

October 23, 1962

Message from Mexican President Adolfo López Mateos to Cuban President Osvaldo Dorticos

Citation:

"Message from Mexican President Adolfo López Mateos to Cuban President Osvaldo Dorticos", October 23, 1962, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Archivo Histórico Diplomático Genaro Estrada, Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, Mexico City. Obtained by James Hershberg, translated by Eduardo Baudet and Tanya Harmer.
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/115225>

Summary:

A message from Mexican President Adolfo López Mateos to Cuban President Osvaldo Dorticos. President Mateos expresses his concern with the possibility of weapons of aggression existing in Cuba. President Mateos hopes Cuba has not yet acquired these weapons, but that if it in fact has, he says that Mexico hopes "those bases are not used in any form whatsoever and the offensive weapons are withdrawn from Cuban territory."

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

Spanish

Contents:

Translation - English

To Gilberto Bosques
To deliver urgently to Mr. President Dorticos.
14460
Mr. President:

On board [a] plane on [a] return flight to my country ['patria'] after a friendly mission to four countries in Asia[1], the essence of which was to express the need to preserve peace, to seek an end to the arms race, and to abolish the manufacture and use of nuclear weapons, I learned of President Kennedy's message, in which he reported on the installation in Cuba of platforms to launch missiles of medium and long range capacity able to transport nuclear weapons. In repeated occasions, your ambassadors in Mexico Mr. [Jose Antonio] Portuondo and [Carlos] Lechuga [soon to become Cuban ambassador to the United Nations] assured me that the Cuban government was only receiving defensive weaponry and training for its use but that there was no intention at all of acquiring or installing any type of aggressive weapons and even less so of so-called atomic [bombs].

I consider that the possible existence of the installations of the type referred to could constitute a serious threat not only to the security of the peoples in the American continent [i.e., hemisphere-ed.] but for the peace of the world.

I think that neither the government nor the Cuban people wish to be constituted as a threat to the peoples of America nor as factors that may lead to a breach of the peace. Humanity as a whole would be in danger.

In the name of the friendly relations that unite and have united our countries, I fervently wish that Cuban territory has not become a base for weapons of aggression and in the case that this were to have occurred, I believe it is my duty in the name of peace which all the Mexicans have the wish to preserve, to cordially make a call to your government so that those bases are not used in any form whatsoever and the offensive weapons are withdrawn from Cuban territory.

[1] [López-Mateos' trip to Asia took place from 3-24 October 1962-T.H.]