

## **Let Cuba Live editorial statement on Venezuela**

**March 29, 2015**

Let Cuba Live joins people and organizations worldwide in saying to the Obama administration, “Hands off Venezuela!” Attempting to justify new sanctions against that nation, the White House on March 9 issued a preposterous statement claiming that Venezuela represented an “extraordinary threat to the national security ... of the United States.” Official spokespersons have added to the myth-making in claiming that rightwing, antigovernment gangs demonstrating in Venezuela’s streets last year were victims of oppression.

In fact, they were thugs who were responsible for most of the killing in those unhappy days. And they fed off U.S. financing. Obama’s statement had hard words about no press freedom in Venezuela, never mind that wealthy business moguls own most of the media there.

Some say U.S. leaders worry about missing out on future access to the world’s largest reserves of oil, property of Venezuela. But one doesn’t really know what’s in their heads. We do know about the proliferation of multi-national alliances seeking to protect the independence of Latin American and Caribbean nations. We do know too that China – joined now perhaps by Russia – has built bilateral trade relations throughout the region that call into question U.S. dominance in what was claimed to be its “backyard.”

So, mindful of the sovereign independence of all nations, their freedom to solve problems on their own, and the right of all peoples to be free of U.S. meddling and put-down, we join right-thinking people all over in telling our own government to, “Let Venezuela be.”

We do this just as we also defend Cuba’s right to exist as a free nation. With the victory of Cuba’s revolution on January 1, 1959, Cuba took a pioneering first step toward a “second independence” for Latin American and Caribbean nations. Cubans went on to make good on a prescription from Jose Martí, the intellectual author of their revolution. Martí envisioned a protagonist’s role for Cuba in the region’s struggle for unity and independence.

More recently, Venezuela’s Bolivarian Revolution has led in that cause, even though its prime tribune, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, is gone. In this respect, Venezuela and Cuba are two birds of the same feather. Solidarity with the one naturally extends to the other. Both are objects of U. S. regime-change longings. In Washington, the power of their good examples in the region must be intolerable.

For the U.S. government, confrontation with Venezuela sets the stage for a contentious 7<sup>th</sup> “Summit of the Americas” taking place on April 10-11 in Panama. Most Western Hemisphere nations are already up in arms about the U.S. posture towards Venezuela. And, Cuba will be participating at this gathering of the Organization of American States for the first time since being expelled in 1962.