

# *New head of IFCO/Pastors for Peace sends message of solidarity and love to the Cuban people*

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**Claudia De la Cruz.** Photo: Deisy de la Caridad Francis Mexidor

New York, February 21 (RHC)-- Claudia De la Cruz, executive director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization IFCO-Pastors for Peace, has expressed her rejection of President Donald Trump's decision to revoke measures in favor of Cuba taken days before leaving office by his predecessor Joe Biden.

"Cuba is known throughout the world for its solidarity, love, and its desire to collaborate even with the people of the United States, which is why its inclusion on a list of alleged countries sponsoring terrorism is inconceivable," De la Cruz said in an interview with Prensa Latina.

She said that "it is very important to be able to expand and strengthen the ties of solidarity with Cuba, with the American and Caribbean region, with the world, and at IFCO we understand that there is a lot of work to be done."

But above all, "we want to maintain the legacy of the Reverend Lucius Walker, the legacy of many who joined IFCO and Pastors for Peace (...) They set the tone and the path in this fight against the blockade," the activist stressed.

"At this time, it is essential to combat the disinformation against Cuba that comes from the Trump government and conservative sectors of the Democratic Party," she reflected.

"And it is essential to work in the new conditions of hostility towards the island by the United States government," added the former presidential candidate in 2024 for the Party for Socialism and Liberation.

For us, just as the Pastors for Peace caravans did in the 90s or early 2000s, which did a job of denouncing, confronting and demanding an end to the inhuman blockade, in the same way we have the need to continue demanding that Cuba be removed from that list, she added.

Part of that legacy of the Reverend Lucius -- which was continued by his daughter Gail Walker, who served as executive director of IFCO after her father's passing -- is the support for Cuba and that is what we will continue to do from the United States, she said.

De la Cruz argued that, in the task of combating false narratives, we have to emphasize that Cuba has in no way been involved in terrorist actions; however, the United States has been a coordinator, promoter of terrorism against that country, a terrorism that has come from Miami many times.

In response to a question about the current deportations by the Trump administration, IFCO's executive director condemned the sending of undocumented migrants to the detention center located at the U.S. naval base in illegally occupied territory in Guantanamo.

"We are seeing that the conditions are being created to have 30,000 people deported from the United States inside that naval base as if they were terrorists," said the activist, insisting that the rights of those migrants sent there would be violated.

For us, within the project of solidarity with Cuba, it is also essential that the Guantanamo naval base be closed, that the territory that is theirs be returned to the Cuban people, and that the blockade that has been imposed against the Cuban people in an immoral manner for more than 60 years be ended.

"Cuba has promoted love, hope, and has materially supported the world, so those are parts of the demands and the work that IFCO-Pastors for Peace will continue to develop from the United States," she concluded.

In 1967, Lucius Walker founded IFCO and in 1988 he conceived the Pastors for Peace project that organized humanitarian aid caravans as a way to support victims of U.S. foreign policy in the region.

Walker promoted 21 Friendship Caravans from 1992 until his death in September 2010, to bring humanitarian aid and medicine to Cuba in yellow school buses, without asking for authorization or a license from the authorities.

( SOURCE: PRENSA LATINA )

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