Important Anniversaries

• 61st Anniversary of the Triumph of the Cuban Revolution and 75th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between Cuba and Canada
  • 75th Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz
    • 90th Anniversary of the Founding of the Communist Party of Vietnam
  • 167th Anniversary of the Birth of José Martí

61st Anniversary of the Triumph of the Cuban Revolution and 75th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between Cuba and Canada

Reception at Cuban Embassy in Ottawa

On January 30, members of the Cuban Embassy in Canada, together with representatives of the Canadian government, Parliament and First Nations, members of the diplomatic corps accredited in the country, businessmen, academics, journalists, Cuban residents, representatives of organizations working in solidarity with Cuba, as well as friends of Cuba from all walks of life, celebrated the 61st anniversary of the triumph of the Cuban Revolution and the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and Canada. Over 300 people
participated in this very spirited reception.

The Carleton University Choral Ensemble sang the national anthems of Cuba and Canada, following which it performed the Venezuelan folk song *Maracaibera* and *Matona mia cara* by 16th century composer Orlando di Lasso. The Ensemble's skill in performing various kinds of music was much appreciated.

Her Excellency Josefina Vidal, Cuban Ambassador to Canada, presented remarks. She recounted the main milestones of the Cuba-Canada bilateral relations, explained the challenges Cuba faced in 2019, mainly as a result of the tightening of the economic, commercial and financial blockade by the United States, and highlighted how the Cuban people have mobilized themselves to deal with these challenges.

Robert Oliphant, MP and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, highlighted the positive relations that have existed historically between the two nations, their future perspectives and the importance of these ties for both countries, pledging Canada's resolve in further developing these relations.

A raffle draw and a delicious buffet followed.

The entire event was marked by the broad support and social love for the Cuban people and all their achievements in their quest for sovereign nation-building in the service of the well-being of all, and for their lofty internationalist spirit, which has won universal admiration from the peoples of the world. Also expressed was the sentiment that the Canadian people see diplomatic relations between Cuba and Canada as an important tool in strengthening the fraternal unity and for holding exchanges of various kinds between our two peoples and countries. The need for friendly relations based on respect for sovereignty and dialogue to prevail over the imposition of dictate, foreign-instigated coups and the use of force to sort out differences between countries, as witnessed through the U.S. strengthening its blockade on Cuba, is more important than ever in the present period.

**Remarks by Cuban Ambassador**

The Cuban Embassy's website provided an overview of the remarks of Ambassador Vidal at the reception.

It informs that:

"[She] recounted the main milestones in bilateral relations, especially in the last 60 years, which
have witnessed a sustained strengthening of diplomatic and economic ties, and an increase in contacts between the two peoples. She recalled, in particular, the relevant place that Canada occupies in our foreign relations, as the first issuer of tourists to Cuba, second foreign investor, fourth trade partner and one of the main sources of cooperation projects.

"On the other hand, she referred to the challenges Cuba has had to face in the last year, mainly due to the tightening of the economic, commercial and financial blockade by the United States, which has adopted unprecedented measures due to their level of aggressiveness and scope, with the aim of suffocating the economy, depriving it of vital income. She thanked business organizations, solidarity groups and associations of Cubans residing in this country for supporting Cuba in its fight against the blockade, and also the Canadian government for its vote in favor of the Cuban Resolution at the United Nations General Assembly and for defending the legitimate right of its companies to trade and invest on the Island.

"The Head of the Cuban diplomatic mission in Canada highlighted how, in the midst of these difficult circumstances, Cuba has not been paralyzed, but mobilized itself with the decisive support of the population, the economy was able to exhibit modest -- but meritorious -- growth, and progress continued to be made in the institutionalization of the country in accordance with the provisions of the new Constitution of the Republic approved by popular referendum.

"The Ambassador concluded her remarks by stating: 'As in the past, once again Cuba will resist and win, and nothing will divert us from the path of building a country that is increasingly just, inclusive, prosperous, free and democratic; a country that continues to care about the welfare of its people and other peoples beyond its borders, for the care of the common environment and for a stable and peaceful world.'"

(Photos: TML, Cuban Embassy)

75th Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz

Only the Most Self-Serving and Reactionary Forces Could Use the Memory of the European Holocaust to Justify Ongoing Violations of Human Rights and Crimes Against Humanity

- Louis Lang -

In the past week memorial events were held marking the day 75 years ago, on January 27, 1945, when Auschwitz was liberated by the Soviet Red Army.

Survivors, political leaders, heads of state and clergy participated in ceremonies, especially one at the site of the death camp, to pay tribute to all the victims and survivors. Yet it seems that the world still has not been able to close the book on all these historic events. There is still controversy over World War II and although there have been great words of sorrow for the events and even a sense of guilt expressed by some, no single country in Europe has committed itself to
defend human rights, not just as a mere formality, but with the content of defending the human
rights of all.


What can we conclude from the declarations and expressions of sorrow and even guilt from
various heads of state and political leaders? It seems that their intention is to divert attention from
the fact that various authorities are not discharging their obligations, but are attempting to confine
the demand for human rights to the forms which suit their purposes.

Not one can say that they have succeeded in changing this situation so that the rights of human
beings are guaranteed. Not only have they not succeeded, they have no plan to do so. Since World
War II how many examples exist of the rights of human beings being trampled underfoot?

The most recent example of attempts to falsify history has been the resolution passed by the
European Union which tries to equate the aggression of Nazi Germany with the role played by the
Soviet Union, claiming that both were aggressive powers responsible for unleashing World War II.
Such claims fly in the face of facts when everyone knows that the USSR was the country that
made the greatest sacrifices to stop the German Nazi aggression.

Left: Memorial plaque to those killed by the Nazis in Auschwitz, put in place in 1948 and removed in

How can we explain that after such acts of boundless brutality and barbarism and the defeat of
Nazi Germany, still, great controversies are created about what happened and how to stop it from happening again?

Seventy-five years after the liberation of Auschwitz, falsifications of history are being put forward under the guise of sorrow for the victims. Instead of de-Nazification, which was supposed to be carried out after the Nuremberg trials and to which many of the western allies paid lip service, today we can see that various east European countries are destroying the monuments that were built to honour the sacrifices and victories of the Soviet army in liberating these countries.

Now these same countries, including Ukraine, Latvia and Poland are erecting monuments to rehabilitate collaborators who assisted the Nazis in putting down the revolt of the people against the German occupation of their countries.[1]

For example, Poland is now passing laws to make it illegal to discuss the role played by various forces who assisted the Nazi occupiers in Poland.

1944 photo of Polish Partisans who fought for the defeat of Nazi Fascism.

State leaders who spoke on January 27 in Auschwitz, instead of dealing with the real problems faced by the people in their countries, used the occasion to impose their own narrow political goals and invoke the memories of the Holocaust to further their own interests.

The Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, used his speech at the World Holocaust Forum in Jerusalem on January 23 to justify Zionist aggression in the Middle East and elsewhere. He said, "But for the Jewish people, Auschwitz is more than the ultimate symbol of evil. It is also the ultimate symbol of Jewish powerlessness. It is the culmination of what can happen whenever people have no voice, no land, no shield."[2]

These hypocritical declarations fool no one. The whole world is witness to the fact that this "shield," which the Israeli Zionists claim is for self-defence, has been used since 1948 to commit terrorist attacks to expel over 800,000 Palestinians from their lands and has created mass displacement of people whose villages and homes were destroyed.

This continues right to today. For the past 14 years the people of Gaza have suffered continuous bombing and military attacks against civilians by the Israeli Army. Israel has turned Gaza into the largest open air prison in the world where over two million people are under attack and forced to live in inhuman conditions.
To invoke the memory of the Holocaust to justify inflicting such suffering on the Palestinian people is a crime that will not go unpunished.

The speeches by various leaders in the past week are a continuation of the attempt to rewrite history. Not only do they refuse to recognize the unmatched role of the Soviet Union and the Red Army in the defeat of German fascism, at such great sacrifice by the Soviet people, but they go even further to spread confusion about the nature of fascism.

They go to great lengths to equate anti-Semitism and Nazism. This is far from the truth because German fascism was far more than anti-Semitism. It was unbridled imperialism with the aim of world domination, which resulted in the mass extermination of Jews and Slavic people like Russians and Poles. Hundreds of thousands of Romani people and people with mental illnesses or handicaps were also executed in the concentration camps. The Nazis carried out politically motivated assassinations as well of trade unionists, Communists and anyone who opposed the expansionist plans of Nazi Germany. To reduce Nazi Germany to anti-Semitism and to declare that today criticism of Israeli crimes and Zionism are tantamount to anti-Semitism and constitute hate crimes is to falsify history and use the deaths of millions of people for narrow self-serving political ends.

All the falsifications of history promoted by the Western media on this 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz cannot cover up the real history of World War II and the supreme sacrifices made by the people of the world who fought to uphold the cause of freedom, democracy and peace to achieve victory over German fascism.

Notes

1. In August 2019 a monument was erected in the Ukrainian Village of Sambir dedicated to 17 members of Stepan Bandera's Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, Nazi collaborators who were responsible for the deaths of thousands of Jews and more than 100,000 Poles. Several uniformed Canadian soldiers, serving in Ukraine, participated in the dedication of the monument.

2. The full text of Netanyahu's speech can be found in the *Times of Israel*, January 23, 2020.
Long Live Revolutionary Vietnam!

90th Anniversary of the Communist Party of Vietnam
- Statement of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) -

On the occasion of the historic 90th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) salutes the heroic Vietnamese people on all their accomplishments, honours the memory and legacy of their legendary leader and the initial architect of modern Vietnam, President Ho Chi Minh, pays tribute to all those who sacrificed their lives to achieve victory in the protracted national liberation war against first French colonialism and then U.S. imperialism and pays deepest respects to the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam and President of the Republic, Nguyen Phu Throng and, through him, to all Party members.

The New Year editorial in Nanh Dan, the newspaper of the Communist Party of Vietnam published on January 3, was titled "Vietnam Greets the New Year with Confidence." What optimism in the face of the crises facing the world and so many countries, Canada included! Such optimism is entirely justified given the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the achievements of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam all these years.

In an interview given to Nanh Dan, January 26, on the occasion of Tet, the Lunar New Year, Comrade Nguyen Phu Throng noted: "In 2019, despite great difficulties and challenges, with thanks to the efforts made by the entire Party, people and armed forces, we have achieved many positive and important results in almost all fields leaving good impressions and providing valuable lessons, as well as creating new momentum and motivation to complete all objectives and tasks set for 2020 and the 2016-2020 period."

He noted that the macro-economy has been stabilized, inflation has been controlled, the country has maintained a trade surplus and, for the third consecutive year, Vietnam has accomplished and surpassed 12 key targets set by the government, and registered a GDP growth rate of over seven per cent, one of the highest in the world.

He went on to add that in 2019, health care, education, environmental protection and climate change adaptation had all been given due attention and improved. President Nguyen noted as well that the political and social situation has remained stable and national security and defence have

been strengthened which contributed to a peaceful environment in the country. He noted as well that Vietnam's participation in international affairs was strengthened and expanded which contributed to raising the position, role and prestige of the nation. He gave the example of Vietnam being elected by the UN General Assembly as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the 2020-21 term, gaining 192 out of 193 votes, a record high number. President Nguyen at the time said, "Vietnam will fulfill the mission successfully, continuing to be a friendly and reliable partner to contribute to global efforts for sustaining peace, cooperation and development."

He also noted that Vietnam is now Chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and well positioned to promote regional cooperation and peace among the ASEAN countries and peoples. "These achievements are a vivid manifestation of the tireless efforts of the entire Party, people and armed forces, with consensus and synchronization of all levels, branches and localities throughout the country as well as the strong support of the international community," the President said.

The work of party-building is key to Vietnam's success in achieving its goals. This work bears no resemblance to the stereotype of how a communist party functions, which is the stock disinformation promoted in the media in this country. On the contrary, the work to train and promote new members to positions of leadership ensures that their talents can be given full play and the role of the Party and State are strengthened in service of the people and the society.

President Nguyen underscored the fight against corruption in the context of party-building as the most important highlight of 2019. He emphasized the impressive results combating corruption, success in eliminating wastefulness and other problems. Many corruption cases have gone to trial and in the handling of the big cases, the Party gained valuable experience while at the same time those accused were justly and humanely treated. He added: "The Party's efforts have been supported and appreciated by the people. It is the most impressive highlight, which has helped strengthen and enhance the people's confidence in the Party and State as well as promote the socio-economic development program in a comprehensive and effective manner."

Next year the Communist Party of Vietnam will be convening its 13th Congress for which careful and extensive preparations are being carried out. Speaking of the upcoming Congress and the local regional congresses leading up to the National Congress, President Nguyen said: "The upcoming National Party Congress has the task of reviewing 10 years of implementing the Party's 2011 Platform (including supplements and developments made since then), looking back at 30 years of implementing the 1991 Platform for National Construction in the Transition to Socialism and 35 years of the Doi Moi (Renewal) process; and the task of summarizing the 10-year implementation of the Socio-economic Development Strategy 2011-2020, in order to create the basis for the building of the Socio-Economic Development Strategy for the next 10 years.

"This congress will not only set out the goals and tasks for the next five years, from 2021 to 2026, but it will also define a longer-term strategic vision, towards the celebrations for the 100th founding anniversary of the Communist Party of Vietnam (2030) and the 100th anniversary of the August Revolution and National Day (2045). These are large and difficult undertakings that require thorough, careful, comprehensive and scientific research on the principle of inheriting and
actively innovating in accordance with domestic conditions and the trend of globalization and international integration. For example, it is important to understand that proper political reform does not mean changing the political regime. It means renewing the political system, organizational structure, working methods, etc. With regards to economic reform, it is also necessary to properly evaluate the relationship between respect for market rules and ensuring socialist orientation within the State, the market and society. We must thoroughly grasp the guiding thought for renewal, without straying from the ideals and the path that the Party, Uncle Ho and the people have chosen."

This is the legacy of the Party of Ho Chi Minh, the legendary leader of the Vietnamese people and founder of the Communist Party of Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh founded the Communist Party of Vietnam, then known as the Communist Party of Indochina, in Hong Kong on February 3, 1930. At the time the people of Vietnam were facing the most brutal oppression and exploitation under French colonialism. Vietnamese patriots were killed, incarcerated or exiled when they organized in the anti-colonial anti-imperialist struggle to overthrow the French. The resistance was heroic but not successful because it lacked competent leadership and revolutionary theory based on the conditions of Vietnam to guide it. It was Ho Chi Minh who summed up the striving of the Vietnamese people's anti-colonial struggle against the French colonizers and concluded that without a Communist Party with a Marxist-Leninist theory and outlook to guide the movement, the Vietnamese people would continue to face great difficulty in crowning their anti-colonial struggle with victory.

At the time of the founding of the Party Ho Chi Minh gave the call:

The Indochinese Communist Party has been founded. It is the Party of the working class. It will help the proletariat lead the revolution waged for the sake of all oppressed and exploited people. From now on we must join the Party, help it and follow it in order to implement the following slogans:

1. To overthrow French imperialism and Vietnamese feudalism and reactionary bourgeoisie;
2. To make Indochina completely independent;
3. To establish a worker-peasant-soldier government;
4. To confiscate the banks and other enterprises belonging to the imperialists and put them under the control of the worker-peasant-soldier government;
5. To confiscate all the plantations and property belonging to the imperialists and the Vietnamese reactionary bourgeoisie and distribute them to the poor peasants;
6. To implement the eight-hour working day;
7. To abolish the forced buying of government bonds, the poll-tax and all unjust taxes hitting the poor;
8. To bring democratic freedoms to the masses;
9. To dispense education to all the people;
10. To realize equality between man and woman.
Under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh and the Communist Party of Vietnam, the people of Vietnam drove out the French and Japanese militarists, proclaimed their republic in September 1945, and then organized the people to defeat the efforts of the French (aided by the U.S., Canada and other Anglo-imperialist states) to recolonize Vietnam, and then those of the U.S. imperialists when they took up where the French had left off. The Communist Party of Vietnam, at monumental cost and sacrifice, made a historic contribution to the anti-colonial anti-imperialist struggles of the world's peoples for peace, and laid the foundation of the new Vietnam. In all of this the Communist Party of Vietnam was steeled and seasoned to be the instrument of the Vietnamese people's striving for independence and self-determination.

In his "Testament" of 1969, the year of his death, Ho Chi Minh again highlighted the decisive role of the Communist Party of Vietnam as the organizer and mobilizer of the people to defend their interests:

First about the Party -- Thanks to its close unity and total dedication to the working class, the people and the Homeland, our Party has been able, since its founding, to unite, organize and lead our people from success to success in a resolute struggle. Unity is an extremely precious tradition of our Party and people. All comrades, from the Central Committee down to the cells, must preserve the unity and oneness of mind in the Party as the apple of their eye.

Within the Party, to establish broad democracy and to practice self-criticism and criticism regularly and seriously is the best way to consolidate and develop solidarity and unity. Comradely affection should prevail.

Ours is a party in power. Each Party member, each cadre must be deeply imbued with revolutionary morality, and show industry, thrift, integrity, uprightness, total dedication to the public interest and complete selflessness. Our Party should preserve absolute purity and prove worthy of its role as the leader and very loyal servant of the people.

The legacy of the Party that Ho Chi Minh founded 90 years ago is expressed and strengthened in the Communist Party of Vietnam today as it continues to find its bearings under complex conditions and in all circumstances. Vietnam has successfully dealt with the external challenges in the world, the rivalry of big powers, the crisis in the imperialist system of states by strengthening and consolidating the Communist Party of Vietnam. As the Party approaches its 13th Congress next year, it can be seen by the optimism and confidence of the Vietnamese people, that the future of revolutionary Vietnam shines bright.

The glorious history of the Communist Party of Vietnam in leading the Vietnamese people in building a prosperous and modern socialist society is a vivid example of the indispensable role of the Communist Party in uniting the people to build a society for the benefit of all. In this way Vietnam has also succeeded in taking its place in the world as a highly respected nation which is a
force for peace, freedom and democracy at home and internationally.

These facts refute the propaganda which we hear these days against communist parties which comes from those ruling circles which are trying to cover up the fact that it is the system of liberal democracy with its multi-party system which is the most hegemonic and oppresses the working class and people and prevents the society from moving forward.

As we celebrate the 90th anniversary of the Communist Party of Vietnam it is important to use this opportunity to study and reflect on the role of the communist party in modern society to organize and unite the people to sort out the problems they and humanity face.

The living links between the Canadian and Vietnamese people were forged when tens of thousands of Canadians across Canada, particularly the youth, stood with the Vietnamese people in their struggle to defeat U.S. imperialism and reunify their divided nation. Here we also vigorously opposed Canada's sale of weapons and armaments, including warheads, bullets, and chemicals to make napalm, and other war materials to the U.S., which were in turn used against the Vietnamese people. The ties between the Vietnamese people today are enhanced with visits by Canadians to Vietnam to get to know and appreciate that country, and other bilateral ties, and the contributions made by Vietnamese students studying in Canada. The Canadian people will always stand with revolutionary Vietnam.

On this historic occasion of the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of Vietnam, our Party pledges to pay first-rate attention to strengthening the fraternal relations between our two parties and two peoples.

CPC(M-L) contingent in a 1970s demonstration in support of the struggle of the Vietnamese people to defeat U.S. imperialism.

167th Anniversary of the Birth of José Martí

José Martí, Essential to Our America

- Yolanda Machado -

Whoever speaks of economic union speaks of political union. The nation that buys, commands; the nation that sells, serves. Commerce must be balanced to assure freedom. A nation that wants to die sells to one nation only, and a nation that would be saved sells to more than one. The excessive influence of one country over another's commerce becomes political influence.

- José Martí, 1891
January 28 marks the 167th anniversary of the birth of José Martí, Cuba's national hero, architect of the 1895 war and critical thinker of the "new republic" that would be established in Cuba after its independence, a republic "with all and for the good of all," which would be essential to curb the expansionism of its northern neighbour.

It can be said that, more than a century and a half after his birth, it is essential to study José Martí if you want to know about the process and the importance of the unity of Latin America, its origins, its history, its actors, its background and more specific forms and ways in which said union is sought.

José Julián Martí Pérez, was born in Havana on January 28, 1853 and had a childhood marked not only by the needs of his family but by the reality of Cuba as a Spanish colony. Early on he was politically active and engaged with his friends and his teacher Rafael María de Mendive, in plots for liberating Cuba.

At 15 years of age, he was sentenced to prison in the quarries of San Lazaro in Havana for his political activism, following which he was banished and then deported to Spain in 1871. His first major writing, "Political Imprisonment in Cuba," emerged from this experience. In subsequent years he travelled through several countries of America, including a return to Cuba at the end of the Ten Years' War, from where he was again deported. In 1881 he settled more stably in New York, where he stepped up the intensity of his work for independence.

José Martí and Latin American Unity

Why study Martí today? He certainly was not the only one in his time, or even of those preceding him (Bolívar being the most significant), to see the necessity for Latin American unity, but it can be said that he is one of its most influential thinkers, whose dedicated political efforts and our America worldview acted as a vehicle linked to the independence of Cuba -- as well as of literary-
journalists -- and whose thinking now in that respect can be found in his articles in several of the Spanish-language newspapers of South America, especially in *La Nación* of Buenos Aires.

Several aspects undoubtedly influenced José Martí's Latin Americanist conception, but it was most certainly strongly influenced by his stay in several of the continent's countries, specifically Mexico and Guatemala, as noted by Cuban teacher and historian Pedro Pablo Rodríguez, and the study of their cultures and histories, as well as his approximately 15 years in the United States between 1881 and 1895. The latter is central to understanding Marti's work, for the events he would go through and review, make his work an unquestioned pause for reflection on the history and challenges of unity in Latin America.

The United States' "Gilded Age" (approx. 1865-1901) was a period of many changes, in which the U.S. emerged as a huge industrial power; new parties were born; with industrialization, the organization of the workers and peasants movement emerged; the railway was completed as was the country's expansion inwards, adding new states to the Union and eliminating, through what are called the Indian Wars, Indigenous peoples living in the west of the country.

A thriving modern society was formed but it also contained upheaval. It did not take long for Martí to see that there would be an increasingly pressing need for this country to expand its markets, and that expansion would almost naturally be towards its neighbours in South America. Clearer background can be found in the ideas of Henry Clay, speaker of the United States House of Representatives, who in 1820 had expressed enthusiasm for a "human-freedom league" of American states for the purpose of uniting "all nations from Hudson Bay to Cape Horn;" and, a few years later, in 1823, in the famous Monroe Doctrine, "America for Americans," through which the U.S. sought to assert its dominance over this part of the world against Europe.

It is necessary to note that this idea of "Pan-Americanism" was not a unanimously supported vision in American politics. While some advocated a union based on trade, similar to a customs union, others, staunch protectionist industries, sought to maintain high rates for imports. However, the United States needed to ensure trade and did not look very favourably on commercial incursions by European powers such as Britain, which had maintained a friendly relationship with several former Spanish colonies in America, with which it had close ties.

Efforts to hold what would be the first International Conference of American States in Washington had already been brewing since 1881 by then Secretary of State James G. Blaine, who would occupy the same position and drive those efforts at the end of that decade.

It is through a law in 1888 that the United States Congress authorized the president of that nation to call for holding "a conference between the United States and the Republics of Mexico, Central and South America, Haiti, Santo Domingo, and the Empire of Brazil" whose objectives were, among others, "measures aimed at the formation of an American customs union, to promote as much as possible profitable and reciprocal trade between American nations" and "the adoption by each of the governments of a common silver coin, used in reciprocal commercial transactions of the citizens of all States of America," according to the announcement.

However, the young journalist and Cuban revolutionary, who also served occasionally as Consul of Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay, wrote in his chronicles that the need to stop this expansionism was urgent -- since as nascent Latin American republics they had not yet been given time to stand on their own feet -- if the relationship was to be among equals.

In 1884, "The American" monthly newspaper wrote: "There is both danger and advantage in the inevitable intimacy of the two sections of the Americas. This intimacy is so close at hand, and perhaps for some points so overwhelming that there is little time to stand, see and speak."
The conference lasted from October 1889 to April 1890, with successive meetings and breaks. In an issue of the Argentine newspaper *La Nación* on November 2, Martí wrote:

Never in America, from its independence to the present, has there been a matter requiring more good judgment or more vigilance, or demanding a clearer and more thorough examination, than the invitation which the powerful United States (glutted with unsaleable merchandise and determined to extend its dominions in America) is sending to the less powerful American nations (bound by free and useful commerce to the European nations) for purposes of arranging an alliance against Europe and cutting off transactions with the rest of the world. Spanish America learned how to save itself from the tyranny of Spain; and now, after viewing with judicial eyes the antecedents, motives, and ingredients of the invitation, it is essential to say, for it is true, that the time has come for Spanish America to declare its second independence.

That conference did not achieve its primary purpose, a customs union, but served as terrain for the manifestation of the worldviews of the southern countries, especially from Argentina, and the response given to several of the proposals made there and to "America for the Americans" was in the end through the chant "America for humanity."

When the Argentinean delegate Sáenz Pena, in challenging the commercial union, concluded his speech with the phrase that is a banner, and was a barrier there: Let America be for humanity, they all stood up in appreciation and extended their hands to him. (*José Martí in La Nación, (March 31, 1890)).

In his book *To the Sun I Go, Glimpses of Martí's Politics*, Pedro Pablo Rodríguez said that "Latin American unity is therefore a logical consequence of Marti's anti-imperialism, or better, is the other side of that coin, because of the close interdependence of both aspects of his thought."

In 1891, Martí repeated his position in the Monetary Conference of the American Republics and that same year published his transcendental essay on Latin American unity, "Our America," a product of a profound maturity of his thought, which placed not only the Indigenous figure at the centre of the formation of the American republics, but also the need for their own approach and to take part in international trade, "Let the world be grafted onto our republics, but we must be the trunk."

**Reissuing the Monroe Doctrine**

In September 2019, in his speech to the General Assembly of the United Nations, U.S. President Donald Trump alluded directly to the Monroe Doctrine and said, "Here in the Western hemisphere we are committed to maintaining our independence from the encroachment of expansionist foreign powers. It has been the formal policy of our country since President Monroe that we reject the interference of foreign nations in this hemisphere and in our own affairs."

Without mentioning what foreign nations he was referring to, one can sense that the reference was directed specifically at China and Russia. Perhaps more at China, which has significant business and trade relations in the region with strong economies such as Brazil (which is part of the BRICS group) and major stakes in technology.

According to an article in mid-2019 by German broadcaster Deutsche Welle, "Chinese investments in the region have increased considerably, from $17 billion in 2002 to almost $306 billion in 2018. At the same time, that country has become the largest trading partner for Brazil, Chile, Peru and Uruguay." The article itself notes that China's strategy has changed, from pursuing diplomatic recognition (in the face of the recognition of Taiwan) to concentrating on its commercial relations although according to the Chinese official consulted, the region is not a priority for China.
However, it is a priority for the U.S., which does not look favourably on this approach, as made clear a few days ago by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on his way through Costa Rica, who criticized China's "flashy promises" highlighting on the other hand U.S. investment in the Central American country, sparking a diplomatic row with the Chinese embassy in San Jose.

All this creates a scenario that places Latin America at the centre of global geopolitical disputes and there exists in the work of Martí relevant elements to illuminate the understanding of the events that are taking place. Some 167 years after his birth, we can say not only that Martí was an outstanding thinker, but also was accurate at the key moment of the emergence of the styles and organizations that would largely shape modern life throughout the 20th century (mass society, parties, mass movements) and are now facing the systemic crises of late capitalism and the scientific-technological revolution challenging humanity in multiple ways.

Martí's legacy may contribute to understanding the complexity of the history of Latin American unity, in a situation that has seen in recent times the collapse of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) and the resurgence of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) as key areas of cooperation between the countries in the south of America, permitting those who study it to have a better perspective and understanding, and to size up events more appropriately. José Martí is in this sense an indispensable voice and, without doubt, one of the essential voices of our America.

The diplomatic corps at Cuba's Embassy and their families pay tribute to José Martí, Ottawa, January 28, 2020.
Cuban Consul in Montreal, Mara Bilbao Diaz, delivers flowers to the bust of José Martí at Latin America Park, Quebec City, January 28, 2020.

The Canadian Cuban Friendship Association-Vancouver commemorates the birth of José Martí, January 26, 2020.

Yolanda Machado is a journalist, communicator and student of Martí’s thought. She is the author of several papers on José Martí for international meetings, and teaches courses in Argentina on the political thought of José Martí.

(Rebelión, January 28, 2020. Translated from original Spanish by TML. Photos: Estudios Revolución, TML, Cuban Embassy in Canada.)

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