

# *A constant threat to Cuba's integrity*

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By María Josefina Arce

The world once again took part in a new day against military bases, which are spread over a hundred countries and constitute a permanent threat to peace, sovereignty and self-determination of the peoples.

These enclaves, mostly American, and which have been essential for the invasion of other countries, also have great social and environmental repercussions for the territories where they are located.

Communities living nearby report high rates of rape by foreign soldiers, violent crime, environmental contamination and health risks.

In recent times they have been used for detention and torture. Precisely the best known example is the illegal U.S. naval base at Guantanamo, in eastern Cuba, a country that in recent hours developed a worldwide tweet in response to the call of the World Peace Council to carry out actions in rejection of the

existence of these enclaves on foreign soil.

Cuban authorities have repeatedly denounced the existence of this military installation in territory illegally occupied by the United States, which constitutes an affront to its sovereignty and a threat to its integrity.

Against the will of the Cuban government and people, the United States maintains this base, which last January celebrated 20 years of being used as a detention and abuse center, as part of the supposed fight against terrorism by the United States and which has served as a pretext for the occupation and aggression against other peoples.

Fake drowning, sleep deprivation or exposure to extreme temperatures have been some of the tortures used by Washington. UN experts have rejected the continuous violations of the detainees' fundamental guarantees and affirmed that these practices are unacceptable for any government, but particularly for the U.S. government, which claims to be the protector of human rights.

Some 39 prisoners are still being held in that enclave, most of them in legal limbo, in open violation of their prerogatives and of international law.

Countless provocative actions have been perpetrated from the Guantanamo naval base, such as the launching of flammable materials into our territory from airplanes coming from the military enclave, the shooting of US soldiers against Cuban border guard posts and the murder in the early years of the revolution of Cuban citizens who worked in those facilities.

Furthermore, studies have shown that the illegitimate naval base causes serious damage to the soil in the area by obstructing the drainage of the basin formed by the Guantánamo and Guaso rivers.

Likewise, its existence hinders the socioeconomic development of the area, since it prevents the exploration of the bay by its legitimate owner, the Cuban people.

More than a century after it was imposed on the Cuban people, against their will, and in spite of international conventions that confirm its illegality, the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo continues to be an affront to our sovereignty and a constant threat to our integrity.

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