

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0908

September 15, 2023

The Honorable Joe Biden  
President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to you today with a deep sense of urgency and concern regarding an impending visit to the United States by Cuban dictator Miguel Díaz-Canel, who is scheduled to attend the United Nations General Assembly in New York City this month. Just as we have taken a strong stance against individuals who pose a threat to our national security, which clearly applies to Díaz-Canel, we firmly believe that we must extend this same principle to those who lead oppressive regimes that trample upon the values of freedom and democracy.

Regimes like the one Díaz-Canel oversees destroy liberty at home and work to do so anywhere in the world it can. That includes the United States and our allies, all of whom are members of the very body Díaz-Canel desires to visit and spread his hateful propaganda.

Miguel Díaz-Canel's illegitimate leadership of the Cuban government is characterized by a complete disregard for the fundamental rights of the Cuban people and deep support for terrorist activity in Latin America and beyond. Under his rule, the illegitimate communist regime in Cuba has continued its oppressive tactics, stifling dissent, and crushing any opposition to its authoritarian rule. The Cuban people yearn for freedom, and they have been met with unwavering repression.

Importantly, it is crucial to recognize that Díaz-Canel's regime has a long history of supporting and harboring individuals who engage in activities contrary to the interests of the United States. Cuba's close ties with rogue regimes and its role in aiding and abetting international terrorism are well-documented. For example, the Cuban regime's recent agreement allowing Communist China to establish an electronic eavesdropping facility on the island simply 90 miles from the state of Florida.<sup>i</sup> Russia has also had a similar relationship with Cuba which includes intelligence cooperation and even now funneling Cuban fighters to help in Russia's evil war. Allowing Díaz-Canel to enter our country would send a distressing message that we are willing to overlook these actions and turn a blind eye to the suffering of the Cuban people and the threats to the United States and our partners.

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The Cuban regime's threats to the United States are compounded by its leadership of the other rogue regimes in the Western Hemisphere. Daniel Ortega, the dictator of Nicaragua, and Nicolás Maduro, the dictator of Venezuela, have for decades been tools of the Communist Cuban regime. The Castros and now Díaz-Canel's support for these dictators and help them stay in power, magnifying their evil in our region.

Furthermore, this visit by Díaz-Canel comes less than three months after the anniversary of the massive and emblematic July 11th protests of the Cuban people against the regime's systematic repression during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>ii</sup> This provides an opportunity for the United States to demonstrate its unwavering commitment to standing against oppressive regimes, terrorism, and threats to international peace and security.

In the past, the United States has taken a principled stand by denying entry visas to foreign leaders who have engaged in actions contrary to our values and interests. President Ronald Reagan denied a visa to Yasser Arafat due to his leadership of a regime engaged in terrorism, and President Trump similarly denied Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif a visa for attending a United Nations meeting.

Just as we have done before, we must deny entry to those who lead oppressive regimes and threaten geopolitical stability. Miguel Díaz-Canel's record is one that should preclude his entrance into the United States, and we urge you to deny him an entry visa for the United Nations General Assembly meeting this month.

Sincerely,



Rick Scott  
United States Senator



Marco Rubio  
United States Senator

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.wsj.com/articles/cuba-to-host-secret-chinese-spy-base-focusing-on-u-s-b2fed0e0>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/report/2022/07/11/prison-or-exile/cubas-systematic-repression-july-2021-demonstrators>