# USS Helena Surfaces in Guantanamo Bay Amid Russian Naval Flotilla Visit



The USS Helena, a Los Angeles-class fast-attack nuclear submarine, surfaced in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, shortly after Russian naval forces arrived in Havana for joint drills with Cuba, a Russian ally. According to US Southern Command, the USS Helena’s visit is part of a routine port stop as the submarine conducts its global maritime security mission. The Pentagon emphasized that the presence of the Russian flotilla, located 90 miles from the coast of Florida, does not pose a threat to U.S. security, with Navy destroyers and P-8 aircraft tracking the Russian ships.

In Havana, the arrival of the Russian Navy flotilla, including the nuclear-powered submarine Kazan and the frigate Admiral Gorshkov, attracted significant attention. Hundreds of Cubans queued to visit the Russian vessels, reflecting historical ties between Cuba and Russia dating back to the Cold War. Despite economic hardships and power outages in Cuba, the Cuban government described the visit as friendly and non-threatening, denying any nuclear weapons were aboard.

The visit by Russian naval forces coincides with heightened global tensions, including a new security pact between the U.S. and Ukraine. Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in May, expressing support for Russia amid the Ukraine conflict. Notably, another U.S. submarine, the USS Pasadena, also visited Guantanamo Bay last year, prompting criticism from the Cuban government.