

The Caracas Manifesto: Proposal and Promise at the Sao Paulo Forum 2019

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Global Research, July 27, 2019

Region: [Latin America & Caribbean](#)

Theme: [History](#)

The 25th Annual Meeting of the Sao Paulo Forum is taking place July 25-28 in Caracas, Venezuela. The first meeting was held in 1990 in São Paulo, Brazil, with 48 political organizations and social movements led by Fidel Castro of the governing Communist Party of Cuba, and Lula Da Silva of the opposition Workers Party of Brazil.

That first meeting seemed to be an urgent gathering of leftist movements that could provide an assessment of what was a major political event with the collapse of the Socialist block in Europe. This 25th Sao Paulo Forum will surely take a look at the causes of some political reversals since about 2009 in Latin America and how to put a stop to the continued attacks on the Bolivarian Revolution, which is today the bastion of anti-imperialism, and prevent the collapse of today's socialist project in Venezuela and Latin America.

This is a meeting of progressive and left-wing political parties in the world that meet regularly to exchange experiences and share ideas to strengthen the peoples' struggle for sovereignty and democracy, social justice, sustainable development and social inclusion.

The Sao Paulo Forum was born with two main purposes: on the one hand, to debate about the international state of affairs after the fall of the Berlin wall and the consequences of neoliberalism in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean; and, on the other hand, to lay the groundwork for the creation of an alliance of research laboratories of ideas and schools of thought where experts and analysts could offer intellectual reflections and analyses, and help develop social policies, economic, political and military strategies for the region.

Since Hugo Chavez became president of Venezuela in 1999, Latin America and the Caribbean had made huge progress in this direction. So much so that the US administration took notice and proceeded to attack every advance perceived to be contrary to the interests of its imperial hegemony. By its own declaration the US government has targeted Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua for regime change.

Today, the specific objectives are to continue deepening the debate, but more importantly to try to move forward with proposals for unity of action in the anti-imperialist struggle, and the promotion of exchanges around economic, political, social and cultural problems than the continental leftist movement faces.

Venezuela is giving the exemplary step of such unity.

Last July 19 ten political parties of the Venezuelan left signed the "Caracas Manifesto for

Peace, Sovereignty and the Prosperity of Our America”, an eight-page document that synthesizes a consensus approach of the revolutionary organizations to be presented by the Venezuelan delegation in the Sao Paulo Forum. [1]

The political coordinator of the event preparatory committee, Julio Chavez, argues that the forum will offer the opportunity to chart strategies that will allow changing the correlation of forces in favor of progressive processes in the region. He stated,

“We believe that the forum will be transcendental insofar as a battle plan for the hemisphere is advanced that will go beyond simple declarations.”

Julio Chavez, who is also a deputy in the National Constituent Assembly, said,

“25 years after the first Sao Paulo Forum there are two conflictive visions of the world: the Monroe doctrine vision, driven by Donald Trump, inspired in the doctrine of domination and of a unipolar world ruled by the hegemony of the United States, versus the Bolivarian doctrine that offers the building of a multipolar world. ” “Despite the differences”, he added, “the local left is united around the role that Venezuela plays in this transition” from one vision to the other.

After a recap of the world geopolitical context, and a review of Venezuela as the regional epicenter of US aggression in the Western Hemisphere, the Caracas Manifesto warns that regime change in Venezuela is the US most coveted goal to rebuild its hegemony in the continent. “The attack on Venezuela is an attack against a political process based on the diversity of social movements and political parties that in a united way claim independence and advocate socialism.” Therefore, “to defend Venezuela is to defend Our America.” Similarly, “the victory of peace in Venezuela will be the triumph of regional sovereignty.”

In order to achieve that, the Caracas Manifesto establishes ten “strategic objectives”. The first four objectives are:

1. Promote a new correlation of forces in the continent, capable of forming a political bloc in order to preserve the spaces of power conquered and to defeat imperialism in Latin America and the Caribbean.
2. Develop and implement a common continental plan for struggle ... with the view of building an International Anti-imperialist Front.
3. Build consensus on the need to preserve peace in the continent, as declared by the heads of state at the CELAC Summit held in Havana (2014), by rejecting militarization and the presence of NATO military bases.
4. Promote socialism as people’s alternative to the general crisis that capitalism is confronting.

Concrete proposals for the Forum include 1. Endorsing a Forum-sponsored initiative to organize an International Conference to promote respect for international law and to prevent the illegal imposition of unilateral coercive measures; and 2. Encouraging the establishment of the Permanent “Bolívar versus Monroe” Chair as a space for the study and investigation of the political reality of the region.

Without doubt the revolutionary parties of Venezuela that subscribe the Caracas Manifesto

take on the hardest responsibility, not only of the daily defense of the Bolivarian Revolution on the ground, but also by promising a commitment to the “task of working intensely for the unity of all popular and patriotic forces.

We wish to all delegates in Caracas a successful Sao Paulo Forum.

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Note

[1] <https://www.aporrea.org/actualidad/n344749.html>

Featured image: A picture showing speakers at one of the panels of the Sao Paulo Forum. | Photo: teleSUR

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