



Forum of Sao Paulo in the Dumps

OE Watch Commentary: The Forum of Sao Paulo (FSP) held its 25th plenary in Caracas this July 25 through 28. As noted in the first accompanying reference, pro-forum *Telesur* reported the meeting's ostensible purposes to include advancing resistance to American imperialism, a favorite staple. Additionally and significantly, *Telesur* noted that one of the centerpiece themes would be support of the "Norway Dialog," which is a negotiation between the Bolivarian regime in Caracas and a slice of opposition parties ostensibly led by Juan Guaidó.

The FSP, an umbrella organization of socialist, communist and workers' political parties formed in the early 1990, has had great success in the past couple of decades in helping member parties take the reins of local and national governments. The forum apparently did not enjoy the kind of attendance this year in Caracas to which it is accustomed and for which its organizers had hoped.

As noted in the second accompanying reference, a number of influential leftist parties, long-term members of the FSP, did not attend or kept their participation hidden. These included the leftist parties from Chile, probably out of support for Michelle Bachelet, with whom the Bolivarians suffered some recent diplomatic unpleasantness. Even Bolivian President Evo Morales, a stalwart within the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas (ALBA) group, made some waffling communications about Bolivian attendance, announcing that Bolivia would not attend 'as government,' in view of upcoming elections in that country.

One of the controversies associated with the meeting involved participation in Caracas by amnestied FARC leaders, who supposedly had to seek permission to leave Colombia. They not only attended, but at least one was given the stage. Moreover, a FARC spokesperson, as recorded in the third accompanying reference, boasted about its long affiliation with the forum, saying that the FARC was one of the "founding members of the Forum of Sao Paulo." The FARC's condition as a legal political party under the FARC-Santos accords makes its open participation in the forum more publicly acceptable, but noteworthy is the openness with which the FARC leadership now talks about their past participation. That openness seems to have marked the forum meeting generally.

The revolutionary goals and methods are no longer being expressed sub rosa, or, for that matter, the forum's alliance with the Venezuelan uniformed group known as the Cartel of the Suns, which is led by Diosdado Cabello. The Cartel, which is heavily involved in transnational criminal activity, was given prominence at the forum meeting. The new radical candor, along with the poor humanitarian record in Venezuela, might be part of what made some leaders of leftist parties in other countries uncomfortable. It appears that although the Cuban Communist Party and the United Socialist Party of Venezuela were hoping that the conference would improve the image and regional support for their (Maduro) administration in Caracas, the opposite happened, as member parties from several countries found it too disadvantageous politically to be seen in support of the Bolivarian regime. **End OE Watch Commentary (Demarest)**

“Journalists and observers in Caracas consider that it is the weakest FSP meeting in many years, given that in reality the number of delegates and international guests did not reach 150, far from the 800 announced by Diosdado Cabello.”

“We were founding members of the Forum of Sao Paulo.” - FARC Spokesperson

Source: Editors, “Inicia en Venezuela el XXV Encuentro del Foro de Sao Paulo (XXV Meeting of the Forum of Sao Paulo in Venezuela Begins),” *Telesur*, 25 July 2019. <https://www.telesurtv.net/news/venezuela-sede-encuentro-foro-sao-paulo-20190725-0007.html>

“According to the event organizers, for this edition of debate and reflection is foreseen about the advance of neoliberalism and imperialism in the world and the region...The objectives of the meeting in the Venezuelan capital will center on the struggle for peace in Colombia, for peace in Venezuela and for support of the Norway Dialogs, among other themes of regional interest... Attendance is expected from more than 125 leftist movements and political parties of the world...”



Continued: Forum of Sao Paulo in the Dumps

Source: Editors, “No asistió al Foro de Sao Paulo: Izquierda democrática marca distancia del régimen de Maduro (Democratic left distances itself from the Maduro regime),” *Venezuela Red Informativa*, 27 July 2019. <http://venezuelaredinformativa.com>

“The meeting of the Forum of Sao Paulo (FSP) that is happening in Caracas through this Saturday has several drops in attendance of the political parties that form it... The greatest evidence of this fracture is demonstrated by the attitude of the government of Bolivia, which publicly transmitted that it would NOT attend ‘as government’, a decision that is interpreted as a tactical move due to presidential elections that will be carried out in October... Journalists and observers in Caracas consider that it is the weakest FSP meeting in many years, given that in reality the number of delegates and international guests did not reach 150, far from the 800 announced by Diosdado Cabello.”

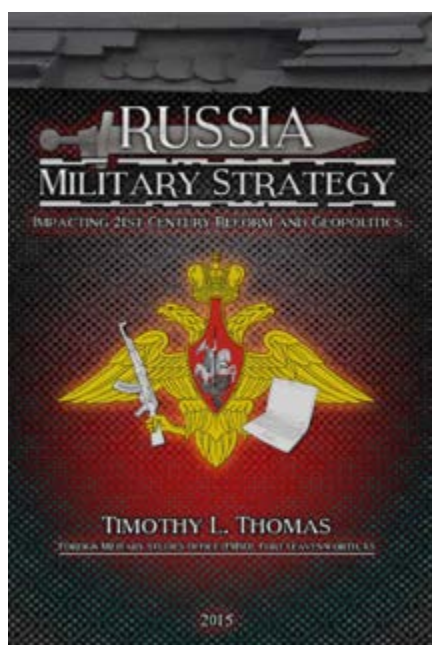
Source: Editors, “‘El Foro de Sao Paulo no tiene ningún vínculo con Santrich’: Rodrigo Granda (The Forum of Sao Paulo has no ties with Santrich: Rodrigo Granda),” *Semana*, 12 July 2019. <https://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/el-foro-de-sao-paulo-no-tiene-ninguna-vinculacion-con-santrich-rodrico-granda/623226>

“... [Question to an official spokesperson of the FARC, Rodrigo Granda while in Colombia]: ‘You [the FARC] were able to participate in the forum as a guerrilla movement?’

[Answer]: ‘Yes, as an armed movement. That caused a very big debate around whether or not a guerrilla could be included. We were founding members of the Forum of Sao Paulo and we participated during the most critical period of repression in this country. Definitely, we had to be careful...’

Source: Richard Mathews, “El Foro de Sao Paulo hace una alianza estratégica con el Cartel de los Soles (The Forum of Sao Paulo makes a strategic alliance with the Cartel of the Suns),” *Diario Las Américas*, 14 June 2019. <https://www.diariolasamericas.com/america-latina/el-foro-sao-paulo-hace-una-alianza-estrategica-el-cartel-los-soles-n4179267>

“Havana, in sum, is putting its strategy and intelligence resources in the service of the recuperation of progressivism and to defend the stability of the Maduro regime, while the Cartel of the Suns loosens resources and assumes real power in Venezuela, while they find a transition that will preserve their domination... According to authoritative sources, the immediate objectives are summarized as ‘take advantage of the incoherence of the opposition to keep Nicolás Maduro in power; back the government of Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua; endorse the illegal candidacy of Evo Morales in Bolivia; underwrite the success of the President López Obrador’s agenda in Mexico; politically and financially support the candidacies of Cristina Kirchner in Argentina and of Gustavo Petro in Colombia; fight together for the liberation of Lula da Silva in Brazil; and strengthen relationships with Islamic fundamentalism, among other projects’.”



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