

US Hegemony and the “Latin American Backyard”

'Let Cuba In!' Sixth Summit of Americas sends ultimatum to US

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Region: [Latin America & Caribbean](#)

Global Research, April 17, 2012

[Russia Today](#) 17 April 2012

When the heads of both Americas met for their Sixth Summit in Colombia, a key issue was finally put squarely on the table: either Cuba is invited to the next Summit or... there will be no next Summit.

Officially sponsored by the Washington-based OAS - Organization of American States - these “Summits” are held every three years or so since 1994.

For the most part, they have been instruments promoting US hegemony over its “backyard” South of the Rio Bravo.

As with most multilateral political, economic and financial institutions - the UN, International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, NAFTA, or the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) - the OAS is one of many instruments used by the Global Power Masters deeply embedded inside the public and private power structures of the United States, to wield political, financial, even legal control over all of the Americas.

During this Summit in Colombia, however, at least some key issues were addressed which is why no final official declaration could be agreed upon by all participants, mainly because the United States and its few regional allies fully oppose even addressing these issues.

Cuba

Cuba had been barred from attending because it was thrown out of the OAS back in 1963 at the height of the Cold War - right after the Kennedy-Khrushchev Cuban Missile Crisis that brought the Bi-Polar World of yore as close to nuclear confrontation as it ever got.

During the cold war years, the US imposed regional security strategies on Latin America centered on “the fight against communism”; today this has shifted to our region’s role in the “global war on terror”.

The fact that there is a British nuclear military base on the Falklands since 1982, or that George W. Bush reactivated the US Fourth Fleet in the South Atlantic in 2008 or that for decades, there are official and un-official US, British and Israeli military operatives in Colombia, Paraguay, Mexico and Argentina, is completely ignored.

As the heads of state of the Americas met for the sixth time, things are not looking so well for the US in our Region: to begin with, hosting President Juan Manuel Santos of Colombia - a traditional US ally - opened the Summit saying that “it would be unacceptable to have any future Summit in which Cuba is not present”. A long throw from Colombia’s staunchly pro-US

President Alvaro Uribe who opened up his country to US military operations.

Sadly, Venezuela's President Hugo Chávez who has been the rallying voice in the region when it comes to openly speaking out against illegitimate US bullying was absent while he continues medical treatment for cancer in Cuba. Presidents Daniel Ortega and Rafael Correa of Nicaragua and Ecuador respectively, both boycotted the Summit over the Cuba issue.

Democracy

Meanwhile, US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton said that before Cuba can rejoin the OAS, "there should be an opportunity for a transition to a full democracy in Cuba".

"Full democracy"? No one denies that Cuba does not have an ideal democracy (whatever that is), but then again neither does the US. Does the US (or the UK, or Europe, or Argentina, Brazil or Mexico) have a "full democracy", when election of all their presidents, vice presidents, governors, senators, representatives and mayors is systematically, directly, and proportionally linked to how many hundreds of millions - even billions - of dollars go into their electioneering and campaigning? What kind of "democracy" is that?

Even President Barack Obama is feeling the heat of 'Money Power' this election year when he will measure himself against Mitt Romney whose greatest virtue is to have amassed a formidable personal fortune of over 250 million dollars. Clearly, political clout is not about ideas, but about huge amounts of money sloshed around Washington and New York halls of power and boardrooms - whether your personal money, as with Romney or the Bushes, or corporate money from the coffers of Halliburton, Goldman Sachs, ExxonMobil, Enron, AIG, JPMorganChase coffers; or both. Is that what US "full democracy" is all about?

As the case of Argentina clearly shows, US-style "democracy" more often than not results in grossly corrupt governments peopled by crooks and thieves. Is the best thing that Clintonite "full democracy" can offer just "government by the rich, for the rich and of the rich"? Clearly, US "full democracy" is nothing but "the best democracy that money can buy".

In the case of Cuba, if you consider almost half a century of US aggression against Cuba - which includes military invasion and repeated assassination attempts against Fidel Castro - then one can understand the highly defensive national security strategy of that island-country, limiting all hope for Democracy.

Can we really say that Cuban "democracy" is less "full" than US "full democracy". Actually, many would add strong adjectives as to what US "democracy" is really "full" of...

When it comes to sins against True Democracy, who out there can throw the first stone?

War on Drugs

And it's not just about the unjust and irrational exclusion of Cuba. It's also about key topics like the regional security threat posed by British (and US) militarization of the South Atlantic in the Falkland/Malvinas, or worsening social problems arising from poverty, hunger, unfair and lopsided trade relationships, or perverse cultural domination and the so-called "war on drugs".

Narco-violence has gripped drug-producer countries like Mexico, Colombia, Bolivia and most

others throughout the region. The US approach is to tackle these as military, policing and security problems inside producer countries, thus justifying US “military and security assistance” to client regimes in Colombia or Mexico. They play down, however, the fact that the key problem lies with gigantic US, UK and European demand for drugs. All coupled with huge mega-banker profits as they recycle and regurgitate trillions of dollars through their global financial system.

This not only reflects how very sick US, UK and European societies really are, but also how their so-called “soft power” – Hollywood flicks, TV series, rap music, MTV and other instruments of global Psychological Warfare – promote and install a global pro-drug culture, particularly amongst the young.

Latin America’s Sovereign Debt

Take hunger, poverty and related social problems, for example. In Argentina, Ecuador, Bolivia, Paraguay, Mexico – even Brazil – they are intimately linked to the many decades of gross exploitation by the global mega-banking financial structure that engineered, consolidated and macro-managed enormous unnecessary and illegitimate Sovereign Debt frauds. They have thus skimmed hundreds of billions of dollars from our Region, thanks to local puppet and caretaker governments, financed into power through US-style money-controlled “democracy” that ensures that nothing ever changes; nothing is ever resolved.

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