MEETING HU JINTAO

I didn't want to speak much, but he forced me to elaborate. I asked a few questions but I mostly listened to him.

He related the exploits of the Chinese people in the past 10 months. The enormous nation with a 1.3 billion population has been hit by heavy and out-of-season snow, and an earthquake which devastated areas three times that of Cuba; in addition to the most serious international economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

I could see in my mind the great efforts of the Chinese people, its workers, its peasants and its manual and intellectual workers; the traditional hard-working spirit and the millennium-old culture of that country that preceded by thousands of years the colonial period imposed by the West, the same West where the current G-7 powers sit today with their force and wealth, playing a hegemonic role in the world economy.

What a great challenge for this leader in these times of globalization who in a gesture of goodwill came to visit our blockaded, harassed and threatened homeland! Are we not one a rogue state among 60 or more that can be the target of a pre-emptive attack? That much was said by the insane leader of the empire seven years ago, the same man who five days ago met in Washington with the G20!

China is the only member of that group whose State can regulate a high growth rate, at the pace it chooses, no less than 8% in 2009. The idea raised during the last Party Congress was to quadruple the per capita Gross Domestic Product between 2000 and 2020, measured in 2007 present values; that was the year the Congress was held. He spoke to me about that in detail. Thus, in conditions of peace, China will reach by the end of that period the figure of no less than 4 thousand dollars per capita income. I think that it should not be forgotten that China is an emerging nation whose per capita income at the time of the revolutionary victory --with a smaller population— hardly reached $400 per capita, and the country was completely isolated by imperialism. Just compare this with the $20 thousand per capita, or more, that developed capitalist countries such as Japan, the Western European nations, the United States and Canada currently enjoy. The per capita income in some of these exceeds the $40 thousand annually, even if their distribution in society is far from fair.

It is only by using $586 billion from its foreign reserves amounting to almost $2 trillions, accumulated through much hard work and sacrifices that this country is facing the present crisis and advancing. Is there any other country as sound as this?

The President of China, Secretary General of the Party and Chairman of the Party and Government Central Military Commissions, Hu Jintao, is a leader who's aware of his authority and exercises it to the full.

The delegation he headed signed with Cuba twelve draft agreements towards a modest economic development in an area of the planet where the small territory in its entirety can be battered by increasingly intensive hurricanes, an evidence of true climate changes. The area affected by the earthquake in China is hardly 4% of the total area of that great multinational State.

Under certain circumstances, the size of an independent country, its geographical location and the size of its population can play a major role.

Would a country like the United States, which robs already trained minds everywhere, be in a position to

apply an Adjustment Act to the Chinese citizens similar to the one it applies to Cuba? Obviously not. Could it apply it to the entire Latin America? Of course, it couldn't there either.

Meanwhile, our marvelous, contaminated and only spaceship continues to circle around, as one popular Venezuelan program likes to repeat.

It's not an everyday occurrence for a small state to have the privilege of receiving a leader of Hu Jintao's stature and prestige. He shall now continue his trip to Lima. There will be another great meeting there. Again, President Bush will attend, this time seven days closer to the end of his mandate.

It is said that in Washington, with only 20 leaders of the attending nations, the local security measures and those required by the host to thwart any attempt at physical removal, changed the habits and every day life in that city. How would it be in the great city of Lima? The city will surely be taken over by the security forces. It will be difficult to move around it because the well-trained members of the US supranational bodies will be there, and their interests and plans will only be known many years after the presidential terms of the eventual leaders of the empire are over.

I summed up for him some of our country's assessments on the habits of our neighbors to the north, which tries to impose on us its ideas, its mindset and its interests with its fleet full of nuclear weapons and fighter planes; also our views on Venezuela's solidarity with Cuba from the most critical days of the Special Period and the hard blows dealt by the natural disasters. Likewise, that President Chavez, a great admirer of China has been the steadiest advocate of socialism as the only system capable of bringing justice to the peoples of Latin America.

In Beijing, they treasure good memories of the Bolivarian leader.

President Hu Jintao reaffirmed his wishes to continue developing relations with Cuba, a country for which he feels great respect.

The conversation went on for 1 hour and 38 minutes. He was warm, friendly and modest, and his affection was obvious. I found him young, healthy and strong. We wish our distinguished and fraternal friend the best in his endeavors. Thanks for his encouraging visit and the honor of showing an interest in a personal meeting with me!

Fidel Castro Ruz

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