



Fifteenth session

LETTER DATED 18 NOVEMBER 1960 FROM THE MINISTER FOR  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF CUBA ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

On the instructions of the Revolutionary Government, I have the honour to inform you of the deep concern felt by the Revolutionary Government in regard to a development which not only aggravates existing international tensions but is also a flagrant violation of the principle of non-intervention, an aggressive act, and an act flouting the sovereignty and right of self-determination of peoples.

I refer to the order transmitted on 17 November 1960 by the President of the United States instructing United States air and naval units to support the dictatorial regimes of Guatemala and Nicaragua which are facing conflicts that are matters exclusively within their domestic jurisdiction.

This act of force by the imperialist Government of the United States of America is an evident threat to international peace and an intolerable act of coercion intended to force all the Latin American Governments to join in a regional agreement which is publicly organized against Cuba on the basis of slanders and misrepresentations. It is also a slight to the peoples of our countries and a challenge to the United Nations.

At the seventh International Conference of American States at Montevideo in 1933 the principle of non-intervention was formally recognized as the keystone of the American juridical community, thus meeting the demand of the peoples of Latin America and satisfying an imperative need in view of the numerous cases of military intervention by the United States Government in the Caribbean area. The principle was reaffirmed at the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace held at Mexico City in 1938 with the adoption of the Additional Protocol declaring inadmissible intervention by any State, directly or indirectly, and for whatever reason, in internal or external affairs of any other State.

Article 15 of the Charter of the Organization of American States, which was signed at Bogota in 1948, ratifies the principle of non-intervention and prohibits, not only the use of armed force, but also any other form of interference or attempted threat against the personality of the State or against its political, economic and cultural elements.

Article 2, paragraph 4, of the United Nations Charter categorically enjoins all Members to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

The mobilization of military forces ordered by President Eisenhower's Government violates the principle of non-intervention, flouts the inter-American treaties, infringes the United Nations Charter, places armed might above international law and reflects a desire to enslave our peoples with a view to consolidating the foundations of economic under-development and political despotism in Latin America as though the ideal of progress could be blocked by the use of metal and high explosive.

This typical expression of the United States Government's policy of force against the peoples of Latin America is the most recent link in a long chain of acts of intimidation, the central objective of which is to stifle these peoples' legitimate aspiration to freedom, independence and sovereignty. There are too many recent instances of this policy to permit anyone to forget it. Who does not remember the insulting mobilization against Venezuela of paratroops based in Puerto Rico and at Guantanamo when the people of Caracas expressed their justifiable distaste for Vice-President Nixon? Who does not remember the landing of 4,000 marines in the Dominican Republic at a critical moment in the affairs of that country's Government? Who does not remember the aggressive concentration of naval and air forces off Costa Rica when the seventh meeting of consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs was held at San José? There are the recent acts of provocation against Cuba at the Guantanamo naval base, under the cloak of alleged aggression by the Revolutionary Government against the base, despite the fact that that Government had repeatedly declared that, while it proposes in due course to reclaim that portion of its national territory in accordance with the rules of international law, it would not and will not give the slightest pretext for United States military intervention.

The Revolutionary Government of Cuba considers that the position of force taken by the United States Government deals a fatal blow to the Organization of American States. Questions affecting the hemisphere cannot be discussed in a body in which the wealthiest and most powerful member disregards its constitutional rules and principles, acting without respect for the personality and sovereignty of the other States and making their equality before the law a nullity because they are weak in the military sense.

Chapter III, article 6, of the Charter of the Organization of American States provides that the rights of each State do not depend on the power they possess to exercise them but on the mere fact of its existence as a person under international law. No State can, without committing a culpable breach of the most rudimentary rules of international law, go to the assistance of other Governments when vast masses of their population are rebelling against a state of affairs which they consider incompatible with the free political, economic, social and cultural development of the nation. The mobilization of United States naval and air forces to prop the tottering regimes of Ydígoras and Somoza is a stab in the back to the great peoples of Nicaragua and Guatemala, the age-long victims of the North American monopolies and of their puppet Governments.

It is evident that the threat and coercion to the remainder of the continent involved in this mobilization of United States military forces is designed, as was pointed out above, to terrorize the remaining Governments of the hemisphere in a scandalous attempt to lay the groundwork for concerted action against the Government and people of Cuba in the regional organization.

It is common knowledge that a substantial role in the plans of aggression and acts of intervention being carried out by the United States Government against Cuba has been and is being played by the dictators of the two countries which have become centres of operations for the large-scale invasion of Cuba plotted, organized and financed by the Eisenhower administration. It is well known that, in consequence of the popular uprising against the Ydígoras regime, most of the mercenaries who were receiving United States military training on private estates and at clandestine airfields in Guatemala have been temporarily transferred to Nicaragua.

The Government of the United States of America has, in its unwarranted attempts to maintain its political domination and economic exploitation of Latin America, assumed the role of international gendarme of the dictatorships and has converted the Caribbean into its private lake. We denounce this arrogant unilateral decision in the face of world public opinion as a plain warning to all the small peoples and particularly to the peoples of our continent. Our denunciation is at the same time a message of moral solidarity to the peoples of Guatemala and Nicaragua, an appeal to the conscience of the representatives of States Members of the United Nations, and an affirmation of the unwavering determination of the Cuban people to resist all the manoeuvres, threats and acts of aggression of United States imperialism.

The incidents in question constitute a clear step towards armed intervention in Cuba and therefore take their place in the Revolutionary Government's complaint against the Government of the United States of America.

In view of the foregoing, I have the honour to request you to arrange for this letter to be circulated to all delegations represented at this session.

(Signed) Dr. Raul ROA  
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba

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