

## Of Peace, of War, and Other Demons



Marisol Escobar (Venezuela-US), *The Generals*, 1962.

Greetings from the Nuestra América Office of Tricontinental Institute for Social Research,

In a **letter** addressed to various leaders and authorities around the world on June 23, 2025, Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro called for a “Summit for Peace and against War” in response to the military offensive by the United States and Israel in West Asia. The South American leader specifically urged organizations of the Global South, such as the Non-Aligned Movement, the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the African Union, BRICS, and CELAC, with the crucial support of China and Russia, to take the lead in promoting, under the framework of international law, an immediate and complete ceasefire throughout the region.

Warning about the danger of a nuclear escalation, Maduro also urged the creation of a “Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in West Asia,” which the United Nations Security Council would have to guarantee by ensuring the denuclearization of Israel. The request is preceded by the resolution first presented in 1974 by Iran with the support of Egypt for the “establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East region,” which was approved and has since been a **recurring** topic of work in the multilateral body.

As a show of support for this initiative, nearly 600 delegates from 80 countries **met** in Caracas on July 25, showing that peace diplomacy must be on the agenda of the peoples of the Global South and not only of the United Nations, whose total budget is a thousand times less than **global military spending**. The Political Coordination of ALBA Movements was present in **Caracas** and identified the urgency of acknowledging that the underlying dispute is “a conflict between the ideas of liberation and the ideas of domination.” In May 2026, on the centenary of the birth of Comandante Fidel Castro, the **IV Continental Assembly** of ALBA Movements will be held with the goal of consolidating a common agenda to fight against the challenges of imperialism and its warmongering agenda, starting from a “**climate of hope and revolutionary mystique**.”



Candido Portinari (Brazil), *Paz (Peace)*, 1952-1956. Oil panel/plywood, 1400 x 953 cm.

## Peace

The clamor for peace in Our America was born in response to the fiercest episode of violence ever recorded in history. In *Open Veins of Latin America*, Eduardo Galeano, citing the Brazilian sociologist Darcy Ribeiro,

notes that of the 70 million original inhabitants in the American continent at the time of the first contact with European invaders, only about 3.5 million survived a century and a half later. In addition, the United Nations notes that for more than 400 years, **15 million** people were victims of the transatlantic slave trade. This is why Simón Bolívar, who led the national liberation process against Spanish colonialism, denounced in his **Jamaica Letter**, “atrocities [rejected] as mythical, because they appear to be beyond the human capacity for evil. Modern critics would never credit them were it not for the many and frequent documents testifying to these horrible truths.” The same could be written today about Palestine (see **Red Alert No. 19**), where the magnitude of the violence transcends the capacity of imagination and reason.

June 2026 will mark 200 years since the Amphictyonic Congress of Panama, an early effort for continental unity and multilateralism **convened by Bolívar**, aspiring to a space of legal equality among states where “none would be weak with respect to another: none would be stronger” and “a perfect balance would be established in this order of things.” The **Treaty of Union, League, and Perpetual Confederation between the Republics of Colombia, Central America, Peru, and the United Mexican States** of July 15, 1826, considered “to commonly sustain, defensively and offensively, if necessary, the sovereignty and independence of each and every one of the confederated powers in America against all foreign domination and to secure now and forever the joys and an unalterable peace.”

Peace, in the Bolivarian concept, must be comprehensive and sustainable over time. For this reason, it is a peace that, in light of our times, cannot be built with our backs turned to the people. It is a peace that must be accompanied by social justice and guarantees so that the motives for war cannot reappear. As **Ytalo Américo Silva** describes, “this is the ‘Unalterable Peace of the Liberator Simón Bolívar,’ the one capable of ‘destroying forever the motives of hatred, discord, and dissolution’; which he thought about as many times as he tried to materialize Colombia.” For this reason, President Maduro’s letter insists that peace in West Asia must definitively resolve the conflict over Palestine, with the full recognition of its state with its capital in East Jerusalem and the right of refugees to return.



Candido Portinari (Brasil), *Guerra* (War), 1952-1956. Oil panel/plywood 1400 x 1058 cm.

## War

The year 2025 marks 80 years since the most significant military victory over fascism, but this does not mean that the fascist ideology has disappeared. The War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression fought by

China and the Great Patriotic War fought by the Red Army remain living testimonies that confronting fascism entails enormous sacrifices and that the military defeat it suffered in the 20th century is no guarantee that our peoples cannot again be threatened by extremist ideologies that combine capitalist predation with its violent ideological project. At the Tricontinental Institute (see **Dossier No. 79**), we have reflected on the advance of the neofascist project and its challenges for our region.

The “new Cold War” with which hyper-imperialism today threatens China, the impossibility so far of reaching a peace agreement in Ukraine, and the worsening of the genocide in Gaza demonstrate the limitations of multilateralism, which is increasingly threatened by Washington’s attempt to impose a supposed “rules-based order” that seeks to change the principles of the United Nations Charter for norms dictated and imposed for the convenience of the interests of a project that aims to monopolize the use of military force and technological development, fragment popular struggles, plunder the common goods of nature, and keep humanity on the brink of a nuclear war.

The principles born in the Global South, from spaces of unity and cooperation such as the Bandung Conference (see **Dossier No. 87**) or the First Conference of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (Tricontinental Conference of Havana), call on us to strongly defend, from the popular camp, a peace anchored on solid foundations of national sovereignty, sustainable development, and social justice. The encounters between the peoples of Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Africa must be resumed with greater force to build a new international order where there is room for an unalterable peace.

The work of spaces like the **Group of Friends in Defense of the United Nations Charter**, faithful to the founding principles of the UN and opposed to the arbitrariness of unilateralism, reminds us that we must look at ourselves in the mirror of the painful history of the 20th century and gather from the fruits of the victory against fascism the elements that allow us to overcome a tragic re-edition of the Cold War.



Beatriz González (Colombia), *Señor presidente, qué honor estar con usted en este momento histórico* ('Mr President, What an Honour to Be with You in This Historic Moment'), 1987.

## The other demons

On the same day that the People's Summit for Peace and Against War was held in Caracas, the United States Treasury Department declared President Nicolás Maduro as the head of a supposed drug cartel known as the Cartel de los Soles, which was also declared a terrorist organization. The Department of Justice raised its reward for the capture of the Venezuelan president to **US\$ 50 million**, and a *New York Times* article on August 8, 2025, states that President Donald Trump has signed a directive aimed at the Pentagon to use

military force against certain Latin American drug cartels considered terrorists.

This is how the Bolivarian call for peace in West Asia was met with a new offensive in the misnamed War on Drugs, which since the Nixon administration has been progressively implemented as a justification for imperialist interventionism against Nuestra América. The War on Drugs, in practice, has been a military and legal instrument used to advance the ends of U.S. foreign policy and even to eliminate obstacles.

In July, the Venezuelan government had also announced that, together with the Colombian government, a **Binational Economic Zone** would be created for commercial integration, agricultural development, social development, and cooperation between the two countries, which would include sectors such as industry, gas, oil, electricity, tourism, and transportation. In terms of security, this advance strengthens cooperation between Colombia and Venezuela to combat drug trafficking without the need for U.S. mediation. Petro expressed on his social media: “I have received the support of Maduro and General Padrino to defeat the drug trafficking groups on the border of that country.” Likewise, **Claudia Sheinbaum**, the president of Mexico, a country that has been repeatedly threatened by Trump with military interventions against drug trafficking, dismissed the attempts to link President Maduro with Mexican drug trafficking: “if they have any evidence, let them present it, but we have no evidence related to those links.”

So far in 2025, Venezuela **has seized** more than 50,000 kilograms of drugs, and local authorities have indicated that seizures after the expulsion of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) are now significantly greater. Political motivation, and not drug trafficking, once again seems to be the main impulse behind this escalation of persecution against the Venezuelan government.

Recently, along with the Observatorio Lawfare, we published the second notebook in the series *Addicted to Imperialism*, which seeks to show the role that the drug problem has played in U.S. foreign policy and the political, social, and economic impact of Plan Colombia. The peace that is sought to be imposed in this war is the peace of exploitation, oppression, the appropriation of natural resources, and displacement from territories. It is an apparent peace that will only end up reproducing the engines of war, exploitation, and death.

Peace is associated with every element of the material reproduction of life. War, consequently, is associated with every threat against it. It is no coincidence that the **Pentagon** is the main polluter of the planet. In a planet of environmental crisis, a climate catastrophe such as a flood or a prolonged drought also puts peace at risk. The peoples of Nuestra América and the entire Global South have the right to build the peace necessary to save the life of the planet. The way to exercise that right is through popular organization.

In the midst of the escalation, Venezuela held its **seventh national election** in a year, and on July 27, **37,000 communal** projects were presented, driven by the country’s youth. In the protagonism of the youth and their organizational capacity lie the keys for new generations of the Global South to build a future that surpasses the logic of capitalism and reaffirms humanist values to transform society. It will not be through war, but through a peace that can be sustained in justice and solidarity, that we can guarantee the future.

In *El despertar de la historia* (*The Awakening of History*), the singer Alí Primera asked us the question and gave us the solution:



What is the struggle of men to achieve peace?  
And what peace? If they want to leave the world as it is.  
Help it, help it, so that humanity may be human.

Greetings to all,

Carlos Ron, Carmen Navas and Guillermo Barreto

ps// You have until September 29 to register for the online diploma course on The Future, Present, and Past of the Global South: Tricontinental Perspectives, which we are launching in partnership with the Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO). Meet the teaching staff and learn about all the content we will be covering [here](#).



Carlos is a former Venezuelan diplomat who served as deputy minister of foreign affairs for North America (2018–2025) and president of the Simón Bolívar Institute for Peace and Solidarity Among Peoples (2020–2025). He holds a bachelor's degree in Latin American Studies and a postgraduate degree in International Relations.



Carmen is a Venezuelan feminist and former diplomat. Her research interests include democracy and political systems, social movements, and the history of the African diaspora.



Guillermo is a biologist and a retired professor specialising in conservation and management of biological diversity. His areas of interest include reparations for slavery and colonisation, the environmental question, ecosocialism, and the civilisational crisis.