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**Cuba Refuses Interference and Exclusion of Venezuela from Summit of the Americas**

16/02/2018



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba strongly condemns the pronouncement of a group of countries in the hemisphere issued on February 13 in Lima, which constitutes an unacceptable interference in the internal affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, while categorically rejects the decision to reconsider the participation of the Venezuelan Government in the eighth Summit of the Americas to be held next April in Peru.

A few days ago the US Secretary of State, during a tour through several countries of the area, declared the full validity of the Monroe doctrine, the most notorious instrument of American imperialist interventionism in our region. He called for a military coup against Venezuela's constitutional Government and advocated for hardening the sanctions against that country.

The decision taken is not alien to these statements and efforts.

In this context, the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs recalls the arbitrary and aggressive executive order of the United States, renewed in January 2017, which describes Venezuela as "an unusual and extraordinary threat to national security and exterior policy" of the superpower, and the most recent warning of

President Donald

Trump on using “a possible military option if necessary” against it.

It is unbelievable and incredible that a supposed “unconstitutional rupture of the democratic order” is now used as a pretext, precisely in a country that has held in a few months municipal, regional elections and for a Constituent Assembly and has just called presidential elections, as it was claimed before, even using external interference or by unconstitutional and violent methods.

Cuba denounces this pronouncement and Venezuela’s exclusion from the eighth Summit of the Americas are contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to the proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, signed by the heads of State and Government of the member countries of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs ratifies the invariable solidarity of Cuba with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and with the civic-military Union of its people that constitutional President Nicolas Maduro Moros heads.

The words of the President of the Councils of State and of Ministers Raul Castro Ruz, pronounced on July 14, 2017 are totally up-to-date, when he said,

“The aggression and the coup violence against Venezuela damage all our America and only benefit the interests of those striving to divide us to exercise their domination over our peoples, not minding to generate conflicts of incalculable consequences in this region, as we are witnessing in different parts of the world. Today we warn that those who are trying to overthrow the Bolivarian and Chavez Revolution by unconstitutional, violent and coup routes will assume a serious responsibility before History.”