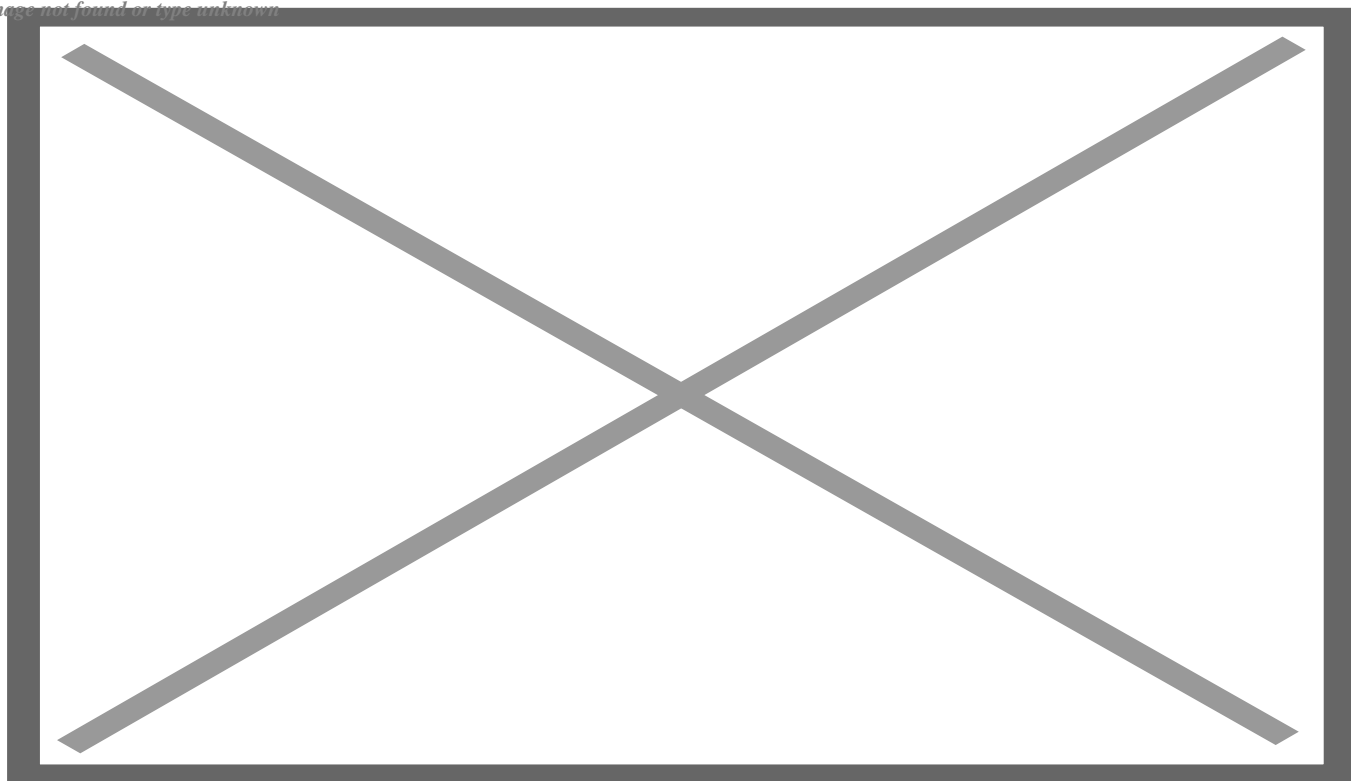


# *Cuban Foreign Minister reaffirms commitment to human rights and denounces aggressions*

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**Cuban Foreign Minister, Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla.**

Geneva, February 23 (RHC) Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez reiterated on Tuesday Cuba's commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights and denounced the economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed by the United States.

Speaking by videoconference at the 46th session of the UN Human Rights Council, he affirmed that the island shows clear proof of its firm commitment to the human rights of its people and other peoples of the world.

On the second day of the high-level segment of the forum scheduled to run in Geneva through March 23, he affirmed that Cuba would continue to advance in the construction of an independent, sovereign, socialist, democratic, prosperous, and sustainable nation, based on the proven capacity for resilience and the

creativity of its inhabitants.

This, despite the cruel U.S. blockade, intensified to extreme levels by the outgoing administration of President Donald Trump, which included Cuba in the unilateral and spurious list of state sponsors of terrorism, he warned.

Rodriguez pointed out at the Council that the manipulation of the noble cause of human rights in favor of twisted political interests is unacceptable when referring to the attacks against the largest island in the Caribbean.

"In the face of attempts to denigrate the nation and overshadow its indisputable achievements in human rights, we will defend our truth and will never renounce sovereignty and independence," he stressed.

According to the island's top diplomat, Cuba will maintain a firm step in the improvement of its economic and social development model and strengthen the legal-institutional framework for the protection and promotion of all human rights guided by the new Constitution of the Republic.

In this regard, he highlighted initiatives such as the National Program against Racism and Racial Discrimination in force since the end of 2019 and the approval in November 2020 of the National Plan for Women's Advancement.

Regarding the Covid-19 pandemic, Rodriguez drew attention to its impact, marked by the worsening of the serious problems and colossal challenges already facing humanity and by new threats, among these the fragility of health systems.

The promotion, protection of , and respect for the right to health acquire special relevance in this context, he insisted.

The foreign minister stressed that Cuba's free, universal, and quality health care system guarantees the right to health for all its citizens, which has borne fruit in the battle against the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus.

Although sadly we have lost lives, it has enabled us to tackle the the pandemic with positive results.

Today we have four vaccine candidates in different stages of clinical trials, thanks to the development of Cuban science and our scientists' selfless work. We hope this year to immunize the entire population, he said.



**Radio Habana Cuba**