

# *Activists with Southern Cross Brigade Say Fidel Castro Continues to Guide and Inspire Revolutionaries*

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CUBA

AUSTRALIA



Sancti Spíritus, January 9 (RHC)-- 'Late Cuban leader Fidel Castro continues to guide and inspire revolutionaries all over the world', said Evaristo Navarrete Manzano, who is visiting central Sancti Spíritus city as part of the the 34th annual Southern Cross Brigade to Cuba.

In statements to Cuban press, Navarrete Manzano, a Chilean citizen who resides in New Zealand, explained that he was a member of the Chilean Communist Party who spent many years behind bars in his native Chile following the 1973 military coup against constitutional President Salvador Allende and the subsequent bloody Pinochet dictatorship.

The Southern Cross Brigade is organized by friendship societies in Australia and New Zealand, in collaboration with the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP), which maintains links with hundreds of solidarity with Cuba organizations around the world.

The first brigade from Australia to Cuba was named the Eureka Brigade and left Australia in December 1983, returning in January of 1984. After this, New Zealanders were also invited and the brigade became known as the Southern Cross Brigade, or Brigada Cruz del Sur in Spanish. The stated aim is to give Australians and New Zealanders a chance to understand Cuba's unique, yet often misunderstood, political history and to participate in Cuba's rich cultural heritage.

The 2016-17 Southern Cross Brigade marks 34 continuously running annual solidarity brigades from Australia and New Zealand to Cuba. The Brigade is attended by Australians and New Zealanders of all ages and backgrounds. Age is no barrier, as it has had brigadistas as young as six and as old as 88.

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