

May 17, 2019

Dear brothers and sisters of the Southern Conference UCC,

Grace and Peace to you from our Lord Jesus Christ.

We feel moved to write this letter in view of the present situation of the relations between our countries, and especially the way that the media is not interested in truth, but in profit.

On the 17th of April, the 58th anniversary of the Bay of Pigs invasion, Mr. John Bolton met in Miami with Cuban-American mercenaries that participated in that aggression, and tried to justify the unjustifiable measures taken against Cuba in these last weeks. Here are some of his comments and the way our Foreign Minister answered them on a press conference the next day.

1. Cuba has 20,000 soldiers in Venezuela. The truth is that there are 20,000 medical doctors working all over the country the majority of whom are women.

2. Cuba has done military practices on the boundary between Venezuela and Colombia. The truth is that the U.S. flew in troops to Colombia in an attempt to invade Venezuela.

3. The staff of the U.S. Embassy in Havana was "attacked" with sound waves and suffered hearing damage. This has been clearly investigated by North American and Cuban specialists and scientists and found completely false. The truth is that it was used as an excuse to limit to minimum the staff in the Embassy in Havana, which makes it very difficult and expensive for Cuban families in the U.S. and Cuba to travel. Cubans now have to travel to a third country (Guyana) to apply for a visa.

4. The U.S. has declared legal Chapter III of the Helms-Burton Law which allows former owners of properties in Cuba nationalized in 1961 to sue Cuba and demand restitution. It also threatens with economic sanctions any nation who tries to do business with Cuba. The truth is that the embargo and the Helms-Burton Act are extra-territorial measures totally prohibited by the United Nations. What would happen if Mexico now demanded U.S. for the expropriation of the states of Texas, California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico and parts of Colorado and Wyoming in taken in the mid-19th Century, under the presidency of James K. Polk (1845-1849)?

Other issues that are affirmed publicly and in the media aimed at creating a negative image of Cuba as an exporter of violence and communist ideology include:

1. To prevent communism to "take over" in Latin America, the Monroe Doctrine has been resurrected as an instrument of maintaining the control of U.S. in this area. This is a colonialist strategy brought back from past centuries trying to impose North American interests on neighboring countries.

2. The U.S. tries to invade Cuba in a media war, using social networks to publish false news and plant seeds of frustration and dissatisfaction, especially in the younger generation that have access to technology.

3. The U.S. has not fulfilled the mutual agreement with Cuba of issuing 20,000 immigrant visas a year. This encourages illegal immigration and many persons, including children, are victims in Central America of human trafficking and violence as they go from one country to another in an effort to arrive in Mexico and cross the border.

4. The U.S. has severely restricted the travel of North American citizens to Cuba, and yet the 150,000 North Americans that visited the Island in 2018 commented on the security and pleasure they experienced while on Cuban soil.

We trust that North American Christians will lift up their voice in solidarity with the people of our country and especially our large family of Christian churches throughout the Island.

In Christ's love,

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