

U.S.-Latin America: Bases of Mistrust

By: Arnaldo Musa / Special for CubaSi
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When writing these lines, Joe Biden's administration had not taken an official stance about the policy to follow regarding Cuba, but he did make clear he would request once again the closure of the prison that the U.S. illegally owns in Cuban soil, Guantánamo. Previously, Barack Obama—in his two presidential terms when the current U.S. President was his Vice President— unsuccessfully attempted so.

That is the closest a U.S. President has been in achieving so, as the Naval Base was something imposed since the early years of last century and still remains as a Damocles Sword over the Cuban sovereignty.

It is no secret that the Pentagon uses every unprincipled method to impose this sort of military bases worldwide, as it happened when they ousted their French allies and set military bases in African nations that had been French colonies, by means of spurious regimes in a resource-rich continent, but very poor population.

Something similar has been happening in our continent, which is still regarded by the U.S. as its "*backyard*." That is why they will always try to implement their National Security Doctrine one way or another.

If such a policy turned abrupt under Trump, now Biden will handle the situation by using Obama-like resources, but always focusing on a "*soft power*" with which they may attempt to maintain their dominance and subvert slyly those governments not kneeling before them.

I only recall one time when a South American government rebelled against the presence of a U.S. military base, which was finally expelled, that of Manta, in Ecuador, with Rafael Correa as President.

The fact is that the U.S. boasts more than 70 military bases across Latin America and has signed several bilateral and multilateral agreements: Plan Colombia, Andean Regional Initiative, Merida Initiative and the Central America Regional Security Initiative, among other agreements that include training programs, training courses, and weapons sales.

Companies suppliers of these resources are deeply involved, as well as some U.S. Security Agencies such as DEA, allegedly to fight drug trafficking, the FBI, and some Latin American governments, companies and police departments.

The pretext for this presence is the “*U.S. security*,” which implies, by definition, the security and “stability” in territories that could emerge as a threat for the U.S.

Nothing new under the sun. On the contrary, it takes us back to the 1960s. In an American training manual, you could read that *“the lack of political stability and some socio-economic concerns in a Latin American nation could jeopardize the U.S. national security. Consequently, the U.S. must adopt, in the field of training and military assistance, strategies aimed at avoiding threats of unrest, by means of economic development and enforcement of order.”*

Therefore, stability evolved into that part of the speech of those who operate as legitimizers of interventionism, even overstepping the sovereignty of states.

Nowadays, in the Southern Command website, you can read that one of UNITAS operations’ goals is *“the continuity of the commitment with the region, aimed at enhancing regional partnership and preserve the hemispheric stability.”*

Of course, all these programs have the support of regimes allied to Washington; namely, Peru, Ecuador, Chile, Paraguay, Colombia, Panama, Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, not to mention Brazil, where American experts instruct personnel in the field of electronic, aerial and submarine war, among other joint military exercises.

The targets of the Empire are, to a greater or lesser degree, governments opposed to its doctrines and they are: Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Argentina, and Mexico.

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