**HUGO CHÁVEZ’ ADDRESS**

By Cde. Fidel Castro Ruz

“Will the US Congress be, starting on January 1, an ultra-right wing Congress? Well, the Venezuelan Parliament from January 5 must then be ultra-left wing.

“And I am calling on the deputies elected by the people, by popular movements, social movements, and parties of the revolution, to have a strong commitment from January 5.

“Indeed it is unprecedented, and Eva reminds us. How is it that here, it is still allowed that we, having this Constitution— which cost us so much, so many years of battle, so much sweat, so much blood, so much effort; here it is very clearly stated, it is also there in the first Constitution, the first act of independence and our first Constitution, we are a sovereign country—at the risk of being called ‘the silly homeland or country—, at the risk of being branded as ‘the vegetables of the empire itself, to lash out against Venezuela and to continue having a television channel here. And so on, and so forth! The Venezuelan bourgeoisie should know that their aggression against the people is going to cost them dearly, and that they should not be hanging about over there. I remember—there’s José Vicente Rangel, Maduro and a colleague, thank you for joining us—during Betancourt’s government, deputies from the leftist parties were detained without trial or previous notice, without any evidence they were led off to prison, stripped of their parliamentary immunity.

“In a few weeks, a group of deputies from the extreme Right will enter this room. Well, you just have to remind them that here there is a constitution. Just as, at one time, the Communist Party of Venezuela, and many other parties, was outlawed here, and the parliamentary immunity of many colleagues was lifted, without proof, some went to the mountains like the great Fabrizio Odija, who resigned his seat and went to the mountains to give his blood for the revolution. And the people: I imagine that this worthy Parliament, having a majority representation from the popular forces, will not accept the rightwing forces coming here trying to subvert the constitutional order. I suppose that the state… I am sure the State will activate all the mechanisms to defend the Constitution and the law against the attacks, giving them no hope. In short, the threat… What did they call the terrorist event? ‘The threat in the Andes’, ‘Nicolas: Danger in the Andes; it’s like the title of a movie, Danger in the Andes; danger in the world, we must raise the alert or rather warn, the danger is global.

“At the moment there is a situation, right now, in the Korean peninsula. When I was on my way here the news was still confusing, as confusing as was the sinking of that vessel from South Korea, the Cheonan, but later evidence emerged that the ship was sank by the US. Now on a small island in that invaded peninsula, ravaged for years and divided by the Yankee Empire, there is a tense situation, some bombs, some dead and some wounded.

“A few months ago, Fidel Castro worried about the serious risks of nuclear war. I was there recently, once again, and he explained to me, he put his thoughts together—we know plenty already, of course, but there is nothing better than thinking—and he said to me, ‘Chavez, the slightest little gun shot in that area, full of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear weapons, could escalate into a war that could be, at first, conventional…’, but he is convinced that it will go directly into a nuclear war that could mark the end of the human species. So the danger is not in the Andes, you dirty scoundrels in Washington, the danger is global.

“Here in Venezuela, as Eva said, a light has been turned on, and another in Latin America, and another, and they’re turning on others. Today we can say—not that Venezuela alone, no—that Latin America is a continent of hope and the Yankee Empire cannot close the doors of hope.

“We, Venezuelans, we’ve always been, for some reason or another, at the forefront of these struggles, for centuries.

“I see over the portraits of Miranda, Bolivar, over there Martin Tovar y Tovar, Carabobo, and all the stuff that Roy read and said with such passion: It is right here, in our genes, in our blood. He paraphrased Mao, the Great Helmsman.

“That empire, that failed state that is the United States, despite its immense power and its threats, will end up being a gigantic paper tiger and we are forced to become true tigers of steel, small steel tigers, invincible, indomitable.

“Madam President, I promised to be brief, and as I said at the beginning, and I repeat: I believe that all that had to be said has been said by that brave woman Eva Gollerking and by that brave deputy Roy Daza, which is contained in this document, which I now understand will circulate to the four corners of Venezuela, and beyond, throughout Latin America.

“Fidel Castro, in this event, I appreciate the gesture, and as just one more person, I join this huge battalion, so to speak, in defense of Venezuela, in defense of the Venezuelan homeland.

“Looking at this painting, more than a painting, the monumental work of Tovar y Tovar, one sees the infantry there, and the cavalry over there. We will draw our inspiration from there: Infantry draws bayonets, quick march! Cavallería, at gallop, in defense of the Bolivarian homeland, of the Bolivarian Alliance of our People! "Downs with the Yankee empire!" he exclaimed at the end. ‘Long live ALBA, the Homeland and the Revolution!’”

**Sakeus Haimbodi** was diagnosed in 2008 (at the age of 18) with Osteo Sarcoma and went to South Africa for treatment after which he was left paralyzed. Dr Dolores Wolfaardt from IOL and Dr Zietsmann from the Dr AB May Cancer Care Centre approached the Cancer Association of Namibia to assist with a custom made wheelchair. The wheelchair is specially made to the measurements of Sakeus and cost N$25 400. The Quinton-Steele Botes Cancer Fund agreed to assist with the financial cost. Sakeus is currently in remission and is studying to complete his Grade 12 with the assistance of the Institute of Open Learning.

The Quinton-Steele Botes Cancer Fund has helped over 30 patients to the total amount of N$250 000-00. Quinton-Steele stated that he is pleased to be able to change someone’s life. He encouraged Sakeus to complete his studies and empower himself. Sakeus in return thanked the Cancer Association of Namibia and the Quinton-Steele Botes Cancer Fund for giving him the opportunity to live an independent life again. He also feels it is important to help other cancer patients who has been newly diagnosed to stay positive and walk the road to recovery.

In the picture (left to right): Quinton-Steele Botes, Sister Nellie Coeetzey of the Cancer Association of Namibia, Dr Dolores Wolfaardt of IOL, (in front) Sakeus Haimbodi. Comandante Fidel Castro Ruz

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**President Hugo Chavez**