

## China, Cuba vow to push forward ties to new high



Wu Bangguo (R), chairman of the Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress, meets with Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, president of the Cuban National Assembly of People's Power, in Beijing, capital of China, Nov. 24, 2010.

**BEIJING** — China and Cuba pledged Wednesday to take the opportunity of the 50th anniversary of bilateral ties to advance their relations to a new high.

The pledge was made during top Cuban legislator Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada's meetings with Chinese leaders in Beijing Wednesday.

Alarcon, president of the Cuban National Assembly of People's Power, is on a six-day visit to China.

During the talks with

Alarcon, Wu Bangguo, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), China's top legislature, said China and Cuba enjoyed a deeply-rooted political foundation to develop ties, which were highlighted by mutual respect, mutual support and collaboration.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of China-Cuba diplomatic ties, China was ready to take this opportunity to enhance coopera-

tion with Cuba, in a bid to push forward bilateral ties, Wu said.

In 1960, Cuba was the first Latin American nation to forge diplomatic relations with China.

Wu also expressed the hope for closer ties between the two legislative bodies, saying China was willing to engage with Cuba on issues concerning governing and administration, as well as reform and innovation.

Alarcon said it was critical for Cuba to enhance bilateral ties with China, and Cuba was ready to draw on China's development experience in reform and opening up.

"The Cuban political party, government and people were proud of the Cuba-China friendship and China's development," he said.

Prior to the talks with Wu, Alarcon also met with top Chinese political advisor Jia Qinglin.

Jia, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), said China paid great attention to the bilateral friendship of cooperation and was ready to further the ties to a new high.

He also expressed appreciation of Cuba's consistent support on issues concerning Taiwan and Tibet, and said China supported Cuba's adherence to the socialist road.

"The Cuba-China friendship has withstood the rapidly changing world, and radiates new vitality," Alarcon said.

Alarcon will conclude the trip on Friday.

In 2009, China was Cuba's largest supplier of capital goods and consumption commodities. (Xinhua)

## Palestinians slam Israeli withdrawal referendum bill

By Saud Abu Ramadan, Emad Drimly

**GAZA**, — The Palestinians on Tuesday slammed an Israeli bill passed by the Israeli Knesset (parliament) on Monday that demands a referendum in case any Israel government make territory concession in East Jerusalem to the Palestinians or in Golan Heights to Syria.

The Israeli law, applying to territories annexed by Israel in the aftermath of the 1967 war, requires a two-thirds majority consent of Israel public to hand over territories to the Palestinians and to Syria.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas told reporters in Ramallah as he inaugurated the temporary headquarters of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) that the Israeli law "was made to put obstacles to reaching any political settlement in the future."

"The law is an excuse for the Israelis to tell the international community that they won't withdraw from Jerusalem or from the Golan Heights," Abbas said. "We don't oppose a referendum when all issues are settled, but they put more obstacles when they set a referendum to tackle the issues."

Meanwhile, chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said in a press conference held in Ramallah that passing the bill "is completely rejected by the Palestinian leadership because the Israeli government is ridiculing the international law."

"Ending the military occupation on the Palestinian territories could never rely on any kind of referendum," Erekat said. "The bill is a de facto Israeli declaration that the peace process will never succeed."

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Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas

Meanwhile, Gaza Strip ruling Islamic Hamas movement also condemned the Israeli Knesset bill, considering it as "another new strike to the illusions of achieving peace with the Jewish entity."

Ahmed Bahar, a senior Gaza-based Hamas leader, called on all international parliaments "to boycott the Knesset and regard it as a parliament of terrorists which threatens the world's peace and stability."

Abdel Rahim Mallouh, the leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), told reporters that the Israeli law "aims at devoting the military occupation of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, and blocks any chance to withdraw from those areas with a peace agreement."

"The law is a message to the Palestinian negotiator and the

international community that Israel wants to seize these lands, a matter that is completely rejected by the Arabs and by Palestinians," said Mallouh.

The Gaza-based Islamic Jihad (Holy War) movement has also slammed the Israeli law and considered it as "a powerful proof that the negotiations with Israel are fruitless and would never bring the legitimate Palestinian rights back," said Dawood Shihab, spokesman of the movement.

The direct peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians had stopped in early October, four weeks after it had been resumed in Washington under U.S. sponsorship. The talks were halted due to differences over freezing settlement construction in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. (Xinhua)

## SWAPO rocks Khorixas

### Founding President wants total victory

By Anna Nakambale

**SWAPO Party took Khorixas by storm last weekend, drawing a huge crowd of the Party's supporters and sympathizers who converged at the town's soccer field to be addressed by Founding President, Dr Sam Nujoma.**

One of the highlights of the events was the welcoming back of some former members of the United Democratic Front, UDF, who crossed over to SWAPO Party. They were welcomed by Founding President Nujoma.

A stronghold of opposition party UDF since independence, Justus Garoeb's party support is now dwindling, and if last weekend's huge gathering is anything to go by, UDF is set to be pushed to the periphery.

"You have joined a party of heroes and heroines," said the Founding President as he welcomed the new members. "You have made the right choice. There is no other political party than SWAPO Party that can deliver on its promises."

Dr Nujoma said that SWAPO Party government had done extremely well over the past five years, and had urged voters to renew its mandate to continue implementing its development programmes.

"Villages and town councils as well as the region that are not under the SWAPO Party leadership are not progressing, either because the opposition parties are inexperienced in terms of governance, or these villages, towns and regions are still confined to tribal political parties. He said that in regions like Kunene, many constituencies and the region as a whole, voters had been voting wrong people in the right positions. As a result, such constituencies had not been pulling in the right direction like other constituencies in the country.

"It is for this reason that the SWAPO Party would like to see dramatic change in the administration of services delivery in this region, starting from Epupa, Kamanjab and Sesfontein constituencies in Khorixas," said the Founding President.

"Like Chief Max Haroseb of the /Gaoi Damna Traditional Authority said last week in Kamanjab, let the residents of Khorixas come to taste the sweet milk under the SWAPO Party's governance.

"The opposition is now afraid of the SWAPO Party's presence in the region and have resorted to buying votes by paying for residents to vote for them. Many of our people in this region have now come to realize that they were misled by the opposition and are now deserting such parties in big numbers to join the SWAPO Party."

He said that SWAPO Party was the only party that had the capacity to achieve economic independence and eradicate hunger, poverty and ignorance. It had set itself realistic objectives and implementable programmes.

"Unlike the opposition parties who make empty promises and could not bring tangible progress and development to the residents in the villages and towns in Kunene Region, including Khorixas and Sesfontein, SWAPO Party does

not make empty promises but always deliver. I therefore urge

you to vote wisely by voting for the SWAPO Party candi-

dates," said the Founding President.



Lands and Resettlement Minister, Cde Alpheus Naruseb, leading the crowd as Ndilimani Cultural Troupe performs at the rally. Photo by Anna Nakambale.