



**CHAIR OF
THE COORDINATING BUREAU
OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT**



**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E. MR. SAMUEL MONCADA,
AMBASSADOR, DEPUTY FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER AND
SPECIAL PRESIDENTIAL ENVOY OF THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC
OF VENEZUELA, ON BEHALF OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT
(NAM) AT THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
THE UNITED NATIONS TO PAY TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF
FIDEL CASTRO, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA**

New York, 20 December 2016

Mr. President,

1. It is an honor for me to join with you all to pay tribute to the life and legacy of former President Fidel Castro Ruz, leader of the Cuban Revolution, who passed away on 25 November 2016.
2. Allow me first to transmit our respects, solidarity and sincere sentiments of sympathy and condolences to the People and Government of the Republic of Cuba, as well as to the family of the Cuban leader, particularly to his brother, President Raúl Castro Ruz, at these difficult times.

Mr. President,

3. President Fidel Castro was a founding member of our Non-Aligned Movement, and the only representative of the Latin American and Caribbean region that participated in the Belgrade Conference of 1961.
4. It is worthy to note that he was a true advocate for the Global South and a New International Economic Order, as well as for the establishment of a peaceful, prosperous, just, equitable and multi-polar world, in line with the Bandung Principles, which serve as the basis of our Movement.
5. His positions and commitment made him the Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement in two occasions (1979-1983 and 2004-2006), at times during which he was instrumental in the defense of the developing world and in promoting our just causes. Our Movement has therefore lost a leader of enormous character, great courage and vision; a man who was able to have an influence in and to forge new leaders in many countries of our Movement and beyond.



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Mr. President,

6. The imprint of President Fidel Castro is all around his beloved Cuba, where he fought, through the implementation of progressive policies for social justice, for the promotion of the wellbeing of his fellow nationals. Under his leadership his country made great achievements, among others, in the fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly in the fields of education, literacy and health.
7. But his mark also goes far beyond the borders of his homeland, as his high sense of solidarity toward other nations and peoples, even at times of natural catastrophes, earned him deep recognition from the international community. He was a champion of those marginalized and oppressed, as well as a prominent figure in the decolonization processes, particularly in Africa, for which he will always be remembered.

Mr. President,

8. President Fidel Castro was one of those leaders who made a difference in his country, the entire region, and the world as a whole. He will be remembered as an emblematic icon of the Cuban Revolution, a prominent figure in Latin America and the Caribbean, and as a leader committed to the just causes of the world, with an incredible ability to connect with the most vulnerable and provide them with a voice so that their aspirations could be heard.
9. It is for those reasons that today the Non Aligned Movement grieves together with the family of former President Fidel Castro, with the People of Cuba, and with all those others around the world that share the same ideals and are committed to work tirelessly for the wellbeing of the peoples and the just causes around the world.

I thank you, Mr. President.