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The Palestinian People Will Never Give Up Their Right to Return

On May 15, Palestinians in the occupied territories, inside the borders of pre-1967 Israel, and throughout the diaspora came out in demonstrations and rallies to reaffirm their struggle for an independent state and their "right to return".

The Palestinians call May 15 "Nakba Day," marking the loss of their homeland 56 years ago as the result of imperialist-zionist aggression.

This year's actions take on special significance because of the recent declaration by U.S. President George Bush that the U.S. government -- in complete defiance of international law and its own commitment -- does not recognize the Palestinian people's right to return. Bush also officially endorsed Israel's annexation of parts of the West Bank and its building of the Apartheid Wall.

Over the last 56 years, the wars of aggression and systematic campaigns of terror organized by U.S. imperialism and Israeli zionism have forced more than 5 million Palestinians from 531 Palestinian cities and villages into exile. The great majority of these displaced and stateless Palestinians still live in refugee camps -- 640,000 in refugee camps in the West Bank, 820,000 in Gaza, and hundreds of thousands more in U.N. run camps in Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria.

In 1948, the U.N. General Assembly passed resolution 194 which declares that Palestinian "refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international

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Giant March in Havana Condemns Hostile U.S. Actions Against Cuba

On Friday, May 14, more than one million people marched past the U.S. Interests Section in Havana, Cuba. The march, led by Cuban President Fidel Castro, was organized to protest and repudiate the recent aggressive measures against Cuba adopted by the Bush Administration.

New U.S. Attacks Against Cuba

On May 6, George Bush announced a series of new measures aimed at overthrowing the Cuban government.

Bush's latest plan, based on a 500-page report prepared by a special Presidential "Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba," outlines steps for strengthening counter-revolutionary forces inside and outside of Cuba, tightening the illegal U.S. economic and trade embargo, stepping up U.S. ideological aggression, further limiting tourism and person-to-person exchanges between U.S. citizens and Cubans, including educational and cultural exchanges, and a variety of other aggressive measures.

Below, we reprint the May 7 statement of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba and the Revolutionary Government of Cuba concerning the latest measures of the U.S. government.

Brutal Economic and Political Measures Against Our Country and Against Cubans Resident in the United States

- Statement of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba and the Government of Cuba, May 7, 2004 -

Yesterday, May 6, the U.S. government announced new measures for intensifying even further its aggressive and hostile policy towards Cuba. In the morning, President Bush,

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New Terrorist Plot Against Venezuelan Government

During the week of May 9, Venezuelan authorities captured at least 71 paramilitaries who had infiltrated the country from Colombia as part of a plan to organize a coup d'etat against the constitutional government headed by Hugo Chavez. Authorities are continuing the search for as many as 50 more men believed to have escaped.

Most of the captured terrorists were members of the Colombian army's military reserve as well as a group of retired Venezuelan military officers. The group was training on the land of Robert Alonso, a legal resident of the U.S., who is heavily involved in an ongoing destabilization campaign against the Chavez government. One of the captured men said that the group's plan was to launch a raid against an arms depot in order to arm a militia of three to four thousand paramilitaries from Colombia as part of a planned coup d'etat.

In fact, over the last several months, Colombian paramilitaries have launched several across-border attacks against Venezuela. In addition, the Colombian government recently purchased a number of new tanks which many analysts believe could be used for an invasion of Venezuela. Such an invasion, by either regular or irregular forces from Colombia, could be used by the U.S. as an excuse to invade Venezuela. The U.S. government has already been implicated in the attempted coup against Chavez in April 2002 and continues to organize a destabilization campaign against Venezuela.

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Bush Imposes Sanctions on Syria

On May 11, George Bush imposed a series of economic sanctions against Syria and made new threats against the country.

Bush issued an executive order that bans all U.S. exports to the country, except food and medicine and bars all air flights between Syria and the U.S. Bush also ordered American banks to cut any ties with the Commercial Bank of Syria and instructed the Treasury Department to freeze the assets of selected Syrian citizens.

In issuing the order Bush said that Syria's actions "constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States and (I) hereby declare a national emergency to deal with that threat."

Bush accused Syria of "supporting terrorism, continuing its occupation of Lebanon, pursuing weapons of mass destruction and missile programs, and undermining United States and international efforts with respect to the stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq." Bush also threatened to take more measures against Syria if it did not "take serious and concrete steps" to change its policies and in particular cut off its political support to Palestinian resistance groups and "cooperate fully with the international community in promoting the stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq."

In other words, relying on the same imperialist rhetoric used to launch the war in Iraq and to declare that every country must either join in the U.S. war program or be "treated as terrorist," Bush is trying to impose U.S. dictate on another sovereign country. Bush's own statement show that the real basis of U.S. pressure against Syria is its refusal to support U.S. colonialism and war in Iraq as well as Syria ongoing support for the Palestinian liberation struggle.

Bush's executive order puts into practice the mandate of the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act passed by Congress last fall in a nearly unanimous vote.

Since the U.S. occupation of Iraq began, various spokesmen for the administration as well as many Congressional leaders have warned Syria that it "will be next," demanding "regime change in the country."

Make no mistake about it. Despite the strong resistance of the Iraqi people to U.S. occupation and the growing isolation of the U.S. government in American and world public opinion, U.S. imperialism is escalating its pressure in the Middle East and threatening to set the whole region on fire.

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setting forth the measures during brief comments to some representatives of the media, reiterated wise, the promotion of national or international conferences in third countries to "disseminate information" on U.S. policies for promoting a "transition" in Cuba. It is the announcement of further \$5 million for financing the international campaign of discredit and lies against Cuba.

2. To limit those who receive remittances of money and packages to immediate family members of Cuban resident in the United States, defined exclusively as grandparents, grandchildren, parents, siblings, spouses and children. This means that from now on, Cubans residing in the United States are the only immigrants to be prohibited from sending economic aid to an elderly aunt or another close family member.

3. To prohibit Cubans resident in the United States from sending remittances of money and packages to family members if the latter are "government officials or members of the Communist Party." A 70-year-old mother, for example, would have to renounce her political rights in order to receive a remittance.

4. To reduce visits to our country by Cubans resident in the United States from the current one per year to one every three years. The additional restriction is established by the obligation, from now on, to seek specific permission for each trip, instead of the general license that currently exists. It limits the granting of permission to travel to Cuba only for visiting immediate family members. To this effect, the U.S. government has decreed that from this moment on, the definition of family is: "grandparents, grandchildren, parents, siblings, spouses and children." That is, from now on, a cousin, aunt or other close family member is not -- according to President Bush -- a family member. It also establishes, as well, that Cubans who have recently arrived in the United States will only be able to travel to Cuba three years after having emigrated. While the Cuban government is continually making visits to the country by emigrants more flexible, the U.S. government is increasing the obstacles. What is it afraid of?

5. Reducing the quantity of money that Cubans resident in the United States can spend to cover their costs during visits to Cuba from \$164 to \$50 per day. A new and arbitrary discrimination against the Cuban community in the United States.

6. Ordering the U.S. authorities to mount "covert operations" on any person bringing money from Cubans resident in the United States to relatives on the island, including recompensing individuals who inform on illegal transfers of family remittances.

7. To continue restricting the granting of licenses for

educational visits and academic exchanges to U.S. citizens and institutions by means of tighter regulations than those currently existing. It should be recalled that licenses for so-called people to people exchange have already been eliminated by the Bush administration.

8. To undertake a rigorous study to evaluate whether the application of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act is contrary to U.S. interests or whether its application could accelerate the fall of the Cuban Revolution. In practice, this evokes the possibility of authorizing trials in U.S. courts against businesspersons from third countries engaged in business with Cuba, which has not been applied to date.

9. To firmly apply the sanctions contained in Title IV of the same act, which prohibits the granting of entry visas to the United States of foreign investors in Cuba, and to supply more resources and personnel to apply the Helms-Burton Act.

10. To "neutralize" Cuban companies dedicated to economic activity linked to the external sector, and to create an Assets Evaluation Group to investigate Cuban companies and those of other nations trading with Cuba.

11. To increase efforts to involve the governments of third countries in campaigns against the Cuban Revolution.

12. To support actions in third countries to discourage tourism to Cuba.

13. To continue refusing visas to Cuban officials who have to travel to the United States.

14. To create the post of a Coordinator for the Transition in Cuba at State Department level, who will be responsible for checking the application of all these measures.

The other five chapters brazenly cover the measures that the U.S. government would bring into effect in our country once it has achieved its dream of overthrowing the Cuban Revolution. For now, we will not analyze it in detail, but merely quote one example. One of the measures proposed is "to immediately immunize all children under five years who have not as yet been vaccinated against the principal childhood ailments." Our people can draw their own conclusions. This is the plan for Cuba's annexation and the return to the fake republic of the Platt Amendment.

The cruelty and hatred that inspire this new aggression against our country is really incredible. It attempts to increase the difficult conditions already imposed on us by the criminal U.S. blockade by all means possible. It constitutes a flagrant violation of the human rights of 11 million Cubans, whom it is trying to force to their knees through

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hunger and disease for the sole "crime" of wishing to be free, independent and not subjected to imperial rule.

The measures announced yesterday likewise constitute a violation of the rights of citizens of Cuban origin resident in the United States who now face new and draconian restrictions in relation to travel to the island and sending economic aid to their families in Cuba.

All these measures and the U.S. policy as a whole openly flout the real interests of the U.S. people, the vast majority of Cubans resident in the United States, a large part of the U.S. Congress and broad sectors in that country who want normal relations with the island.

Assigning tens of millions of dollars to provoking mercenary acts in Cuba, violating international law in order to transmit subversive broadcasts from aircraft, compounded by the scandalous and internationally criticized installation of a concentration camp in territory occupied by its army in our country, constitute unheard of provocations in total breach of the regulations and principles of international law, which will have to be debated in diverse international forums, including the Human Rights Commission in Geneva.

The cunning, cynical and cruel nature of the present administration is fully demonstrated in the face of adopting these measures against our people at a time when the price of foodstuffs and their transportation have virtually doubled on the world market, that of sugar is hardly exceeding its cost of production, and that of fuel is steadily rising, having reached the astronomical price of almost \$40 per barrel. And now, there is to be an additional attempt to hit tourism, which was beginning to show a strong upturn, as hard as possible.

Listening to promises to vaccinate children in a country where preventative medicine and immunization have attained the highest levels in the world is derisive coming from a country

where tens of millions of men, women and children have no access to medical attention, and whose infant mortality rate per thousand live births is above Cuba's. The real fact is that the Führer is maddened by the vast human capital created by our nation; its capacity to send tens of millions of doctors to the most remote areas of the Third World, a total that exceeds the possibilities of all the developed countries together; and the advances in education, public health and culture that will soon rank Cuba in first place among all the nations of the earth. The solid support for the Revolution of almost its total population makes it invulnerable to the rotten ideology of Mr. Bush.

The example of Cuba has to be made to disappear from the map. That is the aim of the insults of the manic and crazed program of transition in Cuba devised by a fraudulently elected president.

In that way the aim is to destroy everything that a heroic people is constructing with immense love. Cuba might be erased from the map, but no threat, no senseless madness from Mr. Bush can make it lose heart. Without any doubt his cruel and cowardly measures will impose a certain sacrifice on our people, but those measures will not succeed in detaining for even one second the people's advance towards the human and social objectives that have been drawn up, and nobody will be left unprotected. Cuba will never return to the horrible, merciless and inhumane condition of a U.S. colony.

As our president stated on May 1 before more than one million Cubans:

"Without violating the standards that it has always applied in its struggles, this country will defend itself with laws and will defend itself with arms when necessary, until the last drop of blood has been shed."

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Palestinian Right to Return (from page 1)

law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible. For more than 50 years, the U.S. and Israeli governments have not only blocked implementation of this resolution, they have forced more and more Palestinians into exile.

Today the area of Palestine, which originally comprised 27,000 square kilometers, has been reduced to less than 7,000 sq. km. Israel's recent measures, including its continuing settlement projects in the West Bank and Gaza, its apartheid wall and its continued aggression against the Palestinians aim at undermining the economic, political and social viability of any future Palestinian state.