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**AFRICA-CUBA
SOLIDARITY
CONFERENCE**

SOUTH AFRICA

**“AFRICA'S COMMITMENT TO
THE CUBAN REVOLUTION”**

Declaration of the 7th African Continental Meeting of Solidarity with Cuba held in Mbombela, South Africa 15-17 January 2024

We, the delegates that convened from 15th to 17th January 2024 in Mbombela, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa, express our sincere gratitude to the South African revolutionary alliance comprising the African National Congress, South African Communist Party, Congress of South African Trade Unions, and South African National Civic Organisation, as well as civil society organisations - the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples, and the Friends of Cuba Society, for hosting the 7th Africa Cuba Conference of Solidarity with Cuba.

The 7th Conference was graced with the participation of a high level delegation from Cuba, led by Cde Comrade Fernando Gonzalez Llord President of the Instituto Cubano de Amistad con los Pueblos (Cuban Institute for Friendship among the People, ICAP); the Prime Minister of the Saharawi Republic cde Buchraya Beyoun, Ft Michael Lapsley of the Friends of Cuba Society; Mme Modiehi Masoleng-Matlhako who received an Award from the Cuban government, presented at the Conference and high level delegations from African national liberation movements, political parties, solidarity associations and networks.

This meeting served as a crucial platform for us, from our respective African countries and other global regions, including Europe, Latin America, North America and Asia, to strengthen our efforts and deepen our international solidarity with the Cuban government and people. We pay tribute to the Cuban people on their historic revolution of 1st January 1959. This year, January the 1st marked the 65th anniversary of the Cuban revolution, a decisive advance in the struggle for national self-determination, freedom and socialist construction to end capitalist exploitation and imperialism – the highest stage of capitalism.

As we met, the imperialist regime of the United States under Joe Biden, its latest President, has intensified the inhuman economic, trade, investment and financial blockade, as well as the accompanying political propaganda and other forms of regime change machinations against Cuba. Yet during his campaign for the office, Biden made a commitment to return to the “normalisation” of United States relations with Cuba. His predecessor, Donald Trump, had adopted 243 draconian measures to intensify the blockade against Cuba, rolling back the little normalisation progress whose first step appeared publicly at the former South African President Nelson Mandela’s memorial service In December 2013.

At a historic event on 10 December 2013 in Johannesburg, for the first time since the Cuban revolution, United States' President Barack Obama, publicly shook hands with Cuba's President, Raúl Castro. This was subsequently followed by engagements and other steps towards the normalisation of US-Cuba relations. However, in his announcement in the United States two years later, on 17 December 2014, Obama reaffirmed adherence to the achievement of "US interests" in Cuba. This, he said, was his administration's goal for what he called the "United States-Cuba Normalization". He did not change US imperialist interests but asserted "normalization" as a substitute for what he called "an outdated policy that had failed to advance" those interests in Cuba. In the end, the gesture at the memorial service did not deter the United States' imperialism from seeking to suppress nations striving for self-determination.

Before the Cuban revolution, working people in Cuba lived under wretched, semi-colonial and super-exploitative conditions. Comprador capitalists, wealthy landowners, along with their political lackeys, hangers-on, and beneficiaries of their patronage networks, all subordinate to the United States' imperialist interests, were in charge. They called the shots, each according to their importance and exercise of power and/or authority in the economy and/or the state. The bourgeoisie super-exploited the working-class, accumulating wealth and depriving ordinary people of decent livelihoods and emancipation. The victory of the Cuban revolution, ended the regime of the US-backed Fulgencio Batista, the dictator. It marked the beginning of a transition to socialist construction in the Western hemisphere. We support the efforts of the government and people of Cuba in their struggle to refuse to go back.

After the revolution, Cuba became a bastion of anti-colonial and anti-imperialist solidarity, and a major inspiration to peace-loving people across the world. The Cuban people showed the way to victory in the struggle to end colonial rule and exploitation in the global South. As Africans, we will continue to cherish the revolutionary discipline, resilience and strength of the Cuban people in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, Angola. The battle raged on from the end of 1987 into 1988. Cuban soldiers, alongside our African liberation counterparts, fought courageously, others shedding their blood for Africa's liberation. In a historic victory, they defeated the arrogant army of the apartheid South Africa, highlighting the global impact of working-class and progressive solidarity.

The triumph in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale resulted in the liberation of Angola and Namibia and paved the way for the negotiations that ultimately brought an end to the apartheid regime in South Africa. This marked a significant transition to democracy in Southern Africa after decades of liberation struggle. We express our sincere gratitude to the selfless Cuban people,

who sacrificed a lot, and returned to Cuba only with the mortal remains of their fallen heroes – and not a single African mineral or shred of wealth.

The Cuban Revolution gave both hope and material support not only to Africans but to other people in different global regions against oppression, exploitation, domination of one country by another, and disease. An independent country of just over 11 million people, Cuba stands as a beacon of socialist transformation and development, upholding the social, cultural, and economic rights of citizens, with guarantees to the right to work, education, health, housing, food security, and social protection. Today, Cuba is the only country in the world to have fulfilled the UN Millennium Development Goals. It has made these and other achievements despite six decades of an economic blockade imposed by the imperialist regime of the United States. While it claims to be a democratic state, the United States is an imperialist dictatorial state in both its posture to Cuba and relations with many other countries.

The United States' blockade of Cuba is illegal. Included in the unjust blockade are unilateral sanctions outside of and undermining the United Nations' legal and multilateral frameworks and annual resolutions. Through the blockade, the United States is against all of us in our respective countries and global regions. The blockade encompasses extraterritorial impacts directly affecting our countries and non-US citizens and companies through sanctions, prohibitive and punitive measures in trade, investment, financial and other relations, economic and political.

We salute the resilience of Cuban socialist construction, which continues despite the heightened blockade. We condemn every US administration up to and including the Biden administration for their intransigent attitude towards global appeals to lift the blockade completely with immediate effect and unconditionally end the occupation of Guantanamo Bay, a Cuban territory. The US blockade, unilateral sanctions and associated intransigence represent an assault on the human rights of the Cuban people and all the global citizens it affects. We declare our unwavering commitment to strengthen the bonds of solidarity and friendship with Cuba.

Besides offering support for many of our national liberation struggles, Cuba offered vital medical, engineering and other education and training assistance to many people in Africa and other global regions. In solidarity with other countries, Cuba trained and is still training medical doctors, nurses, other healthcare professionals, engineers, teachers and other professionals. Cuba's Henry Reeve Medical Brigade has helped other countries during the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. This is terrorist – in the minds of the imperialist leaders

and legislators of the United States. In using every trick in the book in pursuit of its imperialist agenda, the United States has included Cuba in its spurious unilateral list of countries allegedly sponsoring terrorism. We condemn this with the contempt it deserves.

For 31 years since 1992, the United Nations General Assembly has passed a resolution annually for the United States to end its illegal blockade of Cuba. Of all countries, only the US and the apartheid Israeli regime, which has unleashed a genocide of the Palestinian people, have consistently voted against the resolution. The United States has intransigently disregarded both the United Nations and the global community, which have condemned and called for an end to its blockade of Cuba. Also, it has maintained its occupation of the Cuban territory of Guantanamo Bay despite international condemnation and calls to end it unconditionally with immediate effect.

The 7th Africa Cuba Solidarity Conference believes that Now is the time for additional efforts in the struggle for a peaceful and just world order. Consistent with our continuing condemnation of the US blockade of Cuba, its extraterritorial impacts and foreign occupation of Guantanamo Bay, the Conference adopted a Programme of Action (an Addendum to this Declaration).

The Programme of Action contains concrete actions of united efforts to raise awareness and intensify peaceful political protests, directed at United States embassies in our countries, against the unjust and illegal blockade of Cuba; against the unjust occupation of Guantanamo Bay; against regime change agenda and other destabilisation mechanisms in Cuba; and against the inclusion of Cuba in the unilateral list of states that allegedly sponsor terrorism

We further commit to deepen collaborative ties between Cuba and Africa (starting within our respective countries) in various sectors, strengthen people to people and diaspora solidarity; and cooperation in the areas of health, education, science and technology, as well as culture, sports, government to government, tourism, diplomatic and a range of other areas, and amongst various sectors, especially women and youth, set out in the Programme of Action.

Conference welcomes the commitment by FRELIMO, the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique) to host the next, 8th Africa Cuba Solidarity Conference in Mozambique.

The conference reiterated its commitment to stand firmly with all oppressed people of the world, especially in Africa and South America, including the struggle against patriarchy and

vow to continue to work for peaceful resolutions to conflicts. In this regard, the Conference adopted a special resolution on the genocide in Palestine.

Conference pledged our unwavering support to and solidarity with the Cuban revolutionary government and people in defence of Cuba's fundamental right to self-determination, not least their right and pursuit of socialism as their chosen transformation and development trajectory.

The 7th Africa Cuba Solidarity Conference held in South Africa rises determined to continue and expand Africa's unwavering support and solidarity with Cuba. We make a Clarion call to the peace and freedom loving people, organisations and governments of our continent to rally support for the Cuban people, and to work tirelessly for an immediate end to the unilateral economic blockage and other imperialist actions against the people and government of Cuba.

Adopted on 18 January 2024, Mbombela City. South Africa

Resolution of the 7th Africa Cuba Solidarity Conference on Palestine

We, the delegates at the 7th Africa Cuba Solidarity Conference, held in Mpumalanga South Africa from 15-17 January 2024 condemn the fascist genocide being perpetrated by the apartheid Israeli Zionist regime against the peoples of Palestine.

We equally, condemn the United States of America support for the genocide being perpetuated in Gaza. President Biden like Prime Minister Netanyahu's hands will forever be stained with the blood of the thousands of non-combatant innocent men, women and children of Gaza.

We strongly condemn the mass detentions, continual occupation of Palestinian homes and land, and other violations of human rights against the peoples of Palestine.

The daily mass murder of citizens by the Israeli Defence Force has turned Gaza into a concentration camp and death chamber of Palestine. By allowing and being active participants in the above heinous acts, Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Biden have taken over where Hitler and Goebels left off. We condemn the genocide committed at their behest and sanction.

We support the principled internationalists decision of the South African government for having arraigned a charge of genocide against Israel at the Peace Palace in the Hague, Netherlands.

We pledge our support for the struggle of the people of Palestine for human rights, dignity, freedom and their inalienable right to self-determination.

We urge an urgent cease fire and the immediate end of hostilities, and for urgent humanitarian assistance to the peoples of Gaza.

ADDENDUM

AFRICA CUBA SOLIDARITY PROGRAMME OF ACTION

As presented, amended and adopted by Plenary on 17 January 2024

The 7th Africa Cuba Solidarity Conference, held in White River Mpumalanga in South Africa, from 15-17 January 2024, adopts the following programme of action until the next Conference, in order to galvanise and unite all progressive forces on the African continent in solidarity to the Cuban Revolution:

On Education, Health and Science and Technology

1. Strengthen cooperation on health, including telemedicine, pharmaceuticals, combatting disease, health promotion, training of medical personnel, and support the work of the Henry Reeve International Contingent of Doctors Specialized in Disasters and Serious Epidemics.
2. Encourage cooperation and exchange programmes between universities, academics and students.
3. Maintain partnerships in training doctors and engineers, consider Cuban teachers at the high school level, and ensure appropriate recognition of Cuban degrees.
4. Embrace the Fourth Industrial Revolution, integrate technology in education and administrative systems, job creation and collaborate with Cuba on telemedicine.
5. Support cooperation amongst continental, regional and country research institutions on technology with relevant Cuban institutions.
6. Explore how Cuba addresses climate change, analyse media narratives, and partner with institutions for educational initiatives.

On Pan African Solidarity Action and Coordination

7. Adopts the declaration of an annual Cuban Solidarity Focus Week, culminating in an African Day of Solidarity with Cuba on 23 March each year. The day of action should have mass protests to the US embassies, and also highlight the issues of US financial and economic blockage against Cuba. The focus week should include lectures, cultural activities, screening of documentaries and other local and national actions in all countries, to raise awareness, educate our citizens on Cuba and campaign for the immediate end to the economic blockade against Cuba. Add important Cuban dates, such as 26 July to our calendars, to raise further awareness on Cuban Solidarity.
8. Promote and be consistent with the legacy of Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz and the Cuban people in Africa, in the form of in-person and/or virtual events, conferences, exhibitions, panels, political events in different countries to remember their contribution to the liberarian struggles.
9. Establish a Pan-African Continental and In-Country coordination network/mechanism to streamline collaborative efforts, and encourage to create Cuban friendship societies in countries where they don't exist.
10. The coordination network should coordinate the implementation and monitoring of African solidarity efforts agreed on at this and future conferences, with the host country reporting to the next Africa Cuba Solidarity Conference on the implementation of this programme of action.

11. Stress the need to create a Cuban Pan African Solidarity Fund to support solidarity, with fundraising activities such as crowdfunding and contributions from individuals and states.
12. The pan African coordinating mechanism should also create a database of all organisations, networks and societies working on Cuban solidarity in the continent, in order to facilitate cooperation and exchange of information so that we support each other's solidarity activities.

On Economic Solidarity and Cooperation

13. Strengthen economic cooperation between Cuba and our countries in such areas as telemedicine, agriculture and agro-processing, mineral beneficiation, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment and other common sectors, including on trade, investments, business to business, entrepreneurship, exchanges and technology transfer.
14. Collaborate activities in trade, finance and economy in defiance of the blockade, through state enterprises, the African Continental Free Trade Area, BRICS, the African Union and other forums, in order to promote developmental trade and self-determination, as well as country to country developmental trade agreements.
15. In particular, address the inability of the Cuban embassies in our countries to use financial and other banking facilities, by developing policies that forces our banks not to defy international laws.
16. Supports the active collaboration between trade unions in Nigeria, Namibia and South Africa and the Cuban trade union federations, and encourage trade unions across Africa and in the global trade union movement, to follow these examples.
17. Review policy and legislative environments that prohibit trades and economic relations with Cuba.
18. Encourage tourism as part of solidarity: enable free movement through lifting visa requirements, explore direct flights to Cuba and work with travel agents such as Amistur Cuba towards the establishment of an African brigade. Note the 1 May International brigade and the need to revive the initiative.

On People to People and Diaspora Solidarity

19. Raise awareness through social media, citizen and political education, on solidarity with Cuba as support for global humanity, not an act of charity. Mobilize community-based activities,
20. Organise grassroots and community mobilization activities, including documentary screenings, poetry sessions and other cultural programmes and exchanges to build strong networks of support for Cuba in our countries, with a focus on sectoral organisations.
21. Immediately expand the campaign to collect non-perishable goods in all our countries, and ship these at least twice a year.
22. Set up a network of alumni who were trained in Cuba, to share information and expand and contribute to solidarity activities in our countries.
23. Organise community-based agricultural programmes towards food security; empowerment programmes to enable communities to build and maintain their own facilities e.g. schools, clinics, access roads and other socio-economic infrastructure; and short programmes for primary health care. These exchange programmes must not be confined to matriculants and graduates only, but should also empower all our communities, including early school-leavers.
24. Do ideological work to engage the battle of ideas work on solidarity and history and position of Cuba and its contribution to Africa and global humanity, as well as the national and socialist

development achievements of Cuba, despite the odds. Popularise on revolutionary teachings of Cde Fidel Castro and other Cuban revolutionaries.

25. Develop communication strategies through TV, radio, social networks, newspapers and other platforms that allow the Cuban reality to be disseminated, denounce hostile policies against Cuba, and disseminate solidarity activities.

On Cultural Solidarity

26. Encourage sporting activities with between African and Cuban sports clubs, as an education mechanism and for fundraising in support of Cuban solidarity activities.
27. Encourage cooperation and exchange in film, art, music, broadcasting and other cultural exchanges.
28. Encourage the building of monuments in Angola and other countries celebrating the Cuban contribution to African liberation and development, the creation of a Cuba-Africa museum with proceeds going to Cuba, especially where those who fell in this struggle. Take note that the Museum of African Liberation, based in Harare, Zimbabwe will also recognize the role and contributions of Cuba in the armed struggle across the continent.

On Women and Youth Solidarity

29. Encourage women solidarity through cooperation amongst Women's Leagues of NLM, develop an action plan on women solidarity, colloquiums on women of Cuba, and activities coordinated by PAWO to advocate for the dignity and respect for the Cuban women. Collaborate on Young women's dignity packs to be send to Cuba. Use the promotion of UN resolution on women, peace and security, Resolution 1325, as anchor for solidarity actions amongst women.
30. Strengthen youth solidarity with Cuba, with brigades, student exchanges, activities at universities and colleges, social media solidarity and awareness campaigns, exchanges through national youth services, social media campaigns, and other activities to raise awareness amongst new generations on Cuba. Inclusion of the role of Cuba in our history curricula, showcasing collaboration between Cuba and Africa in various sectors, and the creation of a Cuba Africa Youth Forum.

On Diplomatic and Government to Government Actions

31. Encourage liberation movements and political parties, particularly those in power, to take a prominent role in advocating for the lifting of unilateral financial and trade blockades against the heroic people of Cuba. This involves leading international calls, mobilizing support, and engaging in diplomatic efforts to address the economic challenges faced by Cuba. Particularly mobilizing for the majority vote at the United Nations and African Union Resolutions.
32. Urge all African governments to raise the issue of the unilateral and unjust economic blockade against Cuba in diplomatic relations with the USA and countries of the North, and raise the matter in all multilateral and regional institutions.
33. Review Memorandum of Understanding/Agreements to strengthen bilateral relations and cooperation.
34. Promote the establishment of Cuban institutions in African countries, focusing on education and leveraging African minerals and other goods produced on the continent to support Cuba at all times.

35. Strengthen and work towards the establishment of local government twinning agreements between African and Cuban municipalities, towns and cities.
36. Distribute the Declaration and Programme of Action of this conference to legislatures across the continent and the world.
37. For the Africa Cuba Solidarity movement to reach out to Cuba Solidarity networks in the USA, Canada and the rest of the world.
38. Encourage national liberation movements and political parties to invite our respective diaspora communities and chapters in the USA to participate in national conferences, and to lobby, mobilise and advocate in the USA for the lifting of the blockade against Cuba.
39. Write a letter to the government of the United States of America, signed by Conference participants, calling for the end of the unilateral economic blockade, for the removal of Cuba from the US list of countries sponsoring terrorism, the total withdrawal of the US from Guantanamo Bay and deliver to USA embassies in all our countries.

Reporting and the 8th Africa Cuba Solidarity Conference

40. Request South Africa as the host of the 7th Conference to monitor the implementation of this programme of action, and to hand over the report to Mozambique at the next conference.
41. Welcomes the offer from Mozambique to host the 8th Africa-Cuba Solidarity Conference at a date to be communicated.

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS