

Cuba: ‘Our capacity to resist and win is based on socialism ...’

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Commemoration for the 65th anniversary of the triumph of the Cuban Revolution at Carlos Manuel de Céspedes Park in Santiago de Cuba.
Photo: Ismael Francisco

Compatriots:

We arrive at the 65th anniversary of the triumph of our socialist Revolution. Many have been the challenges we have had to face to reach this point; but it has been worth it, the work of the Revolution and its social achievements, even in the midst of difficulties, corroborate this.

For Fidel has been the first thought of Cubans in this historic commemoration, especially here, in the heroic city of Santiago de Cuba that treasures his immortal remains, and also for all those who have fallen in the noble purpose of achieving and preserving the independence of the homeland.

We are gathered in the same place where Fidel proclaimed on January 1, 1959, the triumph of the only Revolution that has ever existed in Cuba, initiated on October 10, 1868, by Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, the Father of the Homeland, whose name this square bears.

By paradoxes of history, the then-nascent Yankee empire consummated the military occupation of Cuba on January 1, 1899; therefore, its total domination over our island lasted exactly 60 years.

One of the most shameful and outrageous acts of the occupier in those days was to prevent the entry into the city of the troops of the Liberation Army commanded by Major General Calixto García, without whose action there is no doubt that the Spaniards would have defeated those arrogant, but quite inept invaders all along the line. That is why Fidel when he was at the gates of Santiago, said in his speech on Radio Rebelde: "This time the Mambises will enter Santiago de Cuba [...] The history of '95 will not be repeated", he concluded.

I remember that memorable night of January 1st, 1959. As many know, by decision of the Commander in Chief, I had arrived hours earlier in Santiago with the mission

of consolidating the surrender of the garrison of the Moncada Barracks, some 5,000 men who were in this city, in addition to the main force of the Navy, and I was, as one more, among the crowd that filled this square.

Fidel, upon seeing me, ordered me to go up to the tribune and speak to those present, I only said a few brief words that have not been preserved but that is not important. The words of Fidel, who on that occasion warned us: "The Revolution begins now; the Revolution will not be an easy task, the Revolution will be a hard enterprise full of dangers". Eight days later, after his triumphal entry into the capital, he insisted on this when he said: "The joy is immense. And yet, there is still much to be done. Let us not fool ourselves into believing that everything will be easy in the future; perhaps everything will be more difficult in the future," he said.

It was his early warning not to overestimate successes and to prepare to face the most difficult option, and life proved him right. The road we have traveled has not been easy, we have had to face the permanent and perverse aggressiveness of the enemy, which has even resorted to military invasion, terrorism, and a ruthless and cruel blockade, condemned by the overwhelming majority of the nations of the world, in its failed attempt to destroy our Revolution and erase its inspiring example for other peoples, that it is possible to build a just and humane society, with equal opportunities for all.

The policy of permanent hostility and blockade of the United States Government is the main cause of the difficulties of our economy. There is no doubt about this reality, even though the enemy invests millions of dollars and much effort to hide it. It is seconded by some who act against their own homeland, either out of a desire for profit or simply out of the spirit of serfs. Others allow themselves to be misled by his lies and, in a certain way, unconsciously play along with him, overwhelmed by daily difficulties. With the latter, we cannot lose patience, we must listen to them explain to them until we convince them with the powerful weapon of truth, which is

on our side.

This does not mean in any way that we are unaware of our shortcomings and errors, which have never been of principle. The leadership of the Revolution has been characterized, throughout these 65 years, by its transparency and self-critical spirit, by discussing with the people any insufficiency, aware that only together we will be able to eradicate them.

On the unknown road of building socialism in a poor country subjected to constant aggressions, we have been forced to create our own ways of doing things, evidence that the Cuban revolutionary process has always been characterized by an immense creative capacity.

Today, we can say with healthy pride that neither external aggressions, nor the blows of nature, nor our own mistakes have prevented us from reaching this 65th anniversary. Here we are, and here we will be! (Applause.)

This has been possible, in the first place, because of the proven resistance and self-confidence of our heroic people; because of the wise leadership of the Commander-in-Chief of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro Ruz; because of the existence of a Party that has become a worthy heir to the trust placed by the people in its leader, and because of the unity of the nation.

Comrade Díaz-Canel referred a few moments ago to this trajectory in his review of the epic lived by the Cubans during these 65 years, which extends to the difficult and unforgettable moments of the Moncada, the Granma and the struggle in the Sierra and the plains, until reaching the true triumph, a day like today.

And the greater the difficulties and dangers, the greater the demands, discipline, and unity required. Not a unity achieved at any price, but one based on the principles so accurately defined by Fidel in his reflection of January 22, 2008, and I

quote:

"Unity means sharing the struggle, the risks, the sacrifices, the objectives, ideas, concepts and strategies, arrived at through debates and analysis. Unity means the common struggle against annexionists, sellouts and corrupt people who have nothing to do with a revolutionary militant".

And he added another essential idea: "We must avoid that, in the enormous sea of tactical criteria, the strategic lines are diluted and we imagine non-existent situations."

Such is our unity, which did not arise by magic, which we have patiently built among all of us, brick by brick. In the Cuban Revolution, there has been room for every sincere patriot, with the only requirement of being willing to confront injustice and oppression, to work for the good of the people, and to defend their conquests.

In that forge of action and thought our Party was forged, alien to authoritarianism and impositions, listening and debating the different criteria and giving participation to all those willing to join in the work. Modesty, honesty, adherence to the truth, loyalty, and commitment have been the key. In socialism and its work, in unity and revolutionary ideology, our capacity to resist and win is sustained (Applause).



Unity is our main strategic weapon; it has allowed this small island to succeed in every challenge; it sustains the internationalist vocation of our people and its prowess in other lands of the world, following Martí's maxim that homeland is humanity. Let us take care of unity more than the apple of our eye! I have no doubt that this will be so. I am convinced that the Pinos Nuevos, our combative youth, will guarantee it.

The unity formed by the Party, the Government, the mass organizations, and all our people, and as part of this the combatants of the Revolutionary Armed Forces and the Ministry of the Interior, is the shield against which will crash, once again, all the subversive plans of the enemy, which include from the systematic use of lies to terrorism.

Today I can state with satisfaction that the Cuban Revolution, after 65 years of existence, far from weakening, is getting stronger (Applause), and as I already said a decade ago, on a day like today and in this very place, with no commitments to

anyone at all, only to the people (Applause).

Compañeras and compañeros:

I know that I express the sentiment of the Historic Generation in ratifying the confidence in those who today occupy leadership responsibilities in our Party and Government and in the other organizations and institutions of our society, from the highest positions to the tens of thousands of grassroots leaders who are in the front line of combat. In very difficult circumstances, the vast majority of them have been demonstrating with their actions the necessary revolutionary firmness and will to overcome the current difficulties and move forward together with our people.

Those who, due to insufficient capacity, lack of preparation, or simply because they are tired, are not up to the level demanded by the moment should give their place to another comrade willing to assume the task.

I call on all our cadres to meditate every day on what more can be done to justify the trust and exemplary support of our compatriots, even in the midst of so many needs, not to be naïve or triumphalist, to avoid bureaucratic responses and any manifestation of routine and insensitivity, to find realistic solutions with what we have, without dreaming that something will fall from the sky. Likewise, within the many daily tasks and challenges find time to overcome, knowledge has always been an essential weapon, and even more so in the present.

If the current challenges and difficulties are great, greater is the work of the Revolution, which constitutes its best and irrefutable defense against the infamies of the enemy, a palpable work in any corner of Cuba in the material and spiritual order.

The Revolution dignified Cuba and Cubans. The very concept of power took on a new dimension when politics ceased to be the fiefdom of an elite, and all the people became the protagonists of their destiny. That is why we have to defend and carry

forward this Revolution of the humble, by the humble, and for the humble.

History has taught us where resignation and defeatism lead. Let us not limit ourselves to resist. Let us get out of these difficulties, as we have always done, by fighting! (Applause), with the same determination of Baraguá, of Moncada, of Granma, of Girón and with the firm convictions instilled in us by the Commander in Chief.

This translates today into working harder and, above all, doing it well. This is our commitment to the glorious history of the homeland and the best tribute to the fallen.

As the Prime Minister, comrade Manuel Marrero, explained in a clear way just a few days ago in the National Assembly of People's Power, in the complex and unpostponable economic battle, it is imperative to advance in productivity, order, and efficiency, even if it implies some sacrifices to create the conditions that will allow us to get out of the current situation and develop.

Finding an answer to these difficulties is an unavoidable duty of all Cuban revolutionaries. On such a significant date, I ask our people to join consciously and responsibly, as we are accustomed to, in this endeavor that the homeland demands today.

I reiterate a conviction that I expressed in the Cuban Parliament on August 1, 2010: "We, Cuban revolutionaries, difficulties do not keep us awake at night, our only path is to continue the struggle with optimism and unshakable faith in victory" (Applause).

In this supreme endeavor, the Revolutionary Armed Forces and the Ministry of the Interior, faithful and sure guardians of the Revolution, will participate decisively. If yesterday, from the victorious arms of the Rebel Army, emerged free, beautiful,

powerful, and invincible the new homeland, today I can affirm that in the face of any threat or weakness, its combatants will not renounce to continue being, together with the Party, the soul of the Revolution (Applause).

Dear compatriots:

As the Commander-in-Chief stated in his message upon the formation of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution thirty years ago: "...There are no generational contradictions in the Revolution for one simple reason: because there is no envy or craving for power among its sons.

"None of us old fighters cling to positions nor do we consider ourselves creditors of the homeland for having rendered it a service, and as long as we have strength left we will be in the post assigned to us, however modest it may be." So much for Fidel's words, which seem to have been spoken today.

On this date of such significance, I can affirm that our greatest pride and satisfaction is to have been with Fidel in every moment of joy, indignation, or sadness; to have learned from him the decisive importance of unity; not to lose serenity and confidence in triumph no matter how insurmountable the powerful obstacles of the enemies or how great the dangers may seem; to learn and draw strength from every setback until transforming it into victory.

Faithful to his teachings and his example, here we are, and from the heroic Santiago de Cuba, we ratify that we remain with our foot in the stirrup and ready to charge with the machete, together with the people and as one more combatant (Applause), against the enemy and our own mistakes, certain that the Mambi cry will always resound in this land:

Viva Cuba libre! (Exclamations of: "Viva!")

(Ovation)

Source: [Cubadebate](#), unofficial translation by [Resumen Latinoamericano - English](#)

