

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY H.E. Mr. BRUNO RODRÍGUEZ PARRILLA,  
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA, AT THE  
GENERAL DEBATE OF THE SIXTY SIXTH SESSION OF THE UNITED  
NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY. NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 26, 2011.**

Mr. President:

Allow me to congratulate you on your election.

We welcome the government of South Sudan for becoming the 193<sup>rd</sup> member of the United Nations.

I join the appeal by all African leaders to give an urgent response to the famine in the Horn of Africa

Mr. President:

While we are deliberating here in this hall, “another preventive” war is taking place in Libya using as a pretext “the protection of civilians”. The United States and NATO, supposedly to avoid a massacre, launched a military attack against a sovereign State without there being any threat to international peace and security, and unleashed a “change of regime” operation.

NATO imposed on the Security Council a dubious resolution authorizing “member States...acting nationally or through regional organizations or arrangements...to take all necessary measures to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under the threat of attack.”

Afterwards, NATO violated this same resolution in order to supply weapons, fund one of the parties to the conflict and deploy operatives and diplomatic personnel on the ground.

Now everybody has a better understanding of the concept of “responsibility to protect” and what it can be used for.

In this war, waged with the most advanced and lethal military technologies, the means of communication have been used as combat weapons by the financial and media emporiums which are profiteering from the war and the reconstruction operations as if they were anti-crisis instruments.

As early as February 21, Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz had warned that NATO was irremissibly preparing a war against Libya. Since then, Cuba engaged indefatigably not in the defense of a government, but of a principle: the assassination of thousands of innocent people with the dubious objective of protecting other civilians is something unacceptable. History has eloquently shown that peace can not be imposed either by war or by force.

It is only up to the Libyan people to decide upon its destiny, without any foreign intervention, in the exercise of its right to self-determination and independence, its sovereignty over its natural resources and its territorial integrity.

The military intervention in Libya and the growing threat against Syria have been the opportunistic and defensive responses given by the United States and Europe to the collapse of their system of domination and plunder in Northern Africa and the Middle East, the emergence of genuinely popular movements in Tunisia, Egypt and other countries, in order to secure huge reserves of oil and water and confiscate financial assets in times of global economic and social crisis.

It is the task of this General Assembly to exercise its powers to prevent a military aggression against Syria. The public opinion should receive objective information and speak up against war.

Mr. President:

According to the *Foreign Affairs* magazine, the White House has rushed to describe what happened in that Northern African country as a model. It is said that the new US strategy is more efficient and less costly...that the Bush administration strategy considered occupation as an option...that the Obama administration strategy is that of national liberation...that the military intervention strategy in Libya could also be applied in other cases."

With full cynicism, reference is made to a military aggression without casualties or the use of infantry troops, the costs of which would be mainly borne by Europe. The destabilization of a country through subversion, covert operations and economic sanctions is described as the "development of a national movement".

This new "change of regime" operations model shows that the current US and NATO military doctrines are ever more aggressive than the previous ones, and that the so called "Euro-Atlantic periphery" comprises the entire planet.

No one should doubt that Latin America and the Caribbean are included in that conception. The re-deployment of the Fourth Fleet, the installation of military bases and the sending of troops and military means to intervene anywhere in the region; the coup d'état against Venezuela in 2002, followed by an oil coup; the sedition in Santa Cruz, Bolivia; the military coup in Honduras and the attempted coup in Ecuador fit perfectly well in the "new strategy".

Can the US and NATO give guarantees today that the use of force and this concept of "regime change" are not applicable in the case of the Latin American and Caribbean countries that do not yield to their interests? Can the European Union say something about it? What would the United Nations do in the event of such circumstances?

Mr. President:

The weakness of the global economy, particularly the economies of the United States and of the European Union, continues to show that the crisis that began in the year 2008 has not been yet overcome.

In developed countries, the terrible burden of its consequences is borne by the workers, the unemployed, the immigrants and the poor, who are brutally repressed whenever they peacefully defend their rights.

We, the countries of the South, which are incessantly despoiled, are suffering the distortions of a world order that excludes our legitimate interests. We are suffering the terrible impact of protectionism and the steady increase in the prices of foodstuffs and hydrocarbons. The peoples of many developing countries are victims of worn out neoliberal economic models and their sequels of plunder and exclusion. The social and political consequences are being felt in all continents.

Mr. President:

In the face of a global economic crisis and the exhaustion of the natural resources of the planet, what would be the response of the extreme right wing forces that are in power or may reach power as a result of the punishment and hopelessness of voters?

In the face of a growing and universal threat of a war, a new distribution of the world and climate change, ¿could we, the countries of the South, act together as an indispensable condition to save ourselves?

In the face of so many and serious threats, the Latin America and Caribbean region, the one that Bolivar and Marti fought for, is integrating and determined to finish what they left unfinished. It would be impossible either to divide us or to turn us against each other. ALBA is a small but morally powerful group of peoples and the new Community of Latin American and Caribbean States is already a fact. The entire force of the Andes will very soon be expressed in a Summit that will be an epoch making event in Caracas, the epicenter of the independence of the Americas, where a Bolivarian people has conquered power and the stature of a continental leader, President Hugo Chávez Frías, is growing bigger.

More than ever before we have to defend the United Nations, but the biggest challenge would be to turn it into an organization that serves the legitimate interests of all States, instead of catering for the arbitrariness and abuses of a handful of rich and powerful countries. We must see to it that International Law as well as the Purposes and Principles of the UN Charter prevail in the face of the brute force that attempts to wipe them out. It is necessary to reestablish the leading role of this Assembly and relaunch the Security Council.

Mr. President:

The General Assembly has the inescapable moral, political and legal obligation to ensure the recognition of an independent Palestinian State, with the boundaries established before 1967 and with East Jerusalem as its capital, as a full member of the United Nations Organization.

It should do so with or without the approval of the Security Council, with or without the US veto, with or without new peace negotiations.

If there's recognition of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to independence, sovereignty and self-determination; if there is recognition of the need to reestablish the exercise of the human rights of Palestinians; if the blockade of Gaza, the economic coercion and segregation symbolized by the infamous wall are recognized as crimes; if the subjugation of a nation to conditions jeopardizing its existence is described as genocide; if all member States are supposed to adopt all legal measures within their reach to protect Palestinian civilians, then the General Assembly should take action now.

Cuba, a country with a small Jewish community, condemns the historical injustice of anti-Semitism, the crime against humanity which was the Holocaust, and recognizes the right of the State of Israel to exist. Our people only harbor fraternal feelings towards the Israeli people, who are also a victim of this conflict.

Cuba likewise proclaims that the United States has the moral, political and legal obligation to stop vetoing the Security Council resolutions destined to protect the Palestinian civilians.

The European Union should oppose this veto and abstain from supporting the empire's brutal pressure on the members of this Assembly and the Council itself. It should also be true and fair for Europe to denounce that those crimes would not be happening if not because of the military supplies, the financial support and the impunity ensured by the US to the Israeli government.

Mr. President:

On September 11, 2011, we Cubans shared the pain of the American people who were victims of those atrocious terrorist actions and offered our selfless solidarity, encouragement and cooperation. As usual, Cuba made some crystal-clear statements against terrorism and against war.

Ten years after, the world is even more insecure because instead of turning international consensus against terrorism into a system of international cooperation to cope with it, the United States has invaded and occupied Iraq and Afghanistan, taking a toll on the lives of thousands of persons and causing pain to tens of millions.

Deception, torture, extrajudicial executions or assassinations, the disappearance of persons, arbitrary detentions and the CIA secret renditions and prisons in Europe and other regions were impossible to hide.

The US Government offends the memory of the victims of September 11 when it maintains the prolonged and inhumane imprisonment of the Five Cuban anti-terrorists, who were unjustly sentenced to serve extreme sanctions at spurious trials for seeking information about the terrorist activities of the groups that have

operated with absolute impunity from the US territory against Cuba, thus causing the death of or physical disabilities to 5 577 fellow Cuban citizens.

Once again, with all due respect, I urge President Obama to make use of his prerogatives to set them free as an act of justice or as a humanitarian gesture which will be highly appreciated by their children, wives, mothers, fathers and all of our people.

Mr. President:

The Cuban government reiterates its willingness and interest to move towards the normalization of relations with the United States. Today I reiterate the proposal of beginning a dialogue aimed at solving bilateral problems, including humanitarian issues, as well as the offer of negotiating several cooperation agreements to combat drug-trafficking, terrorism, human smuggling, prevent natural disasters and protect the environment, even in the event of oil spills as the one occurred at the British Petroleum platform in the Gulf of Mexico.

However, we know that the electoral race has already begun in this country while the economic situation is getting worse.

The economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba has been tightened and the damages it has caused have totaled 975 billion dollars according to the present gold price. The attempts to subvert the constitutional order that Cubans have freely elected have intensified.

There are increasing pressures on the part of the extreme right and the Cuban American mafia to revert the minimal steps taken by the US government that, to some extent, favor the links between the Cuban émigrés and their home country and the exchanges between both peoples.

In Cuba, President Raúl Castro has reiterated that we will continue to change, in a sovereign way, everything that needs to be changed so that our economy is more efficient and our socialism is better, in order to conquer "all the justice" and be able to fully preserve our independence.

As Martí said, "before ceasing in our endeavor to have a free and prosperous homeland, the South Seas will merge with the Northern Seas and a serpent will hatch out of an eagle's egg."

Thank you, very much.