
Cuba, Canada Meet to Discuss US Intervention in Venezuela

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President Diaz-Canel told Canada's foreign minister he was "concerned" about the damage caused to Venezuela and its population by U.S. "economic sanctions, siege policies and isolation that it has been subjected."

Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel reiterated his country's solidarity with Venezuela during a meeting Wednesday with Canadian Foreign Minister Cynthia Freeland upon her official visit to Havana.

During the meeting, Diaz-Canel told Freeland of his "concern" about the damage being caused to Venezuela and its population by "economic sanctions, siege policies and isolation" as a result of the United States' blockade on the South American country.

The Cuban leader underscored his point by saying that the U.S. "Monroe Doctrine is a danger to the entire hemisphere," referring to its continual use by the Donald Trump administration to control the political and economic affairs of both Cuba and Venezuela.

The U.S. government earlier this month placed an all-out blockade on Venezuela and has threatened to cut off any vessels from entering or leaving its shores, while in Cuba, Trump has implemented the Helms-Burton Act that allows U.S. citizens to use the nation's courts to sue foreign companies linked to Cuban-nationalized real estate and land.

At today's meeting, the Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez, also present at the reunion,

reiterated to his Canadian counterpart the solidarity of his country with Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, and proposed that Canada "contribute" to the elimination of the U.S. blockade.

Rodriguez said: "The resurgence of the unilateral coercive measures by the United States damages the Venezuelan people, and is contrary to international law and the dialogue process," underway between the Maduro government and opposition factions being mediated by Norway, Rodriguez told Freeland.

"In particular," said Rodriguez, Cuba wants Canada to "reject the use and threat of use of force, and interference in the internal affairs of states" within the Americas.

Also at the discussion, Diaz-Canel thanked Freeland for her nation's continual support to vote each year at the United Nations to end the nearly 60-year-old blockade on the island country. The two exchanged ideas about Cuban-Canadian bilateral relations and issues of "mutual interest."

The foreign ministers of Canada and Cuba held their first round of discussion about Venezuela in May in Cuba, while the second one took place June 7 in Ottawa.

Before arriving in Havana, Freeland said in a statement that "there is an international convergence on the need for a peaceful transition in Venezuela that results in free and fair elections and the return to democracy."

She said that the "long relationship" between Canada and Cuba said the visit would allow them to continue the previous talks.
