

20 November 2024

His Excellency  
Compañero Miguel Diaz – Canel Bermúdez  
First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba, the Central Committee  
President of the Republic of Cuba  
**HAVANA**  
Republic of Cuba

Your Excellency,

**SUBJECT: MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF CUBA ON THE OCCASION OF THE DEVASTATING NATURAL DISASTERS OF THE NOVEMBER 10, 6.8 MAGNITUDE EARTHQUAKE AND TWO HURRICANES WHICH STRUCK CUBA ON OCTOBER 21<sup>ST</sup> AND NOVEMBER 6, RESPECTIVELY**

It is with a heavy heart that I have learned how Cuba was hit by two consecutive hurricanes and a few days later by a strong earthquake.

Indeed, on November 10, a 6.8 magnitude quake shook the eastern end of the island of Cuba, with the epicenter located some 25 miles south of the town of Bartolome Maso. According to reports, the tremors could be felt in the cities like Santiago de Cuba, the nation's second largest city, and Guantanamo.

The earthquake took place when Cuba is struggling to recover after the category 3 storm of Hurricane Rafael slammed into the Cuban island on November 6 and left an indelible mark with devastations in the form of fallen trees, destroyed homes and knocked down power poles.

Fortunately, no immediate reports of casualties or significant damage from the quake have emerged but both disasters followed on the heels of category 1 storm of Hurricane Oscar, which struck Cuba on October 21, killing at least six people and made landfall amid an island-wide blackout resulting from the October 18 collapse of a thermoelectric power plant in Matanzas, a further blow to Cuba's struggling power grid.

In view of this and thereof, Your Excellency, allow me to express, on behalf of the Veterans of our National Liberation Struggle, my family and indeed on my own behalf, the firm solidarity with the Cuban people and wishes for the prompt recovery of the families and infrastructures affected after the scourge of hurricanes Oscar and Rafael and the devastating earthquake that affected the eastern part of the country.

In times of crisis, solidarity is critical to helping rebuild what has been lost and we trust that, with collective effort, the path to recovery will be opened. It is therefore my sincere hope that our Cuban brothers and sisters will rise from these disasters because every piece of solidarity shared is a reminder that together we can face these challenges head-on.

As the Cuban people have been severely affected recently by the devastating effects of the above mentioned natural disasters, this difficult situation is further compounded by the unilateral sanctions applied by the United States of America, which have been condemned by the United Nations system and by many institutions the world over, on various occasions.

Against this background, given that the Cuban economy has been one of the most heavily impacted by the above mentioned natural disasters and is currently at a point of no return, we demand the immediate lifting of the blockade against Cuba which has been condemned in more than thirty resolutions by an absolute majority in the United Nations General Assembly.

Similarly, we urge the government of the United States of America to remove Cuba from the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism. Our request is grounded in a compelling humanitarian appeal aimed at alleviating the situation of millions of innocent Cuban people, especially during this time of devastating natural disasters like the November 10, 6.8 magnitude earthquake and the category 3 Hurricane Rafael, which slammed into the island on November 6 as well as the category 1 Hurricane Oscar, which struck Cuba on October 21st, 2024.

Hoping that the bonds of friendship with our Cuban brothers and sisters, forged in the trenches and cemented with blood, during our protracted armed liberation struggle, will continue to flourish, allow me to renew to Your Excellency, Compañero Miguel Diaz – Canel Bermúdez, the assurances of my highest consideration and wish the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba, the Central Committee and President of the Republic of Cuba, renewed strength and unparalleled longevity as you lead your country to greater heights.



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