

Canada Complicit in US Blocking Cuba from Attending Summit of the Americas

By [Arnold August](#)

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*From the US-Canadian bilateral statements in 2021 and 2022 leading up to the Summit, to the role of Canada in the last 2021 United Nations vote on the US blockade against Cuba, to the June 6, 2022, visit by Chilean **President Gabriel Boric** to Ottawa and his meeting with **Justin Trudeau**: What does all this tell us about the Summit and the importance of CELAC, which provides a clear alternative?*

On February 26, 2021, then Canadian foreign affairs minister **Marc Garneau**’s readout of his virtual meeting with US counterpart **Antony Blinken**, declared that “both reaffirmed a commitment to address human rights and needed reforms in Cuba... The two discussed the dire situation in Venezuela and agreed to work together alongside the international community supporting Venezuelans to address this crisis and the human suffering it is causing. Minister Garneau and Secretary Blinken look forward [to the next Summit of the Americas.](#)”

However, on April 25, 2022, one of Canada’s foremost dailies, the *National Post* reported that Cuban Foreign Minister Rodríguez said “that the United States had decided to exclude Cuba from preparations for a [summit of regional leaders.](#)” *The National Post* is certainly on the desks of Justin Trudeau and Canadian foreign ministry staff. In response, on May 11, Mexican president Andrés Manuel López Obrador, also known as AMLO, announced that he would not be attending the Los Angeles [Summit as a result of Biden’s exclusionary policy.](#) And AMLO has made it plain that he sees future [CELAC summits](#) as the alternative.

On the road to the Los Angeles Summit

Whereas AMLO’s decision was a definite game changer, the Trudeau government’s news release of June 5, 2022, simply announced that **Foreign Affairs Minister Mélanie Joly** would be in Los Angeles from June 6 to 10. She would be joining Prime Minister Trudeau at the 9th Summit of the Americas, but holding [meetings with key stakeholders.](#) There is no

mention of the revolt by AMLO and leaders of a number of other key Latin American and Caribbean states against the US policy of exclusion. But the Trudeau government's quiet introduction of the term "key stakeholders" was apparently meant to replace missing presidents or prime ministers who would normally be attending, with lower-level representatives. Not to mention certain dissidents from countries such as Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua, who might replace the formal delegations altogether.

It seems that this provocative option to meet with "regime change" activists, known as mercenaries in Cuba, may already be in the Trudeau game plan: the press release vaguely suggests that "Minister Joly will meet with her counterparts from the region, government officials, civil society representatives." This latter term, "civil society representatives," can be seen as a euphemism for mercenaries or dissidents seeking regime change.

Cuban mercenaries in Los Angeles

As might be expected, in a June 6 tweet, **Ambassador Brian A. Nichols**, Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs, U.S. Department of State, appeared in a photo from Los Angeles with one of the main Cuban mercenaries. The caption read "...Cubans must have the chance to tell their stories. Today I had the pleasure of meeting the inspirational @YoTuel007 at the #SummitAmericas civil society forum. We stand with Yotuel and all Cubans that continue to stand [up bravely for "homeland and life."](#)"

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— Brian A. Nichols (@WHAAsstSecty) [June 7, 2022](#)

The June 5 Canadian news release goes on to state that "on the margins of the Summit, Minister Joly will hold a North American Foreign Ministers' Trilateral Meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, and Mexico's [Foreign Secretary Marcelo Ebrard...](#)" Of course, there is no mention that Trudeau will be meeting with his Mexican counterpart AMLO, since he has publicly stated that he will not attend the Summit as a gesture of support for the excluded states and a snub to Biden.

The conclusion one may draw is that, despite its much-vaunted pretence of being a "friend of Cuba," the Trudeau government is fully complicit with Biden's exclusionary policy against Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua. Thus, both North American white supremacist and settler-colonial states are once again firmly pitted against nation states of the Global South. Should this characterization of Trudeau, in particular, come as a surprise?

The Trudeau government's UN performance regarding Cuba

Let us examine Trudeau's track record on the US blockade against Cuba. On June 23 and 24, 2021, the Cuban resolution in favour of lifting the blockade was presented once more to the United Nations General Assembly. Yet again, the overwhelming majority of countries voted in favour of the resolution by a vote of 184 in favour to 2 against (Israel, United States), with

3 abstentions ([Brazil, Colombia, Ukraine.](#))

Although Canada did vote in favour, it did not dare to take the floor to speak out, like numerous other member states. The following compilation of speakers is based on the United Nations official report on the over the two days of debate. It includes those who spoke before the vote as well as those who spoke [after the vote explaining why they voted as they did](#).

Representatives spoke on behalf of various Global South organizations, including the Non-Aligned Movement (120 members), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM, 20 members), Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC, 57 members), the Group of 77 (the United Nations' biggest intergovernmental group of emerging countries, 134 members), the African Group at the UN (54 members), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN, 10 members), with various states being members of several groups.

Also delivering general statements were representatives of Vietnam, the Russian Federation, Venezuela, Mexico, Algeria, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, China, South Africa, Antigua and Barbuda, Philippines, Namibia, Egypt, India, Bolivia and Nicaragua, with the representative of Cuba speaking by right to reply.

From the non-Global South (aside from the Eurasian Russian Federation), only Portugal spoke timidly in the name of the European Union. Why timidly? It was the only country among the European Union members to speak (and just once), while in comparison, a number of countries from the Global South spoke multiple times, while also associating them themselves with one or more Global South organizations. Even the United Kingdom spoke. However, Justin Trudeau's government did not rise to speak.

The liberal poster boy Trudeau, using dog-whistle diplomacy, made a move at the UN appealing to the world and especially the Global South, by voting in favour of the Cuban resolution and thus striving to maintain its dubious reputation as a "friend of Cuba." Yet, by failing to speak in the General Assembly, in contrast to the multiple interventions of the entire Global South, he sent another signal, one clearly intended for Washington: the Trudeau regime stood clearly beside its US partner by intimating... "that we do not strongly oppose the blockade of Cuba," thus emboldening the US to pursue its Cuba policy. Thus, it is a confrontation between the Global South versus the West.

Chilean President Boric and Trudeau in Ottawa: A preview of the Summit?

The superficiality of Trudeau as a "friend of Cuba" came to the fore once again. A meeting between Chilean President Gabriel Boric and Prime Minister Trudeau took place in Ottawa on June 6 as the Chilean leader was headed to Los Angeles. The readout did not mention the exclusionary nature of Biden's [Summit](#). However in the press conference following the meeting, one reporter asked Trudeau about Cuba's exclusion. In typical Trudeau fashion, he avoided giving an answer, only saying that they are looking forward to [dealing with all participants](#). The *US News* outlet got the picture, by gloating that "Trudeau did not say whether or not he disagreed with the exclusion, but said Canada looked forward [to participating fully in the summit](#)." This constitutes yet further proof that Trudeau is complicit with Biden's policy.

On the Summit, Trudeau's imperialist policy toward Latin America has gone even further

down the road of hitching itself to US imperialist ambitions, by not exhibiting any opposition to Biden's exclusionary meeting in Los Angeles.

In a June 7 Press TV interview, I participated with Kawsachun News reporter Camila Escalante Camila, who was speaking from Cochabamba, Bolivia.

Camila Escalante provided the context: the desperate 11th hour attempt by Biden to salvage his collapsing Summit, the Mexican stand to boycott on the presidential level and the significance of the recent Nicolás Maduro-Alberto Fernández phone call. Escalante went further on the context, touching on the stand that Argentina will take at the Summit against exclusion and the suggestion by Maduro to Argentina that in its current role as pro tempore president of CELAC, it should call a CELAC meeting as soon as possible to deal with issues the countries in the South are facing.

For my part, I highlighted the principled stand of Argentina and other countries that are attending but intend to speak out unconditionally against exclusion. In addition, I further elaborated on the Boric-Trudeau Ottawa press conference and the two leaders' cowardly responses to a question on exclusion. I also expanded on the fact that having certain "regime-change" elements from Cuba already in Los Angeles is also symptomatic of what to expect. View [the 10-minute TV video here](#).

Colonialism at home, imperialism abroad

Is there a link between Canada's foreign and domestic policy? Indeed, Canada learned its first baby steps about imperialism via its ongoing colonial genocide against the Indigenous Nations. This is why the description of Canada as "colonialism at home and imperialism abroad" is so popular and so pertinent. For example, the RCMP has had a continuous presence on the Wet'suwet'en (Yintah territory) in British Columbia since late 2018, after Coastal Gaslink obtained an injunction against land defenders blocking the right of way for a liquified natural gas pipeline the company is constructing through approximately 190 kilometres of Wet'suwet'en territory. While the US-Canada-Latin America discussions were taking place in 2021-22 as outlined above, the Trudeau government was carrying out round-the-clock surveillance and harassment by Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and pipeline security personnel against the Wet'suwet'en [First Nation in British Columbia](#). Thus, the Canadian imperialist attitude toward Latin America and the Caribbean is steeped in its centuries-long heritage of colonialism.

Therefore, any apparent differences between Canada and the US regarding Cuba and Latin America should be taken with a grain of salt. Canada is imperialist through and through. Nobody in Canada or the rest of the hemisphere should entertain any illusions about the fact. The worn-out liberal poster boy image of Trudeau is intentionally designed to camouflage this reality, as laid out among other points in the June 7 Press TV interview.

Given the Trudeau policy alone, not to mention that of the US, history may very well show that a complete boycott by the South would have been the only appropriate response. We shall see. How a self-respecting Latin American/Caribbean country can sit side by side with Trudeau in this hemispheric meeting is just unbelievable. Black Agenda Report pointed out on June 8: "A boycott is only the minimum that should be done. However, we understand it will be difficult because we know the vindictiveness of the gringo hegemon and the lengths it will go to [assert its vicious domination](#)."

The Global South states of Latin America and the Caribbean on the one hand, and North America on the other, are clearly at loggerheads as never before. As with the other North American white supremacist, settler-colonial and imperialist regime, Canada deserves no place in any association in the Hemisphere. Thus, the alternative is CELAC, which includes all countries south of the Rio Grande and excludes Canada and the US.

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This article was originally published on [The Canada Files](#).

Arnold August is an award-winning journalist and author of three acclaimed books. His three books on Cuba-US-Latin America have been acclaimed by experts in the field. In 2013, he was awarded the Félix Elmuza Award by the Association of Cuban Journalists and contributes to outlets in English, Spanish and French in many parts of the world. He serves as a Contributing Editor for *The Canada Files*.

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