

MESSAGE TO THE PARTICIPANTS AT THE 17th WORLD FESTIVAL OF YOUTH AND STUDENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

By Cde. Fidel Castro Ruz

Comrades:

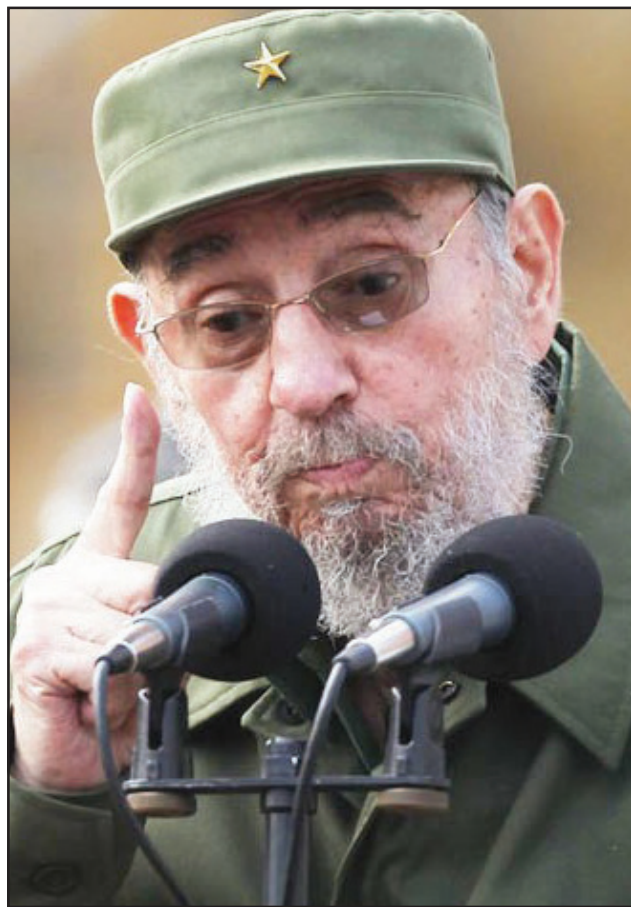
It is a great pleasure and honour for me to agree to the request that you made for me to send a message to the 17th World Festival of Youth and Students that is taking place in the Homeland of Nelson Mandela, the living symbol of the struggle against the odious apartheid system.

Cuba hosted two world festivals: the 11th in 1978 and the 14th in 1997.

For the first time, the Festival ceased to be held in Europe and took place in a country in this hemisphere.

The decision was made by the 9th Assembly of the World Federation of Democratic Youth which was held in Varna, Bulgaria at the end of 1974.

Those were different times: the world was facing serious problems, but ones that were less dramatic. The more progressive youth was fighting for the right of all human beings to a decent life; the old dream of the greatest thinkers of our species when it was clear that science, technology, the productivity of labour and the devel-



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opment of consciousness was making it possible.

In a brief lapse of time, globalization accelerated, communications reached unsuspected levels, the means to promote

education, health and culture multiplied. Our dreams were not without foundation. In that spirit, the 11th World Festival of Youth and Students took place and our people also took

part in it.

At the General Council of the World Federation of Democratic Youth, held precisely in heroic South Africa at the beginning of October in 1995, it was approved to hold the 14th Festival in Havana; 12,000 delegates from 132 countries would be taking part. Our country at that time had been struggling for almost 37 years in the political and ideological battle against the empire and its brutal economic blockade.

Until the decade of the 1980s, not only were the Peoples' Republic of China, the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea, Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea in existence who had been withstanding genocidal wars and the crimes of the Yankees, but also the socialist bloc in Europe and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, an enormous multinational State with 22,402,200 square kilometres, enormous resources of agricultural lands, forests, oil, gas, minerals and more. Face to face with the imperialist superpower, with its more than 800 military bases

deployed throughout the planet, the socialist superpower was surging.

The dissolution of the USSR, whatever the errors may have been at one or another moment in history, constituted a rough blow to the world's progressive movement.

The Yankees moved quickly and spread their military bases and the use of facilities constructed by the USSR in order to encircle more tightly, with their war machinery the Russian Federation which continued to be a great power.

The military bravado of the United States and its NATO allies increased in Europe and Asia. They unleashed the Kosovo War and disintegrated Serbia.

Within the area of our hemisphere, even before the collapse of the USSR, they invaded the Dominican Republic in 1965; they bombed and intervened in Nicaragua with mercenaries; their regular troops invaded Grenada, Panama and Haiti; they promoted bloody military coups in Chile, Argentina and Uruguay and supported Stroessner's brutal repression in Paraguay.

They created the School of the Americas where they were not only training thousands of Latin American officers in conspiracies and coups d'état, but they were also familiarizing many with doctrines of hate and sophisticated torture practices while they were presenting themselves to the world as champions of "human rights and democracy".

In the first decade of this century, the imperialist superpower appears to be overflowing its own riverbanks.

The bloody events of September 11, 2001, when the Twin Towers of New York City were destroyed - a dramatic episode where around 3,000 persons lost their lives - and the subsequent attack on the Pentagon, fit like a glove on the hand of that unscrupulous adventurer George W. Bush for him to orchestrate the so-called war on terrorism that constitutes, simply, a dangerous escalation of the brutal policy that the US has been applying on our planet.

There has been more than sufficient proof of the embarrassing complicity of the NATO countries in such a reproachable war. That warmongering organization has just proclaimed its aim to intervene in any country in the world, wherever it feels that its interests, that is, US interests, are being threatened.

The monopoly on the mass media, in the hands of the huge capitalist transnationals, has been used by imperialism to sow lies, create conditioned reflexes and to develop egoistical instincts.

While the youth and students were travelling to South Africa to fight for a world in peace, with dignity and justice, in Great Britain university stu-

dents and their professors were waging a pitched battle against the considerable and well-equipped repressive police who, on their spirited horses, were attacking them. There have been few times, and perhaps never, that we have seen such a show of capitalist "democracy". The neoliberal governing parties, exercising their role of the police force of the oligarchy, betraying their electoral promises, passed measures in Parliament that raised the yearly fees for university students to \$14,000. The worst of it all was the nerve with which the neoliberal parliamentarians stated that the "market was resolving that problem". Only the rich had the right to a university degree.

A few days ago, the present US Defense Secretary Robert Gates, commenting on the secrets divulged by WikiLeaks stated: "The fact is, governments deal with the United States because it's in their interest, not because they like us, not because they trust us, and not because they believe we can keep secrets. [...] some governments deal with us because they fear us, some because they respect us, most because they need us. We are still essentially, as has been said before, the indispensable nation".

Not a few intelligent and well-informed people harbour the conviction that the Yankee Empire, like all those coming before it, has entered its final phase and that the signs are irrefutable.

An article published on the TomDispatch website, translated from English by the Rebelión website presents four hypotheses about the probable course of events in the United States, and in all of them, world war appears as one of the possibilities even though it does not exclude that there may be another option. It adds that definitely that country will lose its dominant role in world exports of goods and in less than 15 years it will lose its dominant role in innovative technology and the privileged function of the dollar as the reserve currency. It quotes that already this year China has reached 12% in comparison to the US 11% in world exports of goods and it mentioned the presentation in October of this year by the Chinese Minister of Defence of the Tianhe-1^a super-computer, something so powerful that, in the words of an American expert, "it wipes out the No. 1 machine" existing in the United States.

Our dear compatriots, upon arriving in South Africa, among their first activities, paid fully-deserved tribute to the internationalist combatants who gave their lives fighting for Africa.

For the last 12 years, in neighbouring Haiti, our medical mission provides its services to the Haitian people; today, with the cooperation of the internationalist doctors graduated from ELAM (the Latin Ameri-

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Republic of Namibia

MINISTRY OF LAND AND RESETTLEMENT

Request for expression of interest for Consulting Services for the Namibian-German Financial Cooperation Programme "Support to Land Reform in Communal Areas"

The Ministry of Lands and Resettlement invites interested parties to express their interest in providing consultancy services for the Namibian-German Cooperation Programme "Support to Land Reform in Communal Areas" co-funded through KfW Development Bank. The key services to be provided are the elaboration of a road map for the implementation of the Namibian-German Cooperation Programme and the support to organisational set up and programme management, including two long-term experts (senior implementation consultant and project management consultant) and a pool of short-term experts.

Interested firms are invited to contact the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement for a full description of the services required and the requirements for application at the address given below. Only pre-selected parties will be invited to participate in the tender process. Expressions of interest must be submitted by **15h00, Monday 31st January 2011**.

Ministry of Lands and Resettlement

Brendan Simbwaye Square Block A,
Private Bag 13343, Windhoek
Contact person: Mrs. Julia Metz

Directorate for Planning, Research, Training and Information Services (1st Floor, Room 110)

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