

Cuba's official press agency Granma criticizes Muslim Brotherhood over its role in Syria

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Author: Ernesto Gomez Abascal, former Cuban ambassador to Iraq

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Syria: heralding a change in the international strategic situation?

ERNESTO GÓMEZ ABASCAL*

EVIDENTLY the Cold War ended in the final decade of the 20th century with the disappearance of the Soviet Union and the European socialist countries, but the U.S. plan of domination enshrined in the Project for the New American Century, drawn up by a group of neoconservative and Zionist strategists, remains in the minds of Washington politicians.

However, Democrat and Republican priorities on the imperial agenda remain. These are: control of the Near East given its energy resources and strategic position, the elimination of governments who stand up to or interfere with its interests, and to exclude the emergence of new rival powers.

While it is a fact that things have not been going well for the U.S. government in Afghanistan and Iraq, this has not resulted in a change of plans, but merely adjustments to the new conditions. Imperialism has many years of experience in methods of regime change, as we in Latin America know very well.

In Libya, included for years on the list of seven countries whose governments had to be changed [1], the United States was initially successful, having taken advantage of some inconsistencies on the part of Muammar Gaddafi, and certain lack of popularity for the leader. Then came an intensive media campaign, Arab League cover and backing, which facilitated a UN Security Council resolution, and subsequently, a large part of the country's infrastructure was bombed by NATO aircraft, thousands of Libyans were killed, and a government subordinated to its interests was installed in Tripoli. Libya's large oil reserves are now more accessible to U.S. and European corporations, although the chaos created in the country has created an uncertain future.

While this was taking place in Libya, the CIA and its allies in the NATO special services were working on the next country listed, Syria. It has been acknowledged that hundreds of Syrians were trained and armed in Turkey and other countries ill disposed toward the Damascus government, especially those of the Gulf Cooperation Council, and in areas of the Lebanon under the control the March 14 alliance (directed by the Hariri clan, pro-Saudi and linked to the French government). These Syrians are predominantly Sunnis and members of the illegal and extremist Muslim Brotherhood, but include mercenaries from other Arab countries, and commandos trained for special operations. These have received a large supply of modern armaments, sophisticated communications equipment and information via NATO satellite networks.

The predominantly Alawite [2] Damascus government, a strong ally of Iran and a supporter of the Lebanese patriotic forces headed by Hezbollah, which controls power in Beirut, had genuine problems—as do all countries in the region and a large part of the world, including the most developed countries. These include repression, lack of democracy, and corruption, and this has provoked malaise within the population, leading to demonstrations initially encouraged by those in other countries of the region, and which were repressed particularly where they originated, in the southern city of Daraa, right on the border with Jordan.

The media war machine immediately was immediately activated against Syria, as was the case with Libya. In Cuba, Venezuela and other Latin America countries we have become experts on how this operates, having suffered it for many years, and we also know how to combat it, despite disadvantageous material conditions given the enormous propaganda resources possessed by the enemy. Even with the abovementioned defects, the Syrian government was practicing a non-sectarian policy in the religious context and one of relative social justice, anti-imperialist and anti-Zionist. It has been an ally of progressive causes in the South and an obstacle to U.S. and Israeli plans in the region. Allegations intended to discredit it, to the effect

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that its policy of peace serves Israeli interests, have no serious foundation.

Installing a pro-Western government in Damascus would propitiate a change of government in Lebanon and possibly another war there to eliminate the power of Hezbollah, an ally of Iran together with Syria, and viewed as enemies by the Sunni Gulf monarchies, who submit to Western policy in return for protection from an alleged Iranian threat, even though no war has been initiated by that country for centuries.

If the plan concerning Syria is consummated, the Western powers would move against Tehran and, along the way, crush the resistance of Palestine, obliging it to accept crumbs of territory and the minimum rights which Israeli Zionists would be disposed to concede to the people. The U.S. "Grand Middle East" would be completed with its extension to Central Asia, and the siege of Russia and China would be laid.

However, Syria is not Libya. Although its leaders have made undeniable errors and have acted slowly in response to the conspiracy and plans of its powerful enemies, thus losing a lot of time and ground, it would seem to have sufficient internal support and resources to stand up to its enemies and defeat them, albeit at a heavy price in terms of death and destruction.

Apparently, a clear perception of this reality prompted Russian and Chinese representatives to use their veto in the February 4 Security Council vote on a resolution which – regardless of its text – as was the case with Libya – would open the gates to foreign intervention in order to destroy the country and impose a regime change. The highest authorities in both countries have clearly declared a red line and they are not prepared to allow a military intervention in Syria.

The firm stand of Moscow and Beijing and the cooperation they are giving the Syrian government, appears to be starting to change the situation on the ground. The Lebanese army has been mobilized to the border in an attempt to prevent the entry of mercenaries and military supplies into the neighboring area of Homs, center of the anti-government uprising and whose capital city was intended to become the Benghazi of Syria. Syrian government forces have recently moved onto the offensive there.

The Baghdad government, now closer to Iran's influence than to that of the United States, is also trying to prevent Sunni Islamic extremists – possibly linked to Al Qaeda and receiving funds from Saudi Arabia and Qatar – from continuing to infiltrate into Syrian territory. Recent terrorist attacks on the Shiite population in various parts of Iraq would seem to be a message of protest from Saudi Arabia and the United States given the change in position in favor of Syria adopted by the Iraqi government.

Turkey and Jordan, two other countries to have adopted belligerent positions against the Damascus government, are beginning to make more moderate statements. There are even signs of concern in Western capitals at the possibility of extremist Islamic forces linked to Al Qaeda coming to power in Syria in the case of the current executive being defeated.

The situation is highly fluid and extremely complex, but if Syria succeeds in resisting this imperialist, and Zionist counterrevolutionary aggression, and if Russia and China remain firm, there could be a defeat of strategic magnitude. Iran would emerge strengthened and new alliances could be established to oppose imperialist plans of domination. The countries of the BRICS group, the newly independent countries of Latin America, especially the strong core members of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA), are in agreement with the principals of a foreign policy opposed to aggression, and would favor the negotiated solution to conflicts. They also defend justice, sovereignty and non-intervention, all of which could initiate the beginnings of a new multipolar balance in the world.

The grave economic crisis affecting the major capitalist powers and the debilitation this implies, in conjunction with the *indignados* movement, could significantly contribute to this potential panorama. (Taken from *Rebellion*)

* Ernesto Abascal was the Cuban ambassador to Iraq.

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