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**Despite opposition in Miami: Petro's agenda achieves further progress**

By: Arnaldo Musa / Cubasi

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Taking the leadership from Marcos Rubio in the attacks against Gustavo Petro, another Republican lawmaker, regrettably of Cuban origin and named María Elvira Salazar, has again labeled Colombia's president as a Marxist follower of the ideas of Fidel and Chávez, by citing as an example the accession of the dissidence of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army to the talks with the government to pave the way for finally reach peace in the South American nation.

Salazar does not mention that leaders of the organization returned again to arms, forced by the collusion between the former president, Iván Duque, and agents of the North American entity for the fight against drugs, DEA, in order to plant them in the luggage of Jesús Santrich and Iván Duque, who, by the way, is alive and well, despite contrary news from the Western press.

She has also become a lawmaker who gives the green light to Cubans who arrive illegally in Florida's shores, all of which apparently build the basis for her to remain in Congress after the midterm elections next November.

This woman had the backing of the ever-influential leader of the opposition in Miami, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, to start the race for Congress, downplaying the fact that her enemies reproached her for having called Fidel Commander in an interview she gave as a reporter for Telemundo, where she described Obama's gesture of restoring US relations with Cuba as noble.

Having learned the lesson, Salazar has become a paradigm – a word that is widely used – of evil in the state of Florida. That is why she has also railed against the Biden administration for

having admitted Petro's statement that the fight against drug trafficking had failed as well as the goals for Plan Colombia, through which nine U.S. bases were settled in Colombian territory.

In addition, she and other of her kind insulted the president of Colombia, when he asked Biden to remove Cuba from the lists of terrorist countries, calling it a great injustice.

Petro has ignored Salazar and the others. He does not even care about the false statements from people with power such as Brazilian president Jair Messias Bolsonaro, who accused him of wanting to legalize cocaine.

## DEVELOPMENT IN CONGRESS

Petro's agenda has progressed with the Total Peace Act, which grants political status to entities labeled as subversive, so they get involved in the dialogue with the government.

Likewise, the political reform passed its first two debates. It orders that the parties present closed and equal lists for two periods.

It guarantees the public financing of campaigns and private financing directed to the parties and not to the candidates. It also allows elected positions to change parties without incurring double militancy, a measure that helps Petristism to convert the Historical Pact (*Pacto Histórico*) into a party. And it opens the possibility for congressmen to go to the Executive power by presenting only their resignation.

Marijuana regulation advanced. It is the first time that a similar project goes to the third debate in Congress; six remain because it is a constitutional reform.

Petro and some of his main allies in Congress, such as Iván Cepeda, are trying to overcome an accumulation of entrenched norms and ideas in the state that oppose their agenda for change.

Thus, the regional dialogues were resumed, in which the government plans to collect inputs for the launching of the National Development Plan. They will be 47 until the end of the year.

In Ocaña, the second largest city in Norte de Santander and the entrance to Catatumbo, a border region crisscrossed by coca, armed groups, and poverty, peasant organizations came up with ambitious proposals: from heliports to transport the sick and land funds, to binational highways and a large public university for the region. Businessmen and right-wing organizations and parties were absent.

Finally, the Colombian peso fell sharply against the US dollar, trading at 4,700 to one, the highest on record, blaming the economic and political conflicts worldwide and the business distrust of the Petro government, who did not hesitate to blame the United States for all the evil happening in the world, because the U.S. is only interested in its well-being, no matter if it is at the expense of others.

**Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Díaz / CubaSí Translation Staff**