
While US Continues Blockade, Cuba Forges Global Ties with Europe, China, and Vietnam

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While the United States government insists on maintaining their blockade, Cuba has continued to build strong diplomatic and economic links with the rest of the world. In only one week following Donald Trump's rollback of efforts to normalize U.S.-Cuba relations, the Caribbean island is moving forward with the process of building groundbreaking ties with the European Union, as well as strengthening the bond with its historic allies China and Vietnam.

In a major move this week, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament voted to approve the first agreement of bilateral cooperation between the EU and Cuba, after several decades of contingent relations imposed by the EU. The agreement is set to be put to a final vote by Parliament in July.

"Now that Trump wants to isolate Cuba again, the EU must make the most of this opportunity to get closer to the island," Elena Valenciano, the member who submitted the proposal said.

The EU-Cuba Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement is an effort to expand economic cooperation and bilateral trade between the European bloc and Cuba. The EU is Cuba's largest trade partner after Venezuela.

The agreement also includes a call for the U.S. embargo to be lifted.

"With this vote the European Parliament is giving its support to use dialogue and cooperation with Cuba as the best instrument to advance in a constructive and future-oriented relationship, beneficial for the citizens on both sides of the Atlantic," Valenciano said.

Cuba is also continuing to build closer political ties with its historically allied nations.

Speaking in China to his counterparts within the Communist Party of China, President of the Cuban National Assembly of People's Power Esteban Lazo Hernandez emphasized the importance of solidifying exchanges, and cooperation between the two nations.

The Cuban leader emphasized that cooperation between the respective Communist Parties of China and Cuba is especially important due to their shared objective to "guarantee developmental sustainability and the irreversibility of socialism."

Liu Yunshan, member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee said while meeting with the Cuban delegation that party-to-party relations between allied parties were essential to building state-to-state relations.

Lazo also travelled to Vietnam, where talks were held to forge ties and solidarity between the nations.

"Being in Vietnam is like being in our own home," Lazo said.

The U.S. imposed blockade, which the majority of Cuban and U.S. citizens oppose, has hurt the Cuban people by making it difficult for the island to gain access to mainstream trade channels and import certain goods, foods, and medicines. Cuba has managed to make impressive economic and social gains in spite of this by forging strong international relationships and building up self-sufficiency, particularly in agriculture and medicine.

Responding to Trump's expansion of the blockade, Cuban officials have said that such measures are "doomed to fail" based on six decades of historical experience.
