, and more importantly, the "threat of a nuclear war" is currently being used as a weapon by those who try to shame us into denouncing "Russian invasion" or accepting other narratives that are also unacceptable to progressive people.



Anti-NATO Protest at the White House

talk in the last year about the prisoners of war in Ukraine with the false narrative always directly slanted against Russia, how many people know that "the first international treaty on the regularization of war and the treatment of prisoners and the civilian population" was signed by Simón Bolívar and the Spanish colonialist Pablo Morillo? Where is the "jungle" and where is the "garden"? After days of mounting international backlash, Josep Borrell, the European Union's foreign policy chief, apologized for his controversial remarks

In conclusion, Maduro's Bolivarian thesis on war and peace shows, and will continue to show, which forces are on the right side of history and which are not. The main purpose of this article is to promote discussion from the Venezuelan perspective. This thesis, "The war in Ukraine is part of the labor pains of a world that will emerge," is a cause for serious reflection, regardless of one's views. The stakes are too high to refuse discussion and concerted action.

*An excerpt  
Full article first appeared in Orinoco Tribune  
orinocotribune.com*

*Follow Arnold August on Twitter:  
@Arnold\_August*

*Arnold August is a Montreal-based journalist, lecturer and author of "Cuba and Its Neighbours: Democracy in Motion" (Zed Books & Fernwood Publishing, 2013). He is also a member of the Network of Intellectuals in Defense of Humanity (Canada).*

*By Janine Solanki*

With the new year of 2023 upon us, our world is still facing ongoing brutal imperialist wars and occupations, military interventions and crippling sanctions that the U.S., Canada and their allies impose on oppressed nations. But as imperialist war mongering continues, antiwar resistance also continues and grows. With united action and local, national and international coordination of antiwar and peace activists, the struggle for a world free of war is on the rise.

The Canada-Wide Peace and Justice Network (CWPJN), which was formed in 2020 with 45 organizations as well as individual members, has been part of this growing antiwar movement. Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) and Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice have been active members in the network since its formation and continue to organize with member groups on coordinated actions and campaigns.

### No New Fighter Jets!

Mobilization Against War and Occupation, as a member of the No Fighter Jets Coalition, joined a weekend of action January 6-8 against Canada's plan to purchase new fighter jets. The Vancouver action on **January 6** garnered much support as well as media coverage on City TV news (see the full report in Fire This Time Volume 17 Issue 1). Despite coordinated actions across Canada and media attention reflecting how people in Canada need funding for social needs, not fighter jets, on January 9, Canada's defense minister Anita Anand announced the purchase of 16 F-35 fighter jets. This announcement is part of the planned 88 F-35 fighter jets deal, which will cost taxpayers at least \$77 billion over the lifecycle of these dangerous and fossil fuel-intensive jets. Actions and activities are continuing to protest the purchase of the F-35 fighter jets, including the parliamentary petition e-4217.

From **January 13-22**, antiwar and peace activists across Canada, the U.S. and around the world took part in a week of action to demand an end to imperialist wars, occupations, sanctions and military interventions. Over 90 actions took place in response to the call to action, which was initiated by the United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC) in the U.S. and supported by the Canada-Wide Peace and Justice Network. Considering the recent F-35 fighter jet purchase by the government of Canada, alongside the demands of "No to US/Canada/NATO Wars, Occupation and Sanctions!" protests in Canada also raised the demand "No New Fighter Jets" and "Drop the F-35 Deal". Read the CWPJN statement for this week of action on page 23 of this issue of Fire This Time.

A Burnaby, Greater Vancouver action took place on **January 21**, organized by local CWPJN members and friends including Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO), Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice, the Just Peace Committee, Global Peace Alliance BC and the Communist Party of

Canada (Marxist-Leninist). The action was strengthened by the participation of other organizations, such as the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), and the East Indian Defence Committee. Protesters held antiwar banners and picket signs across all four corners of a big, busy intersection near a shopping mall and commuter train station, and received the attention of many passers-by who stopped to ask questions, took antiwar literature and stood in support of the protest. Protesters also did a round of marching around the crosswalks, attracting hanks of support from cars driving by, while protesters chanted "No New Fighter

**FIGHTING BACK:  
CROSS-CANADA  
ANTIWAR ACTION ON  
THE RISE IN 2023**



Jets!", "Money for health care, not for fighter jets!", "Money for jobs and education, not for wars and occupations!", "Hands off Yemen!", "Hands off Haiti!" and "Canada Stop Arming Saudi Arabia!"

### No to War, No to NATO!

Alongside coordinated street actions, the CWPJN also organizes webinars, connecting antiwar activists, organizers and those interested in learning more across borders and time zones. On **February 19**, the CWPJN organized the webinar "No to War, No to NATO: North American perspectives on Ukraine, Russia, and NATO". This timely and critical discussion included speakers: Glenn Michalchuk, President of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians and Chair of Peace Alliance Winnipeg; Margaret Kimberly, author and Executive Editor of Black Agenda Report, Coordinating Committee member of Black Alliance for Peace, Administrative Committee member of the United National Antiwar Coalition, and Board of Directors member of the U.S. Peace Memorial Foundation; and Kevin MacKay, professor at Mohawk College in Hamilton, Ontario and Vice President of the Mohawk faculty union. The webinar was co-moderated by Janine Solanki, an executive member of Mobilization Against

War & Occupation (MAWO) and editorial board member of Fire This Time newspaper, and Brendan Stone, co-chair of the Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War and the co-host of the Unusual Sources radio program. The webinar recording is available to watch online at <https://youtu.be/p6BL8O8-5RI>

### Canada Out of NATO!

From February 23-26, 2023 the Canada-Wide Peace and Justice Network organized a weekend of action to "Stop the War, Stop NATO" in solidarity with other pro-peace, anti-war actions occurring around the world at the same time. Actions took place in Montreal, Ottawa, Hamilton, Waterloo, Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary, Vancouver and Victoria, alongside online events and activities. The CWPJN released a statement for the weekend of action, which can be read on page 22 in this issue of Fire This Time.

On Friday, **February 24**, local members of the Canada-Wide Peace and Justice Network joined together in Surrey, Greater Vancouver, as part of the Stop the War, Stop NATO Weekend of Action. Protesters gathered for the action outside a university campus and local mall, as well as near a busy transit station, and attracted hundreds of commuters who stopped to talk to protesters, listen to speakers, and pick up antiwar literature. The action also received media attention from City TV news and the China Media Group, who both interviewed the organizers and protesters and took extensive footage of the action.

Protesters held picket signs and banners and chanted, "Stop the War, Stop NATO!" "Canada Out of NATO!" "Fund Peace, Not War!" and "Money for Healthcare and Education, not for War!". A short program of speakers was held including representatives from sponsoring and participating organizations, including Just Peace Committee, Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO), Global Peace Alliance BC, Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice, the Communist Party of Canada – Marxist Leninist, and the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS). Speakers demanded that Canada, the U.S., and NATO stop fuelling the war in Ukraine by funnelling weapons into the country and instead emphasized that the path to peace is through negotiations and an end to NATO.

### Hands Off Yemen!

March 26 marks 8 years of the brutal US-backed, Canada-armed, Saudi-led war against Yemen, which has imposed the world's worst humanitarian crisis on the people of Yemen. The Canada-Wide Peace and Justice Network is calling for a weekend of action on March 25-26, with a key demand of #CanadaStopArmingSaudi holding the government of Canada responsible for supplying Saudi Arabia with weapons to use against the people of Yemen. Check <https://peaceandjusticenetwork.ca/canadastoparmingsaudi2023> for upcoming actions across Canada, and for Greater Vancouver-area actions visit <http://mawovancouver.org>



The Canada-Wide Peace and Justice Network (CWPJN) urges people across Canada to join us in calling for an end to the war in Ukraine. This conflict has caused immense suffering for the Ukrainian people and their civilian infrastructure, going back to 2014 when the conflict began in Ukraine's Donbas region. We condemn the Trudeau government for flatly refusing to talk to its Russian counterpart and for continuously refuelling the rapidly escalating conflict in Ukraine, which has the potential to expand into a wider European war or even a nuclear

confrontation. The CWPJN calls for immediate negotiations with all parties for a political solution to the conflict and a return to peace and neutrality in Ukraine. On the weekend of Feb 23th to 26th, our members will be holding actions across Canada, uniting with other pro-peace and anti-war actions occurring around the world at the same time.

For years, NATO has been provoking conflict with Russia. NATO's expansion to Russia's borders, its training and arming of Ukrainian military, and support for Ukraine's war against its eastern Donbas region since 2014 have been the principal causes for the hostilities and the devastating war in Ukraine. The CWPJN is opposed to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) because it is an aggressive, US-led, military alliance of 30 Euro-Atlantic countries that has launched deadly and destructive military interventions in the former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Libya. These NATO wars have caused profound misery and a massive refugee crisis.

We are opposed to NATO's demand that

F-35 fighter jets purchased by Canada are designed for offensive strike first attacks and to carry B61-12 tactical nuclear weapons. Is this purchase the reason why Canada has refused to sign the United Nations Treaty to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)? The TPNW requires that signatories “never under any circumstances... develop, test, produce, manufacture, otherwise acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.” The

CWPJN demands that the government of Canada sign the TPNW now!

## Canada out of NATO!

NATO is not a  
defensive alliance.

## A black and white photograph of a large group of people participating in a protest. They are dressed in winter clothing like coats and hats. The protesters are holding numerous signs and banners. In the foreground, a large banner reads "NO TO NATO! NO TO WAR! CANADA OUT OF NATO NOW!" followed by "MONEY FOR JOBS, HEALTHCARE, EDUCATION, HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT! NOT FOR WAR!" and the website "WWW.MAWOVANCOUVER.ORG". To the right, another large banner says "No More Hiroshimas!" with "Just Peace Committee" written below it. Other visible signs include "CANADA OUT OF NATO!", "STOP YOUR FUNDING RUIN OUR RIGHTS", "MONEY FOR EDUCATION NOT WAR!", "CANADA NEEDS AN ANTINWAR GOVERNMENT", and "NO NATO! CANADA OUT OF NATO!". Some signs also feature symbols like a target or a peace sign.

70% over the next 5 years. NATO's demand that members buy new inter-operable weapons is leading to a costly arms race. Carbon-intensive weapons systems like fighter jets, tanks, and warships are exacerbating the climate crisis.

In Canada, this includes the recently announced purchase of 16 F-35 fighter jets, part of the planned 88 F-35 fighter jets deal which will cost taxpayers at least \$77 billion over the lifecycle of the jets. The government of Canada is also planning to purchase warships at a sticker price of \$84 billion and \$5 billion for armed drones.

This explosion in military spending will prevent Canada from investing adequately in public healthcare, education, housing, jobs and climate solutions. NATO's reliance on a dangerous nuclear deterrence and first strike policy puts us all at risk. The deadly, expensive and environmentally harmful

It undermines global peace and human security and exacerbates the climate crisis. Because of Canada's NATO membership, we are dragged into every war of the US empire. It's time for Canada to withdraw from NATO and develop a non-nuclear, independent, foreign policy, free from arms exports to fuel wars

and occupations, and without massive expenditures on weapons for future wars. With humanity facing global

environmental and health crises, we need international cooperation, nonviolence and common security for all countries. Peace in Ukraine, and peace with Russia and China begins with negotiations, diplomacy, and an end to NATO.

*A Canada-Wide Peace and Justice Network  
Statement. Originally printed:*

**22 FIRE THIS TIME**    **Volume 17 Issue 2-3**    **February & March 2023**

# Join the call to build a united



Anti-war action in Burnaby, Canada as part of Canada-wide Week of Action, January 21, 2023.

## ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT!

Across Canada, the U.S. and around the world, peace activists are taking action January 13 – 22 to demand an end to imperialist wars, occupations, sanctions and military interventions. This call to action was initiated by the United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC) in the U.S., marking Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day and remembering his words from April 4, 1967 which still ring true today, “The greatest purveyor of violence in the world: My own Government, I can not be Silent.” This week of action is supported by the Canada-Wide Peace and Justice Network, a network of 45 peace groups across Canada.

### No New Fighter Jets!

An urgent demand for antiwar activists in Canada is No New Fighter Jets! On January 9, 2023 Canada’s Defense Minister Anita Anand announced that Canada will buy 88 F-35 fighter jets costing Canadian taxpayers \$19 billion, with \$7 billion approved for the first 16. Even these exorbitant prices are not the full story – the lifecycle cost of the 88 fighter jets is estimated to be at least \$76.8 billion over 30 years, according to the No Fighter Jets coalition 2020 report, From Acquisition to Disposal: Uncovering the true cost of 88 new fighter jets. This fighter jets purchase is part of a massively expanding military budget. Military spending increased by 70% since 2014, and in 2022 Minister Anand announced that military spending will increase again by 70% in the next five years. Just in 2021, the government of Canada spent \$33 billion on the military. This is money that is desperately needed for affordable healthcare, education, jobs and climate solutions. Furthermore, these

fighter jets are fossil fuel intensive, using 1,340 gallons of fuel per hour, more than twice the average of what a standard car uses in one year!

This deadly, expensive and environmentally harmful fighter jet is designed for offensive strike first attacks and to carry B61-12 tactical nuclear weapons. This highlights the fact that the government of Canada has refused to sign the United Nations Treaty to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) despite demands from antiwar and peace activists. The TPNW requires that signatories “never under any circumstances... develop, test, produce, manufacture, otherwise acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.”

The fighter jets purchase is being protested across Canada, during the January 13-22 week of action and also recently with the No Fighter Jets Coalition weekend of action from January 6-8 which had 13 actions across Canada demanding “No New Fighter Jets” and “Drop the F35 Deal!” The Canada-Wide Peace and Justice Network also encourages people in Canada to sign the parliamentary petition against the fighter jets purchase at <https://petitions.ourcommons.ca/en/Petition/Details?Petition=e-4217>

### Stop arming Saudi Arabia!

Besides buying weapons of war, Canada is also producing and selling them. Today, the United Nations deems Yemen the world’s worst humanitarian crisis, after almost eight years of Saudi-led, U.S. backed and Canadian-armed war. This war has killed over a quarter of a million people, and has displaced an additional four million people.

The Saudi-led coalition has bombed Yemeni markets, hospitals, and civilians, and yet Canada has exported over \$8 billion in arms to Saudi Arabia since 2015, the year the Saudi-led military intervention in Yemen began. The Trudeau Government continues to profit from its controversial \$15 billion arms deal for armoured vehicles—killing machines which have been used against people in Yemen and in Saudi Arabia.

The Canada-Wide Peace and Justice Network calls for an end to the Saudi-led war on Yemen and demands that Canada Stop Arming Saudi Arabia!

### Canada, US and UN Hands off Haiti!

Canada’s military exports have also reached Haiti. In October 2022 Canadian and U.S. warplanes delivered armoured vehicles and weapons to Haiti, in the midst of widespread protests for access to food, fuel, and basic necessities and against the country’s imperialist backed government. More recently on January 11, 2023 Canada made a second delivery of armoured vehicles to Haiti’s police. While the government of Canada is arming the illegitimate and unelected Prime Minister of Haiti, Ariel Henry, they are also keeping the option to occupy Haiti on the table. In October 2022 the U.S. drafted a United Nations Security Council resolution for the “deployment of a rapid action force to Haiti immediately”. This is a very dangerous move by Canada, the U.S., and their allies and will have devastating results for the people of Haiti.

The Canada-Wide Peace and Justice Network stands against Canada sending

*Continued on page 30*



# Cuba's First International Meeting of Theoretical Publications of Left Parties and Political Movements



*By Janine Solanki*

From February 10 to 12, 2023, four organizers of the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice traveled to Cuba to participate in the First International Meeting of Theoretical Publications of Left Parties and Political Movements. More than 200 people, including over 100 delegates from 34 countries and 65 organizations, as well as over 40 Cuban academics, participated in the conference. The meeting was convened by Cuba Socialista, the theoretical and political magazine of the Communist Party of Cuba, and held at the Casa de las Americas, a cultural and political institution in Havana.

Cuba acted as an important venue and gathering point, providing an opportunity for left parties, movements and organizations from around the world to join together, discuss, and build new collaborations and connections. What better place to discuss the building of a better world than in Cuba, where the ongoing Cuban revolution is a shining light and example for how to fight against capitalism and imperialism, and how to develop a socialist project in society with revolutionary internationalism at its foundation.

The conference was opened by Rogelio Polanco Fuentes, Member of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of Cuba's Communist Party and Head of its Ideological Department, who said "The world is experiencing a structural systemic crisis: economic, energy, food, environmental, social, civilizational. There are no global responses in sight, because capitalism is not capable of structuring them, but is the cause of their exacerbation."

This important assessment and the necessity to build a revolutionary socialist alternative was reflected in the three main themes and workshops of the conference, which were 1) Imperialism and the New World Geopolitical Configuration, 2) Fidel and International Solidarity and 3) Socialism and Youth.

## **Revolutionary Internationalism, Imperialism and Dynamics of the World Today**

On the first day of the conference, the



**Fire This Time delegate Azza Rojbi addressing the conference, February 11, 2023**

workshops Imperialism and the New World Geopolitical Configuration and Fidel and International Solidarity featured many important speakers from Cuba and around the world, including Abel Prieto, president of Casa de las Américas and former long-time Cuban Minister of Culture; René González Barrios, director of the Fidel Castro Ruz Center in Havana; and French-Spanish journalist Ignacio Ramonet, a renowned author whose works include the book *My Life*, an interview with Fidel. Given the international nature of the meeting, discussing Fidel's foundational concept of international solidarity was a critical topic. As delegates looked to Cuba's



**Meeting Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel, February 11, 2023**

example, it is with the understanding that Cuban revolutionary internationalism is at the core of Cuba's socialist project and revolution and is a weapon to win the battle of ideas. The example of Cuba's revolutionary internationalism is evident in Cuba's numerous international medical missions, Cuba's Si Se Puedo – yes I can – literacy program that took Cuba's own experience of successfully overcoming illiteracy to the world, and Cuba's vital assistance to Angola in the fight against the invading South Africa apartheid army that ultimately led to the defeat of apartheid in South Africa, to name a few key examples.

Between workshops, the floor was opened for interventions, which had the spirited participation of Cuban and international delegates alike. The final discussion period of the conference's first day was presided over by a special surprise guest, Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel, who spoke to thank delegates for joining and stressed the importance of international solidarity.

During this session, the head of the delegation of the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice, Azza Rojbi, addressed the conference on the themes of imperialism, international solidarity, and the battle of ideas, reflecting the example provided by Fidel on these topics. Azza emphasized that "today, the best way to explain our struggle for socialism is the Battle of Ideas. Today the Battle of Ideas is as important as Workers of the World Unite by Marx and Engels. Both concepts are the most correct generalization that reflects the interests of working and oppressed people to defeat capitalism and imperialism. We need to develop an action program to guide us to an anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist



**Meeting the Union of Young Communist of Cuba, February 14, 2023**

revolution.” Azza also highlighted the importance of building a united front in the battle of ideas and said, “if we are union activists on workers’ strikes, if we are in the environmental movement to fight against capitalist degradation of the earth, if we are fighting against war and occupation, if we are fighting against sanctions and blockades, if we are fighting against racism, sexism and homophobia, if we fight against the colonial structure, this is all about the survival of humanity. We have to win the Battle of Ideas as we say today, or as Malcolm X, the great black American once said, the ongoing battle between us and them. The Battle of Ideas is about the realization of the struggle for a better world, socialism.” Following Azza’s intervention, she had the chance to meet President Miguel Diaz-Canel, who thanked her for her words, and she gave him copies of the Fire This Time newspaper.

### **Socialism and Youth**

The third workshop, “Socialism and Youth”, was held on the second day of the conference and moderated by Yoerky Sánchez Cuellar, director of the Cuban newspaper Juventud Rebelde (Rebel Youth). This important workshop included speakers Marxlenin Pérez Valdés, professor of Marxism-Leninism at the University of Havana, and Manolo de los Santos, co-executive director of The People’s Forum in New York and researcher at Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research. In the words of Marxlenin Pérez Valdés, “Socialism cannot be passive or conformist; as youth is not. What is youth ultimately, if not a revolutionary force? The same as socialism, designed to transform the old world in pursuit of a new one. Therefore, socialism needs youth to exist. For their abilities to create with creativity. For their push and strength to conquer. For their desires and willingness to act actively. For their energy to transform themselves and others. So, saving socialism is also a way to save the youth.”

Throughout the conference, Fire This Time delegates had a chance to meet with organizers from all around the world, including Peru, Venezuela, Argentina, Brazil, Korea, India, Kenya, China, Russia, Germany, Scotland, Denmark and England, just to name a few! From the informational table or in discussions with Fire This Time delegates, participants received recent issues of the Fire This Time newspaper, a special issue of Fire This Time commemorating the life and legacy of Fidel, and examples of Cuba solidarity activism in Vancouver and Canada including the new postcard campaign from Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) demanding that US President Biden remove Cuba from the U.S. State Department’s list of state sponsors of terrorism. Through these interactions, organizers exchanged about their approach to different social justice struggles and found connections on how to collaborate and work together. Alongside the conference program, Fire This Time delegates also had the opportunity to exchange with Cuban institutions, including meeting leading members of the Union of Young Communists (UJC), Cuba’s Federation of University Students (FEU), and the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP).

### **Action Plan**

This inaugural conference closed with a reading of the Action Plan, which among other points, included a denunciation of the genocidal blockade by the United States against Cuba and the commitment of organizations to campaign against the blockade. After two days of workshops, the last day of the program was a visit to the Fidel Castro Ruz Center, which was opened in late 2021. Delegates were welcomed by the Fidel Center’s director René González Barrios, who also spoke at the conference. He emphasized that when Fidel passed away, he ensured a law was passed that no monuments or statues of him be erected and no streets, schools or other institutions be named after him because Fidel rejected any manifestation of a cult of personality.

However, we know that Fidel’s ideas are an important legacy for present and future generations of revolutionary fighters not just in Cuba but worldwide, which is why the Fidel Castro Center is an important and singular exception to this law, as an interactive and educational institution dedicated to documenting and reflecting the ideas and legacy of Fidel, with its doors open and free to Cubans and international visitors alike.

The First International Meeting of Theoretical Publications of Left Parties and Political Movements took place in connection with the 31st International Havana Book Fair, which featured over 40 countries and 120 exhibitors as well as poetry readings, book launches, art exhibits, concerts and other cultural events. Fire This Time delegates also had a chance to explore this massive book fair and take part in some of the many activities.

The experience of participating in the First International Meeting of Theoretical Publications of Left Parties and Political Movements, as well as being immersed in Cuban political and cultural life, left the Fire This Time delegates much to share. On March 3, Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice hosted a report back webinar, with stories, photos and videos from the trip. To watch the recording online visit <https://youtu.be/2KytsUmJu7Q> or [www.youtube.com/@firethistime](http://www.youtube.com/@firethistime)

Cuba’s First International Meeting of Theoretical Publications of Left Parties and Political Movements was an important



**At the Fidel Castro Center in Havana, Cuba, February 12, 2023**

opportunity for international exchange and building collaboration among left parties and organizations, and also to learn from the example that Cuba’s socialist revolution gives us. Cuba is the socialist vanguard and leading the way in the fight for a better world, and this conference was an important step forward in continuing that path!

*Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki*



# CUBA

## It's a target not a terrorist

### Off the 'State Sponsor of Terrorism' list



## #DeList & #UnblockCuba #BetterWithoutBlockade



1982 because of Cuba's support for anti-colonial liberation movements around the world, and because Cuba gave asylum to political prisoners who escaped persecution by the U.S. government. President Barack Obama removed Cuba from the SSOT List and began to normalize relations with Cuba. Trump added 240 additional harsh sanctions on Cuba and, at the very end of his term, re-designated Cuba as a State Sponsor of Terrorism on January 11, 2021, just days after the fascist insurrection

There is no mistake about it. With the February 27 release of the State Department Country Report on Terrorism 2021, President Biden accepted ownership of the illegal U.S. economic war on Cuba, following suit with Donald Trump, George Bush, and Ronald Reagan's hawkishness with the false designation of Cuba as a so-called "State Sponsor of Terror."

Unbelievably Biden's Secretary of State asserts that "Cuba had repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism since its State Sponsor of Terrorism designation had been rescinded in 2015." Despite this untrue report, Pres. Biden need only review the past six months and accept Cuba's unequivocal rejection of terrorism to take Cuba off the list.

The real purpose of slandering Cuba as "terrorist" is to justify the criminal blockade on Cuba. Biden is choosing to join his predecessors in failure – failure to defeat the Cuban people's centuries-long determination for sovereignty and self-determination on the road to equality, full human development and socialism.

The Country Report on Terrorism repeats the same discredited excuses that over 180 of the world's countries have rejected

for 30 consecutive years in votes at the United Nations General Assembly. The U.S. war on Cuba is increasingly rejected by the U.S. public, whose elected officials in government and unions — representing over 44 million U.S. people — have called for Cuba to be removed from the State Sponsors of Terrorism (SSOT) list and that the U.S. end the blockade and take steps to normalize relations with its much smaller neighbor.

With Cuba's SSOT designation, the U.S. attempts to criminalize normalizing relations with Cuba, exacerbating the already devastating impacts of the US blockade on Cuba. It makes it harder for Cuba to make international transactions or borrow loans for building infrastructure and buying essential food and medicine. The SSOT designation also punishes people from 40 non-U.S. countries for traveling to Cuba by threatening their eligibility for the U.S. visa waiver program.

During his presidential campaign, Biden said he would reverse Trump's harsher sanctions and revert to Obama administration's policies of normalization, but he has failed to deliver. President Ronald Reagan put Cuba on the list in

at the Capitol. Biden is continuing the long history of U.S. terror towards Cuba, which includes the Bay of Pigs invasion, funding Cuban exiles to bomb Cuban planes and hotels, and attempting to assassinate Fidel Castro 638 times.

We have seen the results of Biden's 'freedom, democracy and human rights' in his administration's record number of deportations, COVID deaths, and police killings; in crumbling U.S. infrastructure; in the economic crisis of the American working class; in the never-ending violence and mass-shootings fueled by white supremacy; and in his imperialist policy toward Cuba and the entire Global South.

Despite the devastating impacts of the U.S. economic blockade, Cuba still has a longer life expectancy, lower infant and maternal mortality rates, better health outcomes, higher literacy, more education, and less violence than in the U.S. We support the right of the Cuban people to determine their own path, free from coercive economic measures and U.S. taxpayer-funded destabilization. We support the right of the entire Latin America and the Caribbean to a Zone of Peace, free from the Monroe Doctrine of U.S. intervention and economic exploitation.

We call on justice and freedom loving people to join us at the White House on Sunday, June 25 to demand Biden take Cuba #OFFTheList and end U.S. terror on Cuba. Biden, write the letter. Take Cuba #OFFtheList and end the blockade. Let Cuba Live.

*Statement by National Network on Cuba, <https://nnoc.org>*

Hey President Biden,  
**CUBA IS NOT A  
'SPONSOR OF  
TERRORISM'!**  
**REMOVE  
CUBA FROM  
YOUR LIST!**



@NoBloqueoVan  
Friends of Cuba Against the US Blockade - Vancouver  
[www.vancubavblockade.org](http://www.vancubavblockade.org)

## POSTCARD CAMPAIGN

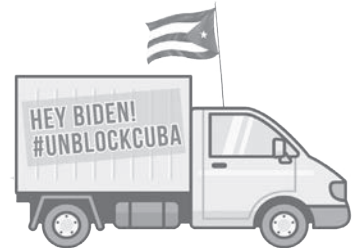
### Cuba is Not a Sponsor of Terror!

New postcard campaign by Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade - Vancouver calling for Cuba to be removed from the State Sponsors of Terrorism List.

For more details, check out [www.vancubavblockade.org](http://www.vancubavblockade.org) or email [NoBloqueoVancouver@gmail.com](mailto:NoBloqueoVancouver@gmail.com)

# SOLIDARITY WITH CUBA ON THE STREETS, ONLINE AND ACROSS BORDERS!

*By Janine Solanki*



For 61 years, the Cuban people have endured a vicious blockade by the United States, intended to bring down the Cuban Revolution and to bring Cuba back under the domination of U.S. imperialism. The U.S. government didn't anticipate that the Cuban people are prepared to defend their revolution and advance it, despite the enormous challenges imposed by the blockade. One of Cuba's many achievements is developing one of the best healthcare systems in the world that has resulted in the Cuban people having one of the highest life expectancies in the world!

Former U.S. President Trump took a "maximum pressure" stance on Cuba and imposed 243 new sanctions on Cuba, making the blockade the most restrictive it has ever been. In a move that Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez characterized as "lethal", just nine days before leaving office and in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, Trump placed Cuba on the U.S. State Department's List of State Sponsors of Terrorism. Two years into his presidency, U.S. President Biden has failed to reverse this illegitimate and immoral designation. Being on this list means that many banks and financial institutions won't process Cuban transactions, which makes international trade even more difficult and expensive, and denies Cuba access to vital food, medicine and other countless other essentials.

## **Car Caravans demand Lift the U.S. Blockade of Cuba!**

Around the world, Cuba solidarity activists are campaigning in defense of Cuba for an end to the U.S. blockade. While Trump took advantage of the already difficult situation of the pandemic to tighten the blockade on Cuba, solidarity activists found new ways to continue protesting the blockade. During the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic, Cuban American Carlos Lazo and his group Puentes de Amor (Bridges of Love) began Car Caravans against the U.S. blockade on Cuba in Miami, U.S. The idea quickly spread throughout the U.S., Canada, Cuba and the world, and now on the last Sunday of every month, caravans worldwide join in unity to call for an immediate end to the U.S. blockade on Cuba.

In Vancouver, Canada, Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade – Vancouver and other sponsoring organizations come together for the monthly Car Caravan. On January 29th, Vancouver Cuba solidarity activists joined the first Car Caravan of 2023, with 12 vehicles and 25 participants that drove through the streets of Vancouver. The caravan of cars was decorated with Cuban flags and banners denouncing the U.S. blockade on the people of Cuba and received many honks of support from other drivers and thumbs-ups from pedestrians!

## **Twitter Storms take Cuba solidarity online!**

February 23 marked the International Day of Action Against Foreign Military Bases, and to mark this day, the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP) called for a Twitter

another world-wide Twitter Storm in protest of the U.S. blockade on Cuba! This Twitter Storm was called by the Latin American and Caribbean Continental Network of Solidarity with Cuba, which was joined by Vancouver through posts, tweets and stories in support of Cuba.

Another online platform to support Cuba is webinars, such as the January 28 webinar titled "To Dream with Open Eyes," commemorating the 170th anniversary of the birth of José Martí, Cuban independence leader, poet, writer and visionary. The event was organized by the Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC) and member groups Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba and Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade – Vancouver joined to participate and share greetings from Vancouver to the network.

## **Cuba solidarity in the belly of the beast**

For Vancouver activists in the Cuba solidarity movement, supporting U.S. initiatives against the U.S. blockade is vital, taking the fight to what José Martí called the "belly of the beast". Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba and Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade – Vancouver have been active organizers in the International U.S.-Cuba Normalization Committee Coalition. The committee has held many online webinars and three conferences, and the next conference

is coming up in New York City on March 11-12, 2023. See how you can join the conference online or in person at <http://us-cubanormalizationconference.org>

Vancouver Cuba solidarity activists will be launching a new postcard campaign at the U.S.-Cuba Normalization Conference, addressed to U.S. President Biden and demanding that he remove Cuba from the U.S. State Department's "State Sponsors of Terrorism" list.

There is always an upcoming event in solidarity with Cuba to join in Vancouver! Find out about the next event at [www.vancubasolidarity.com](http://www.vancubasolidarity.com) or follow Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba on Twitter @VanCubaSolidarity, on Instagram @vancuba\_vcsc and on Facebook @vancubasolidarity

*Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki*



**Car Caravan against the US Blockade, Vancouver, BC - January 29th, 2023**

Storm and social media campaign, promoting the hashtags #ReturnGuantanamoCubaNow and #DevuelvanGuantanamoYa! While today the U.S. has over 800 foreign military bases worldwide, their first and oldest foreign military base is in Guantánamo, Cuba, which has been occupied by the U.S. against the will of the Cuban people for 120 years. Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) and Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade – Vancouver took on the campaign with a virtual storm of posts demanding the U.S. return Guantánamo to Cuba now!

On February 26, a snowstorm prevented Cuba solidarity activists from safely holding a planned Car Caravan in Vancouver, so Cuba supporters turned to social media platforms for



# Mexico leads against the U.S. Blockade on Cuba

Dear President Andrés Manuel López Obrador of Mexico,

The Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC), an organization comprised of 24 member-groups across Canada that work in solidarity with Cuba, would like to express our highest commendation and support for your recent statements and declared intention, pledging that Mexico will lead an international movement against the more than 60-year-old illegal US blockade against Cuba, and your rightful recognition of the successes of the Cuban Revolution and the example that the resistance of the Cuban people sets for countries around the world.

The CNC applauds Mexico's position both in the context of solidarity with Cuba, as well as in its broader importance

with regards to foreign policy, national sovereignty and independence, and the prioritization of basic, fundamental human rights, such as access to healthcare and education, and food security for all people, as opposed to allowing them to be marketable for profit by oligarchs.

Canada and Mexico were the only two countries in the Americas that did not sever relations with Cuba after its revolution in 1959. The CNC fully supports the Mexican people in this endeavor of

solidarity with the Cuban people, and we affirm our commitment to join in solidarity with Mexico, and all progressive countries, and contribute to this movement in any way that we can.

The United States has no right to subjugate another country or people, and Cuba has been a victim of its terrorism for more than six decades. The Cuban people need our collective solidarity more than ever before, and that we act to demand and actualize the removal of the criminal sanctions against Cuba. The CNC will continue doing everything that it can to show our gratitude to revolutionary Cuba for the precedent that it sets for the world, and that necessitates the elimination of the blockade.

¡Abajo el bloqueo!

*Samantha Hislop  
Julio Fonseca  
Co-Chairs, Canadian Network  
on Cuba  
canadiannetworkoncuba.ca*



Cuban President Miguel Díaz Canel with Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador - February 11, 2023.

# México encabeza contra el Bloqueo de Estados Unidos a Cuba

**\* EN ESPAÑOL \***

Querido presidente Andrés Manuel López Obrador,

La Red Canadiense de Solidaridad con Cuba (CNC, por sus siglas en inglés), compuesta por 24 grupos de solidaridad con Cuba de todo Canadá, expresa sus más altos elogios y apoyo a sus recientes declaraciones e intención de que México prometa liderar un movimiento internacional contra el ilegal bloqueo de EEUU impuesto unilateralmente desde hace más de 60 años contra el pueblo cubano y el reconocimiento suyo de los muchos logros de la Revolución Cubana, y su ejemplo de resistencia que sirve de paradigma para los pueblos del mundo.

La CNC aplaude la posición de México

tanto en el contexto de la solidaridad con Cuba como en su más amplia relevancia en cuanto a política exterior, soberanía nacional e independencia y la priorización de los derechos humanos fundamentales tales como educación, salud pública y seguridad alimentaria para todos, opuesto a dejar que nuestros pueblos se conviertan en objeto comercializable de ganancias para los oligarcas.

Canadá y México fueron los únicos dos países en las Américas que no rompieron relaciones diplomáticas con Cuba después del triunfo revolucionario de 1959. La CNC respalda totalmente al pueblo mexicano en su empeño de solidaridad con el pueblo cubano y reafirmamos nuestro compromiso de unirnos a esa solidaridad y a todas las fuerzas progresistas del mundo, y contribuir a este movimiento de cualquier forma a

nuestro alcance.

Los EEUU no tienen derecho a subyugar a otros pueblos y Cuba ha sido víctima de ese terrorismo por más de seis décadas. El pueblo cubano, ahora más que nunca, necesita de nuestra solidaridad colectiva y que actuemos demandando la eliminación de las sanciones contra su heroico pueblo. La CNC continuará haciendo todo lo posible para mostrar nuestra gratitud a la Cuba revolucionaria por el precedente que establece para el mundo y que precisa la eliminación del bloqueo.

¡Abajo el bloqueo!

*Samantha Hislop  
Julio Fonseca  
Co-Chairs, Canadian Network on Cuba*

# PEACE IN UKRAINE

**SAY NO TO ENDLESS  
U.S. WARS**

**FUND PEOPLE'S  
NEEDS, NOT THE  
WAR MACHINE**



**SATURDAY, MARCH 18 AT THE WHITE HOUSE**

**ACTIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY MARCH 18-19**

**PROTEST ON THE 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE U.S. INVASION OF IRAQ**

**INITIATED BY  
ANSWER COALITION  
CODEPINK  
THE PEOPLE'S FORUM**

**PROTEST ON THE 20<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE U.S.  
INVASION OF IRAQ**

**FUND PEOPLE'S NEEDS, NOT THE WAR MACHINE!**

**PEACE IN UKRAINE – SAY NO TO ENDLESS U.S. WARS!**

**Saturday, March 18 at 1:00 p.m.**

**Washington, D.C.**

**The White House**

Coinciding with the 20th anniversary weekend of the criminal U.S.-invasion of Iraq a major set of actions will take place including a demonstration at the White House in Washington, D.C. on Saturday March 18 demanding "Peace in Ukraine – Say NO to Endless U.S. Wars" and "Fund People's Needs, Not the War Machine." Since 2003, the U.S. has engaged in sanctions (economic war) on more than 40 countries. These targets of U.S. economic warfare include the people of Cuba, Zimbabwe, Venezuela, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Iran and many other nations. Even in the wake of the worst disasters, like the recent deadly earthquake, Washington keeps its cruel sanctions in place against Syria. U.S. bases and "commands" blanket most of the world. It is a global empire.

The Biden administration is determined to escalate the Ukraine war. The real goal of the massive arming and training of Ukrainian forces has nothing to do with the interests of Ukrainian, Russian or American people. The aim instead is to "weaken Russia" as stated by the U.S. Secretary of Defense himself, even at the risk of a catastrophic nuclear war that could end life on Earth. A U.S. General commanding 50,000 troops in the Pacific also issued a letter to his sub-commanders in recent days informing them that he believes that the United States will be at war with China within two years. The danger of global war is growing! The people must act!

The demonstration will make connections between the human and financial toll of U.S. militarism at home and abroad. Key demands include:

- Peace in Ukraine - Negotiations not escalation!
- Abolish NATO – End U.S. militarism & sanctions on Syria, Cuba, Zimbabwe, Venezuela, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Iran and many other nations
- Fund people's needs, not the war machine!
- No war with China!
- End U.S. aid to racist apartheid Israel!
- Fight racism & bigotry at home, not other peoples!
- U.S. hands off Haiti!
- End AFRICOM!
- Free all political prisoners – Mumia Abu-Jamal, Julian Assange, Leonard Peltier, and many others

*Almost 200 organizations have endorsed the protest including Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice and Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO). For a full list of endorsers visit: [https://www.answercoalition.org/protest\\_march\\_18\\_19\\_peace\\_in\\_ukraine\\_say\\_no\\_to\\_endless\\_u\\_s\\_wars](https://www.answercoalition.org/protest_march_18_19_peace_in_ukraine_say_no_to_endless_u_s_wars)*

## OUR HERITAGE



**AUDRE LORDE**

*(1934-1992)*

*In her own words, Audre Lorde was a "black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet."*

Within each of us there is some piece of humanness that knows that we are not being served by the machine which orchestrates crisis after crisis and is grinding all our futures into dust. If we are to keep the enormity of the forces lines against us from establishing a false hierarchy of oppression, we must school ourselves to recognize that any attack against Blacks, any attack against women, is an attack against all of us who recognize that our interests are not being served by the systems we support. Each one of us here is a link in the connection between antipoor legislation, gay shootings, the burning if synagogues, street harassment, attacks against women, and re-surgent violence against Black people.

*Excerpt from Learning from the 60s (Sister Outsider, 1984)*



weapons to Haiti and demands No New Occupation of Haiti!

### Canada Out of NATO!

The Canada-Wide Peace and Justice Network opposes the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a U.S.- led military alliance of 30 countries, which undermines global peace and human security and is responsible for the deadly and destructive interventions in the former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Libya. For years, NATO has been provoking conflict with Russia. NATO's expansion to Russia's border and its training and arming of Ukrainian security forces have contributed to growing tensions and war in the region. NATO's demand that allies buy new interoperable weapons is leading to a costly arms race. Carbon-intensive weapons systems like fighter jets, tanks, drones, and warships are exacerbating the climate crisis. Canada is complicit in U.S. wars and is pursuing an imperialist agenda.

The Canada-Wide Peace and Justice Network demands that Canada adopt an independent foreign policy free of all military alliances, including NATO.

### No to imperialist wars

For over 30 years, we have witnessed the acceleration of brutal imperial wars by the U.S. and their allies, including Canada, against the former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Haiti, and other countries. These wars have killed millions, turned tens of millions into refugees, laid waste to infrastructure, impoverished citizens through sanctions, and overthrown governments. With the full support of the governments of the U.S. and Canada, the Zionist Israeli regime has continued to occupy Palestine, brutally kill and imprison Palestinian people, including children and journalists, demolish Palestinian homes and routinely bomb Gaza. When fleeing homelands that have become war zones, refugees are subjected to harrowing and dangerous journeys and met with racism and discrimination in the very countries responsible for the destruction of the refugees' original homes.

The Canada-Wide Peace and Justice Network says NO to imperialist wars, occupations, economic sanctions, and military interventions, and YES to self-determination!

### Take Action!

The Canada-Wide Peace and Justice Network supports the United National Antiwar Coalition's week of action, and encourages peace loving people across Canada to join demonstrations and activities for the Week of Action January 13 – 22.

To view actions in the U.S. and around the world visit <https://unac.notowar.net/martin-luther-king-jr-week-of-actions/>

Together, let's end imperialist wars and build a loving and peaceful world!

*A Canada-Wide Peace and Justice Network Statement . Originally printed: January 19, 2023*

[www.peaceandjusticenetwork.ca](http://www.peaceandjusticenetwork.ca)

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## The Newspaper Of

**FIRE THIS TIME**  
MOVEMENT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

[www.firethistime.net](http://www.firethistime.net)

Volume 17 Issue 2-3

February-March 2023

Published Monthly

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distributed entirely by volunteer labour and printed in  
Burnaby, Greater Vancouver, Canada

**ISSN-1712-1817**

to reverse the tremendous gains made by poor, working and oppressed people in Venezuela. They are attempting to reverse all that Chávez fought for and to destroy his spirit, which lives on in the people of Venezuela who are fighting every day against continuous U.S. attacks.

10 years after the passing of Comandante Chávez, we must see with clarity that the continuity of the Bolivarian revolutionary process is critical to bring about the defeat of imperialism in Latin America. Defending Venezuela's sovereignty and self-determination is our essential task. Standing side-by-side with the people of Venezuela and the government of President Maduro, we must increase our united efforts to end the U.S. blockade and war on Venezuela.

In the words of Comandante Hugo Chávez: "Let the dogs of the empire bark, that's their job; ours is to battle to achieve the true liberation of our people."

Viva Chávez! Viva Venezuela!  
US/Canada Hands Off Venezuela!

A 10 años de la siembra del Comandante Chávez, debemos ver con claridad que la continuidad del proceso revolucionario bolivariano es fundamental para lograr la derrota del imperialismo en América Latina. Defender la soberanía y la autodeterminación de Venezuela es nuestra tarea fundamental. Al estar codo con codo con el pueblo de Venezuela y el gobierno del presidente Maduro, debemos aumentar nuestros esfuerzos unidos para poner fin al bloqueo y terminar la guerra de los Estados Unidos contra Venezuela.

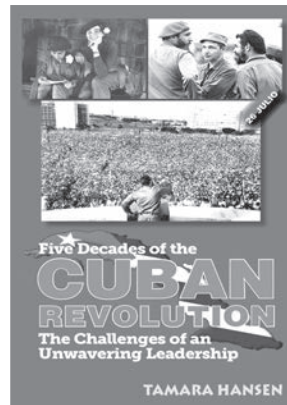
En palabras del Comandante Hugo Chávez: "Que ladren los perros del imperio. Ese es su papel: ladrar. El papel nuestro es batallar para consolidar este siglo, ahora sí, la verdadera liberación de nuestros pueblos"

Viva Chávez! Viva Venezuela!  
US/Canada Hands Off Venezuela!



## Battle of Ideas Press

### 5 Decades of the Cuban Revolution The Challenges of an Unwavering Leadership



By Tamara Hansen

Coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC). She is also an editorial board member of The Fire This Time newspaper. She has travelled to Cuba over a dozen times and has written extensively on Cuban politics since 2003.

April 2010, paperback, \$10.00

314 pages, illustrated,

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## 1 CENT 4 CUBA CAMPAIGN



### Who is 1C4Cuba?

The #1c4Cuba campaign was launched by a group of Cuba solidarity organisations in Britain and Europe including Cuba Support Group Ireland, Rock around the Blockade and Cubanismo.

Other organisations are welcomed and encouraged to take part and help develop the campaign internationally.

### How does the campaign work?

We want to mobilise large numbers of bank customers to send small transactions – as little as 1 cent/1 pence – from UK or European bank accounts, using reference words or destinations that are likely to trigger the banks' sanctions mechanisms against Cuba.

Each small transaction, and subsequent complaint process, can create a burden of (costly) administrative work for the bank at minimal cost to the customer.

Multiple coordinated transactions have the potential to create an unmanageable quantity of work for the banks and so make the US blockade of Cuba too costly to enforce.

### What are we campaigning against?

Banks in Britain and Europe illegally enforce the US blockade of Cuba despite UK and EU laws to prevent this.

Financial transactions which either engage with Cuba or refer to Cuba have been stopped. For example, HSBC 'inhibited' the account of Cubanans in UK, a community association raising funds to send medical equipment to Cuba. After this was denounced publicly and protests were called, HSBC unblocked the account, but Cuba remains on the bank's sanctions list.

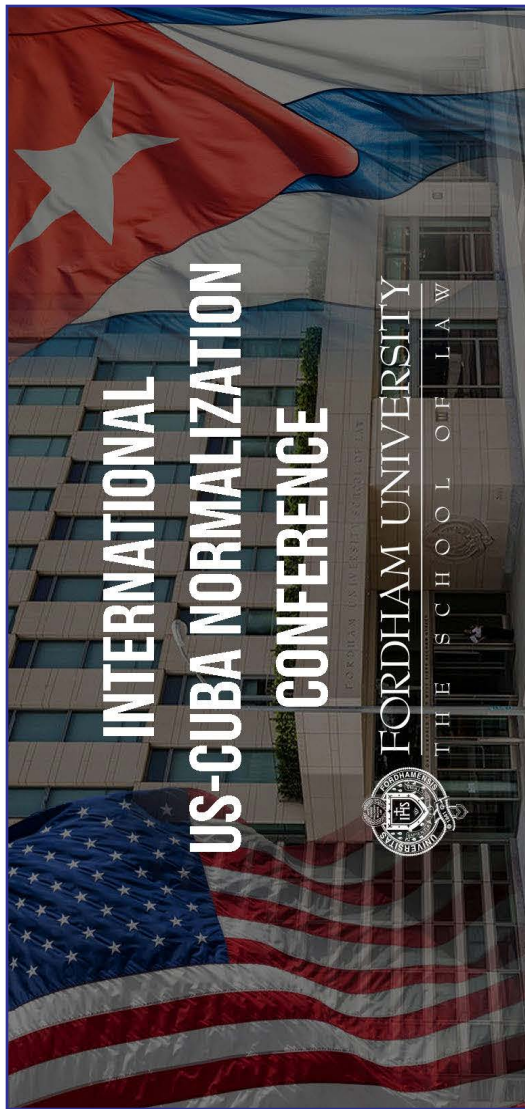
Simply sending a bank transaction to an account in another country with the reference 'CUBA' can alert the internal review systems of banks so they are required to check the purpose of the transaction, and may block the payment.

Through testing, we have found that some banks will actually reject international payments to third countries if they have any suspicion that the transaction is associated with Cuba.

This behaviour is open to customer complaints and legal challenges.

Learn more at <https://1c4cuba.eu>





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**March 11-12 2023**

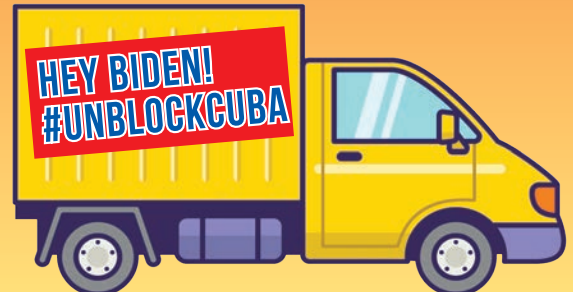
**Let's educate, organize, and mobilize against  
Washington's brutal and criminal economic and  
political war against Cuba!**



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LIFT THE U.S.  
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