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havana, Jan 29, reuter -- cuban vice-president carlos rafael rodriguez broke his silence about a +secret+ meeting with u.s. secretary of state alexander haig in mexico city on november 23, 1981 because president reagan +decided to confirm, unilaterally and without previous consultation, that the meeting had taken place.+

rodriguez's statement appeared in today's daily granma.

rodriguez said that he had agreed with haig that the meeting he considered secret, but now felt free of the commitment.

in the meeting cuba's top foreign policy expert said he reiterated with clarity the position of principle on each regional and world problem that constitutes our differences with the united states. +

rodriguez, who is a member of the communist party politburo, said that he told haig that +cuba can negotiate with the united states but that it will never renounce its principles, since, as fidel said, principles are not negotiable.+

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he also told the u.s. secretary of state that +cuba could not be forced to yield or be intimidated by any threat.+

the cuban vice-president declared that cuba did not take the initiative in setting up the meeting. it was organised, he affirmed, +on the official initiative of mexico by the secretary of foreign relations of mexico, jorge castaneda.+

rodriguez denied u.s. press reports that this was his first meeting with a u.s. secretary of state. he said that in may, 1978, during a visit to the united nations in new york, he had met with then secretary of state cyrus vance.

==reuter lem/syl