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## Castro again blasts ethanol

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HAVANA --

(AP) -- Cuba's government on Wednesday issued the second article in a week about ethanol production signed by Fidel Castro, with the ailing leader reiterating his charge that the use of food crops to produce biofuels for automobiles could leave the world's poor hungry.

"Where are the poor countries of the Third World going to get the minimum resources to survive?" asked the article, *Reflections of the Commander in Chief*. "I'm not exaggerating or using unmeasured words. I am sticking to the facts."

As for Brazil's continued support of ethanol production, Castro wrote: "It is not my intention to harm Brazil, nor get mixed up in affairs related to the internal politics of that great country."

But, Castro wrote, key questions remained unanswered about plans for biofuel production following weekend talks between Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and President Bush on that and other trade matters.

"From where and who are going to supply the more than 500 million tons of corn and other cereals that the United States, Europe and the rich countries are going to need to produce the quantity of gallons of ethanol that the big companies of the United States and other countries demand in return for their many investments?" he asked.

Castro's articles indicate he is increasingly anxious to have his voice heard on international matters eight months after being sidelined by illness.

On July 31, the 80-year-old revolutionary temporarily ceded his functions to his brother Raúl, the 75-year-old defense minister, after announcing he had undergone emergency intestinal surgery.

Castro's condition and exact ailment remain a state secret, but he is widely believed to suffer from diverticular disease, a weakening of the walls of the colon that can cause sustained bleeding. Senior Cuban officials have given increasingly optimistic reports about his health, and there is a growing expectation on the Caribbean island that he could soon make his first public appearance since falling ill.

Although some seem confident Castro will resume the presidency, others think he is more likely to take on a less physically demanding post as elder statesman, weighing in on

international issues while Raúl and a new collective leadership handle daily domestic affairs.

Bolivian President Evo Morales said last month that he expects to see Castro in public on April 28 during a meeting in Havana with presidents celebrating a regional trade and cooperation pact. The Cuban government has not commented on Morales' statement.