

Statement before the U.S. House Judiciary Committee
Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, Artificial Intelligence, and the Internet
A Hearing on “The International Criminal Court’s Threat to the Sovereignty of the United
States and Its Allies.”

September 15, 2026, 2:00 PM ET

Rayburn House Office Building Room 2237

Statement by

Stu Smith

Thank you to the chairman and the ranking member and the rest of the committee for the opportunity to address you.

I am an investigative analyst who focuses on extremism. I am here to discuss the DSA's international activities and organizing efforts which I believe pose significant concerns for American sovereignty and is worthy of closer scrutiny. These activities are rooted in proletarian internationalism, a revolutionary anti-imperialist vision of global working-class solidarity aimed at overthrowing capitalism.

The causes the DSA champions abroad are antithetical to the American project. Their support for governments including Cuba, Iran, Venezuela, and North Korea raise serious concerns about its willingness to minimize or disregard the authoritarian practices and human rights abuses associated with those regimes.

DSA's national leadership is increasingly acting as an international political actor, developing relationships with foreign political parties, participating in foreign delegations, coordinating with overseas political movements, and engaging in domestic political advocacy that intersects with the interests of foreign governments.

There is a common saying inside the DSA: "Put ten socialists in a room, and you will get eleven different answers." The phrase reflects the organization's big-tent character, bringing together anarchists, communists, Maoists, Marxist-Leninists, socialists, social democrats, and others across the left.¹ It obscures a more important question: Who has the power to turn those eleven answers into reality?

The most obvious place to start is the DSA's primary national governing body, the National Political Committee (NPC). Since its election in August 2025, the current NPC has pursued an unprecedented level of international engagement.²

Across multiple countries, DSA delegations have operated through state-controlled organizations³ including Cuba's Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP),⁴ Venezuela's Simón Bolívar Institute for Peace and Solidarity Among Peoples (SBI),⁵ and China's China NGO Network for International Exchange (CNIE).^{6,7,8} These organizations function as extensions of state power, cultivating foreign sympathizers and promoting government interests abroad. ICAP was just sanctioned by the U.S. Treasury. The CNIE has been identified as part of the CCCP's broader influence network, providing them with a channel to "exert influence, often covertly, around the world."⁹

These delegations spend several days networking and participating in political programming, often meeting with government officials. Upon returning to the United States, participants are expected to translate those experiences into advocacy and organizing. As national co-chair Megan Romer explained in the lead-up to a 2025 Cuba

delegation, “If you are going on the delegation. You need to expect that you are going to come back and like, talk to a bunch of chapters about Cuba like that's the sort of thing you're going to be doing. You need to be throwing down for Cuba organizing work in DSA.”

The 40-person delegation to Cuba in October of 2025 included both national co-chairs, both Young Democratic Socialists of America (YDSA) co-chairs, and additional members of the NPC.¹⁰ The DSA later described the Cuba delegation as its “leading example of internationalism.”¹¹ Organizers returning from the trip reported meetings with senior Cuban government officials and outlined plans for future Cuba related organizing efforts.

In the months that followed, the DSA expanded its Cuba-focused activities through advocacy, fundraising, material assistance, and organized travel. It participated in the Nuestra América convoy, helped facilitate Hasan Piker’s visit to Cuba,¹² launched its “Stop the Siege” campaign,¹³ expanded its delegation fund,¹⁴ and took part in the “Cuba Under Siege” conference featuring virtual participation from ICAP representatives.¹⁵ This organizing continued even as the United States expanded sanctions targeting the Cuban regime including the ICAP representatives who appeared at the conference.¹⁶ Despite those sanctions, the DSA joined an August 2026 delegation commemorating the 100th anniversary of Fidel Castro's birth.

The DSA has also collaborated with the Palestinian Youth Movement (PYM) on campaigns targeting weapons logistics, including the F-35 supply chain. PYM's “Mask Off Maersk” campaign drew congressional scrutiny after Sen. Tom Cotton and Rep. Anna Paulina Luna raised concerns about PYM's calls to disrupt F-35 supply chains, with Senator Cotton later urging the FBI to investigate PYM.¹⁷

To quote the NPC’s Ahmed Husain, “We consider ourselves part of an international left. Many of us do organize in multiple countries and have connections. I grew up in a left party overseas. And we're accountable to all of our comrades, both here and overseas. We don't see our struggles as separate, but as one.”¹⁸

Those connections have included collaboration with Samidoun,¹⁹ an organization sanctioned by the United States in October 2024 for its role in raising funds for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). The DSA has also long partnered²⁰ with Marxist-Leninist Filipino organizations that organize delegations to the Philippines, where participants have developed ties to the New People's Army, a Maoist insurgent group that has waged armed conflict for decades.²¹ The DSA likewise has maintained longstanding ties with Nodutdol, a pro-North Korea organization that organized delegations to North Korea until U.S. travel restrictions were tightened following the death of Otto Warmbier.

Over the years, the DSA has co-sponsored Nodutdol events, promoted its campaigns, participated in joint protests, and supported efforts to lift the North Korea travel ban.²²

This testimony has examined only a fraction of the available record. As the DSA continues to expand its international engagements while advancing what it has described as a “struggle to dismantle the U.S. empire,”²³ Congress and the American public should seek a fuller understanding of the organization’s partnerships and political activities.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today and I look forward to the committee’s questions.

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³ Democratic Socialists of America International Committee. “DSA Venezuela Solidarity.” *DSA International Committee*, <https://international.dsausa.org/venezuela-solidarity/>

⁴ Democratic Socialists of America, “Special thanks to our partners at @cubamistad and @AmisturCuba” for helping make this delegation possible. X, <https://x.com/DemSocialists/status/1980359147217645736>

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⁶ Socialist China. “Who We Are.” *Socialist China*. Socialist China — Who We Are <https://socialistchina.org/who-we-are/>

⁷ Progressive International. “Report: Delegation to China, May–June 2025.” Progressive International, <https://progressive.international/movement/article/2025-06-27-report-delegation-to-china-may-june-2025/en/>

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¹⁰ Democratic Socialists of America International Committee, “2025 DSA Cuba Delegation,” *DSA International Committee*, 2025, <https://international.dsausa.org/cuba-solidarity/2025-dsa-cuba-delegation/>

¹¹ Araos, Christian. “Clouds Over Havana,” *Democratic Left*, <https://democraticleft.dsausa.org/2026/01/13/clouds-over-havana/>

¹² Smith, Stu. “Hasan Piker and Code Pink Went to Cuba. Now They Might Be Under Investigation.” *City Journal*, <https://www.city-journal.org/article/hasan-piker-code-pink-cuba-investigation>

¹³ Democratic Socialists of America. “Stop the Siege.” *DSA International Committee*, <https://international.dsausa.org/cuba-solidarity/stop-the-siege/>

¹⁴ Smith, Stu. “Why Is the DSA Making Friends with Communist Cuba?” *City Journal*, <https://www.city-journal.org/article/democratic-socialists-of-america-cuba>

¹⁵ Smith, Stu. “The Plot Against the Cuban Embargo,” *City Journal*, <https://www.city-journal.org/article/cuny-cuba-conference-us-sanctions>

¹⁶ U.S. Department of State, “Imposing Sanctions on Cuban Regime Actors Associated with Marxist Subversive Networks and Corrupt Economic Dealings: Fact Sheet,” <https://www.state.gov/releases/office-of-the-spokesperson/2026/08/imposing-sanctions-on-cuban-regime-actors-associated-with-marxist-subversive-networks-and-corrupt-economic-dealings-fact-sheet>

¹⁷ Smith, Stu. “Activists Want to Dismantle America’s Top Fighter Jet—by Any Means Necessary.” *City Journal*, <https://www.city-journal.org/article/lockheed-martin-f-35-lightning-ii-fighter-jet-israel>

¹⁸ @thetustustudio. “DSA’s Ahmed Husain on International Organizing — “Many of us do organize in multiple countries” and “We’re accountable to comrades here and overseas”” X, Accessed September 12, 2026. <https://x.com/thetustustudio/status/2030730355603296410>.

¹⁹ DSA International Committee. “From the River to the Sea: Palestinian Resistance and the Threat of Regional War.” *YouTube*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQ69ADtmJJ0>.

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