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Participants in Int'l Meeting in Argentina Paid Tribute to Fidel Castro

HAVANA, Cuba, Nov 7 (acn) Participants in an international meeting to commemorate the sixth anniversary of the refusal by several Latin American countries to join the so-called Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA)—promoted by the government of the United States—held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, paid tribute to the historic leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro.

Speaking of the life and work of the Cuban leader, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Argentina, Patricio Echegaray, described him as a statesman and revolutionary who understood the essence of U.S. imperialism and who successfully resisted the attacks of the last 15 U.S. administrations.

“We can not forget that it was him who warned us and helped us fight against the foreign debt, who taught us to see it as a weapon of the powerful against

our peoples,” Echegaray added.

The Cuban ambassador in Argentina, Jorge Lamadrid, told Prensa Latina news agency that more than 10,000 representatives from social and political organizations, and trade unions participated in the meeting.

Tribute was also paid to late Argentinean president Nestor Kirchner, who — during the Summit of the Americas six years ago— ratified the refusal by several Latin American countries to join the U.S.’s hegemonic project.

Participants also agreed to hold, every November 5 in Mar del Plata, a Forum for the Unity of the Latin American Peoples.

Cuba: Council of Ministers Session Focused on Economic Issues

HAVANA, Cuba, Nov 4 (acn) An expanded meeting of the Cuban Council of Ministers presided over President Raul Castro focused on the existing complex problems that have a negative impact on the Cuban economy and the services offered to the population.

According to a note published by Granma newspaper on Friday, the Cuban leader pointed out that insufficient cattle control mechanisms and deficient security measures by state-run companies and private owners are the two main causes that led to a hike in crimes related to the robbery and slaughter of cattle.

The Granma note adds that, after a national operation launched last August against these crimes, 1,187 animals have been returned to their original owners, although the problem still exists.

With the participation of the Interior Ministry, the General Attorney’s Office, and other institutions and organizations, the operation aims at reestablishing order, discipline and the implementation of the national cattle development program. Some of its goals include eliminating the impunity that culprits have enjoyed for years in crimes of this type, contributing to eliminate the causes and conditions that have favored this criminal behavior, and improving the national system to prevent and face these crimes.

Raul Castro insisted on the need to continue applying severe penalties against those who commit this kind of crimes and to encourage the population to actively participate in this national program.

Also during the meeting, Raul noted that many of the problems currently affecting the national economy stem from not respecting contractual relations established among enterprises and other institutions.

“The violation of contracts has its origin in the existing lack of discipline, order and control that many times lead to negligence and the waste of important resources to the detriment of the country’s social and

economic development," the Cuban leader said.

The US Violates its Own Laws in the Case of the Cuban Five

BAYAMO, Cuba, Nov 5 (acn) The judicial process against the five Cuban heroes condemned to harsh sentences in the US for fighting terrorism constitutes a flagrant violation of that northern country's legislative precepts.

These were the words of Alexis Guerra, professor of the School of the Cuban Communist Party (PCC) in Granma province, during a panel held as part of the meeting "In the name of peace," organized by the territorial office of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP).

While referring to the US Constitution, he exemplified that the Fifth Amendment refutes depriving someone of their freedom without due process of law. In the case of Gerardo Hernandez, Fernando Gonzalez, Ramon Labañino, Antonio Guerrero and Rene Gonzalez, most actions have been incorrect, he pointed out.

He explained that these brave men, who were condemned in 1998 to arbitrary sentences for preventing their country against criminal actions, have been the object of cruel and inhuman treatment, imprisoned in punishment cells for long periods of time, without having committed any crime.

The unfair confinement -he asserted- breaks international human rights conventions; the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners; and the Eight Amendment, which establish that no cruel or unusual sentences can be inflicted.

Attending the meeting were Magali Llorca and Mirta Rodriguez, mothers of Fernando and Antonio, respectively, who, overcome by emotion, expressed their appreciation for the support of the people of Granma for the immediate return of these heroes to their homeland.

We're not alone in this struggle, and on behalf of Gerardo, Fernando, Ramon, Antonio and Rene we thank you for your support, since the smallest detail about the truth of this case is important in a battle that will be defined only by way of solidarity, they said.

Also participating in the meeting was Sonia Perez, first secretary of the Cuban Communist Party in Granma, and other leaders, intellectuals, journalists, artists and students.

Russians Demand Return of Cuban Five to Cuba

HAVANA, Cuba, Nov 5 (acn) The Russian movement Venceremos urged today the U.S. Government and judicial bodies to return the five Cuban anti terrorist fighters condemned in that country for trying to prevent criminal actions.

Representatives of the solidarity organization delivered a letter at the U.S. embassy in Moscow in which they claim for the human rights of the Cuban prisoners to be respected, as well as those of their family members, as established by international laws recognized by the White House, Prensa Latina reported.

The document demands justice for Rene González, Fernando Gonzalez, Antonio Guerrero, Ramon Labañino and Gerardo Hernandez, arrested in 1998 and condemned to harsh terms ranging from 15 years in prison to two life sentences plus 15 years for monitoring Florida-based terrorist groups.

Rene Gonzalez was released in October after serving his imprisonment term, however, he was not allowed to return to Cuba as judge Joan A. Lenard, from the Florida Southern District, who imposed an additional sentence of remaining in the U.S. under probation for another three years.

The Russian movement reiterates in the letter its call to President Barack Obama to make use of his constitutional power and release the Cuban Five.

Venceremos asked as well that governmental officials who, in violation of the law, paid reporters from different media to create a unfavourable environment against the Cuban men and put pressure on the jury.

The also claim the extradition of terrorist Luis Posada Carriles to Venezuela, where he would be tried for the midair blowing of a Cuban airliner in off Barbados in 1976, in which all 73 people aboard were killed.

This November 5, as every fifth, Cuban Five supporters dedicated the day to demand the release of Cuban anti terrorist fighters.

Visiting Indonesian Top Parliamentarian Paid Tribute to Cuban National Hero

HAVANA, Cuba, Nov 4 (acn) The Speaker of the People's Consultative Assembly of Indonesia, Mohamad Taufiq Kiemas, paid tribute on Friday morning to the Cuban National Hero, Jose Marti.

Accompanied by his wife, Diah Permata Megawati Sukarnoputri —a former president of that Asian nation—, Taufiq Kiemas placed a floral wreath before the monument dedicated to Jose Marti at Havana's Revolution Square. It was the first activity of his four-day official visit to Cuba.

Present were members of the visiting delegation and the vice president of the Cuban National Assembly, Jaime Crombet.

Speaking to reporters, Taufiq Kiemas said he hopes this visit will help to further strengthen friendship and cooperation between Cuba and Indonesia which began during the administration of Achmed Sukarno (1901-1970), who ruled in Indonesia from 1945 to 1967.

The distinguished visitor arrived in Havana on Thursday and his official visit includes meetings with the president of the National Assembly, Ricardo Alarcon; with Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez Parrilla; and with the president of the Cuban Friendship Institute (ICAP), Kenia Serrano.

Top Cuban Official Describes FIHAV 2011 as Excellent

HAVANA, Cuba, Nov 5 (ACN) The Vice President of the Cuban Council of Ministers, Ricardo Cabrisas, described the 29th Havana International Trade Fair, FIHAV 2011, on Saturday, as excellent, noting that it succeeded in having a greater number of businesspersons involved and in an atmosphere of opportunities and confidence, Prensa Latina reported.

At the end of the awarding ceremony, Cabrisas told reporters that FIHAV is a fair in which we can bilaterally discuss trade opportunities.

"The country has had a change in the economic structure over the past few years," Cabrisas said.

Until 1989, Cuba's main source of income was the export of goods such as nickel, cigars, fish and seafood.

Today, after more than 23 years, that change is determined in the export of services, mainly due to international tourism, the top official noted.

Business people from 60 countries are participating in FIHAV 2011, wrapping up this Saturday, November 5.

Cuban Rum Exporting Company Expands its Portfolio

HAVANA, Cuba, Nov 5 (acn) The Cuban firm Cuba Ron S.A. has increased its export capacity by adding two new Cubay brands: dark rums Cubay Carta Dorada and Cubay Añejo Suave to its portfolio.

In addition, the company launched its newest products, Cubay Cola and Elixir del Ron Cubay, at the 29th International Trade Fair of Havana (FIHAV 2011).

Cuba Ron S.A.'s export director, Jorge Cardoso, said on Friday that both products are elaborated following traditional ageing techniques and mixtures of Cuban rums, which is the reason why Cuban products are on high demand worldwide.

Cardoso noted that exporting the two new rums brings about new business opportunities for Cuba in European and Latin American nations.

He said the company has already signed two contracts for their sale in Chile, Germany, Holland, and the Nordic countries, which will increase international sales estimated for this year.

According to the executive, entering the Chilean market will be a difficult endeavor due to its tradition, quality, and richness.

In order to increase exports, Cuba Ron S.A. launched its newest products, Cubay Cola and Elixir del Ron Cubay, at the 29th International Trade Fair of Havana (FIHAV 2011).

Cubay, as a distinctive brand, was first registered in Havana, in 1964; and later on it emerged as a rum brand in the Ronera de Santo Domingo factory, in the central province of Villa Clara.

The Antonio Gades Dance Company to Perform in Santiago de Cuba

SANTIAGO DE CUBA, Cuba, Nov 5 (acn) The Antonio Gades Dance Company will perform on November 9 at the Heredia Cultural Complex in this city, where the mortal remains of the Spanish dancer rest.

The company, founded by Gades, will present the pieces Bodas de sangre – based on the homonymous text by Federico Garcia Lorca, immortalized in its choreographic version by Carlos Saura's film- and Suite Flamenca, a group of traditional dances reflecting the history of that artistic expression, the two of them composed by Gades.

Its members are now in Cuba to participate in Havana's International Theater Festival, an event that will close on Sunday.

Now under the artistic direction of Stella Arauzo, who danced for many years with the flamenco star, members of the first generation of ballet dancers and young artists, carry out frequent international presentations.

The creative work of Antonio Gades (1936-2004) as choreographer and dancer was extensive, as well as his cultural promotion work.

The mortal remains of this very close friend of Cuba, who supported the country in the most difficult moments of its history and was an active member of its Communist Party, rest by express wish of the flamenco dancer at the Mausoleum to the martyrs of the Frank Pais Second Eastern Front.

Havana Hosts Japanese Culture Festival

HAVANA, Cuba, Nov 4 (acn) The Japanese Culture Festival was inaugurated on Friday at the Asia Center's museum in this capital, with the opening of an exhibition of objects and documents related to the Japanese imperial house.

The exhibition is made up of over 20 pieces, among books, dinner services and other objects of personal use that belonged to Japanese emperors, owned by Amadeo Blanco and Jose Guerra, former Cuban ambassadors to that Asian country.

Japan's ambassador to Cuba, Masuo Nishibayashi, expressed his satisfaction for being able to inaugurate the exhibition, which strengthens cultural bonds between the two peoples.

He also thanked the City Historian's Office, researchers, and the staff that worked in this cultural promotion project.

Teresita Hernandez, director of the Asia Center's museum, said that the objective of the event is to expand people's knowledge about the vast cultural richness of the Asian nation. She added that this edition of the Festival includes a varied program to show old traditions and examples of contemporary Japanese art.

Completing Friday's program was the presentation of the books *Genji Monogatari*, by Murasaki Shikibu; *Acercamiento a la Ceramica Artistica Cubana*, by Teresita Gomez, and *El Karate de Okinawa en Cuba*, by Ernesto Guzman.

The Festival has taken place for ten years now, sponsored by the Japanese embassy to Havana as a tribute to Japanese Culture Day (November 3).

The current edition will run until November 12 and will also include premieres of documentaries and lectures.

Blockade Vs. Health: Cruel and Inhuman Policy

By Iris Armas Padrino

While the international community is still echoing the victory of the UN General Assembly approval of the Cuban resolution entitled: "Necessary to end the economic, financial and commercial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", the historic vote continues to make headlines in the national and international press.

But the US government continues to remain silent and is not concerned over the international community's demand to end the criminal policy which is still in place for who knows how long inflicting sacrifices and restrictions on the Cuban people.

The blockade particularly affects the island's health care system and the pain and anguish on patients and families will continue. Many times doctors or nurses do not have the necessary resources to save or prolong someone's life.

In the health sector particularly, pain and anguish will continue on patients and families. Many times doctors and nurses need certain resources to save or prolong a patient's life.

The recent report presented by Cuba to the UN General Assembly highlights that between May of 2010 and April 2011, the losses to the sector are

calculated at 15 million dollars.

According to the document, the estimated amount is due to imports from other nations and the increase of prices of disposable materials and equipment, medication, reagents and spare parts.

Although Cuban exports of medication, accessories and medical devices are authorized by the Torricelli Act (1992) and Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act,, important restrictions remains.

Among many examples of the damage the blockade inflicts on the sector is the purchase of products for aorta coronary devices, valves among others from third nations.

The materials must be purchased in other markets at prices three or four times higher than if imported from US companies that have not suffered the impositions of the blockade.

Specialized hospitals have been affected in part by the refusal of US companies in purchasing components that is required for the maintenance of hyperbaric chambers, Gamma Radiation equipments and other types of spare parts.

Cuba has not been able to obtain apparatus, supplies, and materials destined to children affected by malignant tumors because they are operated by US companies.

Cuba cannot obtain new US produced chemotherapy, certain anti biotic for children under one year of age and reagents affecting the National Transplant Program.

The world condemned the Barack Obama administration's policy towards Cuba and some day justice will come to the Cuban people for the Washington's crimes against humanity and for having promoted such a genocidal policy against the Caribbean nation.

What Hides Behind the Supervised Release of Rene Gonzalez?

By Ana Ibis Galán

The horrendous crime of September 11th, 2001 shook US society and the world. Amidst the atmosphere of pain and indignation another absurd incident took place: the arbitrary trial of the Cuban Five.

Taking advantage of the moment and to generate confusion, Joan A. Lenard, district judge for South Florida made an unusual decision.

She postponed the sentences against Gerardo Hernandez, Fernando Gonzalez, Ramon Labañino, Antonio Guerrero and Rene Gonzalez for a three month period.

It was an absurd postponement that had nothing to do with the mourning of the victims of the terrorist attack against the World Trade Center.

Washington and the Lenard were dishonest to US laws and the memory of those that died that day.

They were looking for a way to separate both events –the act of terrorism against the World Trade Center and the five Cubans being tried for fighting terrorism.

As mentioned in the book entitled: “Atlanta and the Case of the Five: a Long Way Towards Justice”, the case was another maneuver to support and protect the violent groups based in Miami.

After the delayed and biased judicial process, the prosecutor requested the most severe sentences against the Five.

The accused in addition to having been given excessive sentences, were imposed very precise restrictions for which, once released are not able to do anything that would hurt the self confessed assassins that are currently walking the streets of Miami.

The judge immediately accepted the government’s request and in addition to the sentences against Rene, 15 years and Antonio, life plus 10 years both US citizens, would receive an extra punishment.

We must recall that after the resentencing request by the Five, Rene’s sentence was ratified by the Court of Appeals and in consequence was excluded of that possibility although today he is out of prison but under what is called supervised release.

In Tony’s case, his sentence was reduced 21 months in prison and five years of supervised release.

This additional special condition is very clear: “They are prohibited by associating with or visiting specific places where there are or frequently visit individuals or groups, like terrorists, members of organizations that sponsor violence of figures of organized crime”.

Gerardo, Ramon and Fernando will have similar impositions: the day they are released from prison they will have to remain under police custody until the day they are repatriated to Cuba.

Judge Lenard’s own orders recognize the existence of “terrorist” groups under her jurisdiction, which also “sponsor violence”, but justice continues to protect those that the Cuban Five were monitoring to stop terrorist acts against their people on the island.

If they are so guilty, as they say the Five are, why once released they are

stopped from approaching terrorists or places where they frequent?

As expressed by the president of the Cuban National Assembly, Ricardo Alarcon, "this is a good example that the Five are innocent."

It's clear that the anti Cuban terrorists worked with the complicity of the US government and judges that punished the Five.

They have removed their masks with so called supervised release, said Alarcon. The case of the Cuban Five –four of them are currently still behind bars- only explains Washington's commitment in protecting the extreme right wing sectors in Miami and punish those that oppose them.

Rene was denied a motion to modify the conditions of release presented last February 16th, in order to return to Cuba because according to the judge, the request was out of date; he was still serving his sentence.

He was told that once released from prison, he was not forced to carry out the three year supervised release in Miami or the state of Florida, but still the dangers against him remains.

Alarcon said during a meeting of the National Assembly's International Relations Commission, that Rene has been out of prison for days and as logical, all eyes are on him, what he does and where he goes.

But, he stressed, it is not to protect him from violent individuals or organizations. It was said by the judge herself, it is to protect the terrorists.