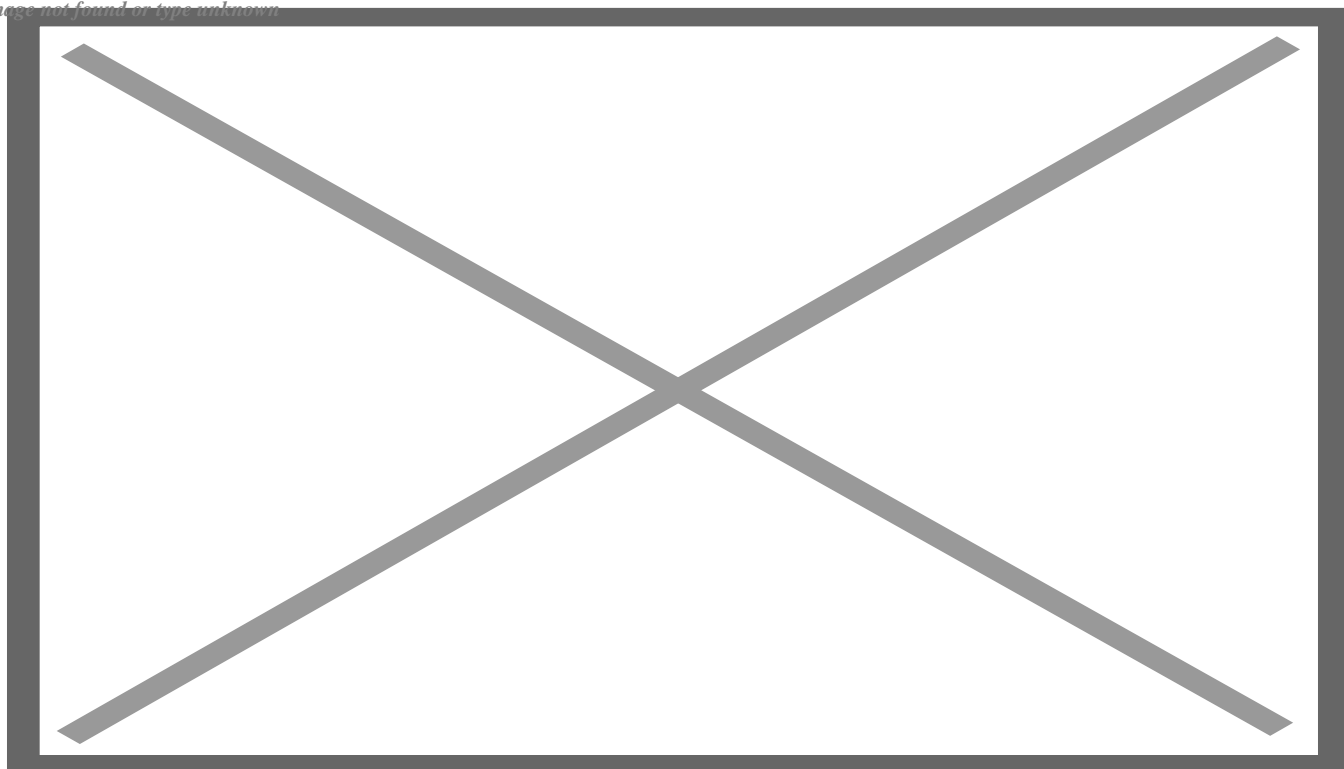


Demands for an end to the blockade of Cuba gain strength

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By María Josefina Arce

In the messages of solidarity to Cuba for the situation created in the city of Matanzas, as a result of the fire of great proportions in the supertanker base, an old demand stands out: the end of the U.S. blockade against the Cuban people.

Organizations, friendship groups and personalities have stressed that it is time to lift the economic siege, which they say is causing serious humanitarian damage to the inhabitants of the largest of the Antilles.

They also recall that even in the midst of the global health emergency caused by COVID 19, the government of then President Donald Trump tightened the blockade, which further hindered the

acquisition of supplies to deal with the virus, which could make the difference between life and death.

And the reality is that the more than 200 coercive measures imposed by Trump are still in force, and although the current administration of President Joe Biden adopted certain provisions, described as positive by the Cuban authorities, they are still insufficient because the economic siege is still in place.

In that sense, the Australia-Cuba Friendship Association made a statement in the last hours, which acknowledged the offer by the United States of technical assistance in view of the disaster in Matanzas, but reiterated its request for an end to the hostile policy, which for six decades has been an impediment to the socioeconomic development of the Antillean nation.

In the United States itself, where there have been countless signs of encouragement and wishes to help, intellectuals, politicians, artists and other personalities asked Biden to put an end to the coercive measures against Cubans, who in these days have faced a difficult and painful situation.

In a letter, the signatories stressed that "despite words of condolences and the offer of technical advice, the U.S. government has done very little to help the people of Cuba in their time of greatest need."

They insist that it is an imperative to lift all sanctions that prevent Cuba, directly or indirectly, from receiving medical, humanitarian and environmental aid and financial and other assistance from U.S. organizations and other nations.

The truth is that the lifting of the genocidal U.S. blockade is a unanimous demand of the international community. Year after year since 1992, the UN General Assembly has pronounced itself against this unilateral measure, under which more than 70% of the Cuban population has been born.

Health, scientific research, education and food are some of the spheres that are seriously affected by the blockade, which in sixty years has caused losses exceeding 147 BILLION 853 million dollars.

The world has always accompanied Cuba in its struggle for the lifting of the criminal economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States, and is now strongly calling for an end to it so that the archipelago can not only allocate the necessary resources for recovery after the unfortunate event of Matanzas, but also to move forward with its life project.

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