



MEMO International Conference:
Palestine & Latin America in the 21st century

Cuba and Palestine, two countries one struggle

Address by Jorge Luis Garcia

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MEMO Publishers
419-421 Crown House
North Circular Road
London, NW10 7PN
t: +44 (0)20 8838 0231
f: +44 (0)20 8838 0705
e: info@memopublishers.com
w: www.memopublishers.com

Cuba and Palestine, two countries one struggle

Jorge Luis Garcia



Luis Garcia is a Cuban diplomat and a graduate of the Cuban Superior Institute of International Relations, Raúl Roa García. He has been appointed to several positions at various Cuban Embassies, including those in Poland, Venezuela and the United Kingdom.

His roles have included consul, press officer, administrative officer and political counsellor.

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I want to say that from the very beginning in 1947 during the second General Assembly of the United Nations organisation, the Cuban delegate Dr Belt opposed the partition plan for Palestine which was going to come into effect later [as part of the] application of the resolution 181. Cuba was one of the 13 countries that voted against.

The Cuban government officially recognised Palestinian liberation in November 1974 in the frame [work] of the first visit to Cuba of the historical Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. Cuban President Raul Castro last year sent President Mahmoud Abbas a congratulation message on the occasion of the celebration of 18 November, the 26th anniversary of the declaration of independence of the State of Palestine.

Cuba supports the right of the Palestinian people to a state of their own and the pre-1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital. Cuba has condemned the aggressive policies of Israel against the Palestinians which violate flagrantly international law and the charter of the United Nations. We think the United Nations General Assembly should act with resolve and guarantee, without further delay, that the full membership of Palestine, the supply of weapons, [inaudible] in the Security Council which ensures the impunity of the crimes committed by Israeli leadership must be finished.

The commanding chief Fidel Castro has expressed many times the Cuban support for the Palestinian cause. Last year he signed the manifesto of international support to Palestine, which demanded Israel withdraw from Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Last year the Cuban government sent to Gaza six tonnes of drugs

and medical supplies to the Palestinian victims of the Israeli attacks and said it was willing to receive Palestinians injured during the fighting.

Cuba has long been in support of the Palestinian cause because it is an anti-colonial one. My people have been subjected, for more than 55 years, to a genocidal blockade by the government of the United States and is convinced that no one thinks that oppression can end how deserving of independence and justice the Palestinian people are.

We must remember, and let me quote the Cuban national hero José Martí: “A just idea in the roof of the cave is stronger than the army.”

Contribution during the Q&A:

I think Latin America right now is enjoying a very good moment because we have no dictatorship there. We have a lot of progresses in government and we have a lot of political and social [inaudible] to improve the quality of living of our people. Those are very brave achievements for this time. In the case of Cuba, let me say something, because I don't want to mislead the audience about the changes that are taking place in Cuba. Yes we are changing, but we are changing for deep social reasons. We are not changing to join the United States. We are keeping with our policy; we are going to support Palestinian people. This is something that must be very clear in the mind of all of us.

** This transcript has been edited for clarity*

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