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Non-aligned nations to meet in Cuba

By: AP + Reuters on: 10.09.2006 [17:05] (131 reads)



Fidel Castro to host dinner during Nonaligned Summit in first public appearance since surgery

(5100 bytes) [c]

HAVANA Fidel Castro is expected to make his first public appearance this week since undergoing emergency surgery in July.

The Cuban leader is slated to host a dinner on Friday for visiting leaders of Nonaligned Movement nations.

An earlier statement said Castro will also be meeting with some visiting dignitaries during the week-long summit, which begins tomorrow. But those meetings are expected to be small and private.

The 80-year-old Castro announced on July 31st he had undergone surgery for an intestinal ailment and provisionally handed over power to his brother, 75-year-old Defense Minister Raul Castro.

The nature of Castro's surgery and his specific ailment have been treated as a state secret, although photographs and statements from him have been released.

[link](#)

Non-aligned nations to meet in Cuba

Reuters

By Anthony Boadle 27 minutes ago

HAVANA (Reuters) - Leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement of 116 developing nations will meet in Cuba this week for a summit that will gather some of the United States' fiercest critics just 90 miles offshore.

But Washington's longest-lasting ideological foe, Cuban leader Fidel Castro, may not be well enough to attend.

Cuban officials said they had mistakenly listed Castro as hosting a dinner for heads of delegations in a press coverage schedule issued earlier.

"I can confirm that he will receive some of the foreign dignitaries and almost certainly (U.N. Secretary-General)

Kofi Annan," Cuban Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque said.

"We cannot say yet whether he will be physically present in the work of the summit."

Emergency intestinal surgery in July for an undisclosed illness forced Castro, 80, to turn over power to his younger brother, Raul, and left him 41 pounds thinner.

His main leftist ally, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, is seen as the political heir who will take up Castro's role of assailing Western capitalism in the name of the world's poor.

"Chavez may well become the star of the show," said Riordan Roett, director of Western Hemisphere Studies at the School of Advanced International Studies in Washington. "He will certainly use it as an anti-American platform.

"Part of the color, though, will be lost if Fidel can't give one of his three- to four-hour rousing speeches," Roett said.

The presidents of

Iran and Syria, countries the Bush administration sees as supporters of terrorism, are expected in Havana, as well as a high-ranking delegation from

North Korea, which Bush has included in an "axis of evil."
The Non-Aligned Movement, which groups almost two-thirds of the member states of the

United Nations, is expected to endorse Iran's nuclear energy program after Tehran ignored an August 31

U.N. Security Council deadline to stop enriching uranium, a process that could yield atomic bombs. Perez Roque said the summit was not organized to attack the United States but developing countries would denounce the world's only superpower for its policy of preventive attacks and regime change, the illegal occupation of other countries and the existence of secret prisons around the world.

COLD WAR RELIC

The Non-Aligned Movement was founded in Belgrade in 1961 by Third World leaders such as India's Jawaharlal Nehru, Egypt's Gamal Abdul Nasser and Indonesia's Achmad Sukarno, under the aegis of Yugoslavia's Josip Broz Tito, to try to avoid alignment with either the United States or the Soviet Union.

But since the Cold War ended, the movement has struggled to find a purpose. Experts say it is handicapped today by historical, cultural and religious divisions.

"It's a relic of the Cold War," Roett said. "Allowing Cuba to head the movement again indicates that it is pretty irrelevant, particularly under an ailing Fidel or an aging Raul.

"They clearly are not going to have the energy to do very much other than make statements."

The Non-Aligned Movement has been supplanted by other emerging-nation groups focused on more relevant issues, like the G20, which met with U.S. and

European Union officials in Rio de Janeiro on Saturday to try to break deadlocked global trade talks, he said.

Cuba, which takes over chairmanship from Malaysia for the next three years, hopes to revive the movement by rallying nations critical of the U.S. role as a world policeman in the wake of the invasions of

Afghanistan and Iraq.

But moderates like India want no such finger-pointing at the meeting, diplomats say.

The summit may serve to revive peace efforts between India and Pakistan over the

Kashmir region.

Pakistani President Gen. Pervez Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh are due to hold their first meeting in a year on the sidelines and could restart ministerial-level talks frozen in the wake of the Mumbai bombings in July.

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Castro health improving
by Iranian-Shi'ite on 10.09.2006 [23:49]

Fidel Castro Follows Cuba Summit Preparations

Cuban Foreign Minister Felipe Perez RoqueHavana, Sep 10 (ACN) Cuban Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque told the press on Sunday that Fidel Castro continues to recover satisfactorily while he follows the preparations of the 14th Summit of the Non Aligned Movement (NAM), which gets underway on Monday in Havana.

In a press conference that followed the inauguration of Havana's new press center, specially set up for the Sept.11-16 summit, Perez Roque pointed out that the leader of the Cuban Revolution officially presides over the Cuban delegation to the meeting, seconded by First Vice President Raul Castro.

Perez Roque said that the Cuban head of state will welcome some of the foreign visitors to the summit including UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, who is coming on observer status.

The Cuban foreign minister said the summit, which begins with two days of sessions of high level officials, will boost the struggle in defense of the rights of developing nations and strive to preserve the UN Charter and impede the dismantling of a positive legacy after World War II.

Despite the end of the cold war and the contradictions between two superpowers, the Non-Aligned Movement has an important role to play in today's world, said Perez Roque.

The foreign minister said that after a deep and mature debate, the Non Aligned nations have concluded that today's world poses risks and obstacles which are even greater than before for the majority of humankind. He added that "we have the will to strengthen and revitalize the movement, that is the decision of the Havana Summit."

Perez Roque informed that everything is ready for the gathering in political, logistic and organizational terms.

He noted that 115 out of 116 Non-Aligned nations have confirmed their attendance to the summit and that more than 50 heads of state and government will head their respective delegations to the event, while a dozen delegations are being headed by vice-presidents and deputy prime ministers.

After informing that Haiti and Saint Kitts and Nevis will join the Non Aligned Movement during this summit, Perez Roque said that 11 out of all 15 nations with observer status will attend the meeting, plus the UN Secretary General and the leaders of the African Union and the Arab League.

The foreign minister explained that after the high level officials meet on Monday and Tuesday, the ministerial level of the summit will take place on Wednesday and Thursday followed by the heads of state on Friday and closing on Saturday.

On behalf of the Cuban government, Perez Roque expressed his recognition of the work undertaken by Malaysia as current chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, which noticeably advanced during the past three-year period under that country's leadership.

<http://www.cubanews.ain.cu/2006/sept10cumbre-conferencia.htm>

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