

Statue of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara in the struggle

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Monumento Encuentro, a bench with statues that commemorate the meeting in Mexico between Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, located in the Jardín Tabacalera (Plaza San Carlos). Photo: La Jornada

Once again, bronze statues are taking the front line in an ideological war. The statues of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, both dressed in combat garb (one might say looking very Mexican), have been seated in a small park in Mexico City's Colonia Tabacalera neighborhood since 2017. The Monumento Encuentro (Encounter Monument) monument was placed there by the Mexico City administration of then-Mayor Andrés Manuel López Obrador.

The statues were located near the historic first meeting place of Che and Fidel. It was here in 1955 that they began to plan their revolutionary campaign to free Cuba from the grasp of U.S. imperialism and the brutal despot, Fulgencio Batista.

Currently, a social media storm has countered the abrupt removal of the popular Encuentro monument by a right-wing borough president in the Cuauhtémoc district, where the monument was located.

Outspoken opposition has come from Mexico's President, Claudio Sheinbaum. She has said she will make arrangements with Mexico City's mayor, Clara Brugada, to place the historic monument in another part of the city.

Sheinbaum suggested that the removal of the Monumento Encuentro was political retaliation for her own widely applauded monument removal — the banishment of one of Mexico's most infamous symbols.

In her former position as Mayor of Mexico City, Sheinbaum ordered the removal of the bronze statue of the genocidal conquistador Christopher Columbus from a pedestal dominating the capital's Paseo de la Reforma.

Indigenous activists have led campaigns protesting the monument for years.

The traffic circle where the Columbus statue once reigned has been renamed “[Glorieta de las Mujeres que Luchan](#)” (Roundabout of the Women Who Fight). Today, it is a rallying point for the struggles of Indigenous peoples.

Women have installed an “anti-monument” featuring a purple-clad woman with a raised fist to honor women who have faced violence and injustice for their activism and struggles.

