

افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نباشد تن من مباد بدین بوم و بر زنده یک تن مباد
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

By Juan J. Paz-y-Miño Cepeda

02.08.2023

Return from the Third World



Sources: Rebellion

Africa is a giant continent, with 54 sovereign States. Latin America and the Caribbean agree on an equal number of States, taking into account the many islands of the Caribbean. But on both continents there are still territories dependent on former colonial powers. The wars of independence in Latin America started in the early nineteenth century and the new states were finally constituted *into presidential republics* (Brazil was temporarily an empire and Mexico had two imperial moments). In 1898 Cuba only achieved independence, but Puerto Rico, also liberated, became dependent on the United States and

became a Commonwealth. Africa, on the other hand, was a giant territory, with a population enslaved since a long historical past, but which deserved the widespread interest of Europe in the middle of the capitalist era, so that at the Berlin Conference (1884-1885) the division of Africa was agreed, thus inaugurating the European imperialist expansion. The independences of the African colonies occurred after World War II (1939-1945) and *decolonization* lasted until the mid-1970s. Latin America/Caribbean retained its formal independence, because the *economic dependence* that during the nineteenth century was established with Europe and particularly with England, passed into the hands of the United States during the twentieth century, on the basis of *Monroist Americanism*.

Latin America/Caribbean and, above all, Africa, are regions in which European colonialism marked the historical structures of underdevelopment, poverty, external dependence and deep social divisions that are distinguished by the internal domination of privileged and rich elites, compared to the majority of the inhabitants who remain in conditions of poverty and exclusion. While Africa is the continent with the highest human polarization and highest poverty/misery in the world, Latin America/Caribbean is the most inequitable region among all continents. The plundering of resources, the direct interventions of the powers to guarantee their interests, the brutal incursion of foreign companies eager for mines and so many other rich natural products of the varied geographies, the political subordination or the inhuman exploitation of their inhabitants, have been common features in the history of Latin America / Caribbean and Africa under colonialism and during the era of industrial and imperialist capitalism of Europe and the USA.

These adverse conditions began to change, between advances, stagnations and setbacks, since the postwar period. The Bandung Conference (1955) can be considered as a starting point, for the birth of what was then called the *Third World*, which claimed not only independence and sovereignty, but also *Non-alignment* with either of the two world blocs of the time: capitalism, hegemonized by the USA and socialism, with the USSR at the head. However, Africa always counted on the support and defense of the USSR to the processes of decolonization.

But the capitalist and transnational globalization of the world as a result of the collapse of Soviet-type socialism brought a complex era of varied economic repercussions for Latin America / Caribbean and also for Africa, where a true re-colonization was imposed. In

Latin America, since the final decades from the twentieth century, the penetration of neoliberalism and the role of the IMF proved disastrous. But on both continents, economic relations with Russia, China and other countries and regions also grew slowly, including the still scarce links that have been established between Latin America/Caribbean and Africa.

In the midst of globalization, the anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist and sovereigntist rise of Africa and Latin America/Caribbean inevitably incubated. In the current conditions, when the historical rise of Russia and especially China, as well as regional entities such as the BRICS, has also become unstoppable, the hegemony of the West has had to change and a *multipolar world* is taking shape. The "old" powers warn of the phenomenon. The U.S. is trying to return to the path of Monroist Americanism, while Europe seeks to relaunch rapprochement with both Latin America/Caribbean and Africa. Meanwhile, Russia has managed to expand its influence particularly in Africa, while China does so there and rapidly in Latin America.

At the recent summit of CELAC and the European Union (EU), held on July 17 and 18 (2023), a Final Declaration (<https://rb.gy/pifqn>) was agreed in which slavery and the slave trade, which includes the transatlantic trade, are condemned as "atrocious tragedies" and a "crime against humanity". But also at the most recent II Russia-Africa Summit held on July 27 and 28 (2023), the Final Declaration is forceful in stating: "

Promote the completion of the process of *decolonization of Africa and seek compensation for the economic and humanitarian damage inflicted on African States as a result of colonial policies, including the restitution of cultural property seized in the process of colonial plunder*" (<https://shorturl.at/yKUY9>). The Summit with CELAC did not admit the alignment of this region with Europe in condemning Russia for the war in Ukraine. The Summit with Africa recognized Russia's historic support for the anti-colonial cause, but pushed forward a specific plan to agree peace in Ukraine. The criticisms of several African rulers against the West were explicit and even radical. African countries, as well as Latin American and Caribbean countries, are not willing to see unilateral sanctions continue. CELAC managed to reject the blockade of Cuba. For Africa and also Latin America/Caribbean, both Russia and China are not "enemy" powers but offer valid economic possibilities and instruments for the promotion of development, such as agreements on energy, communications, infrastructure, credits and investments that should

be strengthened in the future and that, with different scopes, are already present in the two continents representing the Global South.

These processes of global change are not yet considered strong in political debates. Countries like Ecuador, whose setback in this area is impressive, have a government that still believes in neoliberal and libertarian ideology, as well as in free trade agreements for the good businesses of business elites, oblivious to the living and working conditions of the population, which have deteriorated in six years. In the processes leading up to the presidential elections in several Latin American countries, these issues have not been addressed.

However, the strengthening of the Third World, on the basis of the rapprochement between Latin America/the Caribbean and Africa, must be addressed and promoted in order to guarantee the consolidation of the principles of sovereignty and independence that have been renewed today in the face of a multipolar world.

Author's Blog *History and Present*: www.historiaypresente.com

Rebelión has published this article with the permission of the author through a [Creative Commons license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), respecting his freedom to publish it in other sources.

Rebellion 02.08.2023