

# *Cuba's contribution to peace in Colombia*

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**A group of 17 young people from different regions of Colombia left this Saturday for Cuba to study medicine. Photo: Prensa Latina**

By María Josefina Arce

Cuba has always made clear its commitment to international peace and security. Latin America and the Caribbean was declared a Zone of Peace in Havana in 2014 under its pro tempore presidency of CELAC, Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

The largest of the Antilles was, together with Norway, guarantor of the peace talks between the once guerrilla Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army and the government of then President Juan Manuel Santos.

The dialogue that led in 2016 to the signing of the historic agreement to put an end to the armed conflict of more than five decades, which had bled Colombian society, took place in Cuban territory for four years.

Impartiality, transparency and discretion characterized Cuba's performance, recognized by both parties and international organizations such as the UN. The United Nations has highlighted the importance of Cuba's support as a guarantor country from the management of the pact to its implementation.

An example of its total commitment was the offer of one thousand scholarships to study Medical Sciences in Cuban territory, destined to young people demobilized from the guerrilla and victims of the armed conflict.

At the rate of two hundred per year for five years is the distribution of scholarships, a process that began in the 2017-2018 academic year and has been described as a true gesture of humanity.

Thus, a new group of 17 young Colombians from various regions of the South American nation traveled in recent days to the Cuban capital to begin their studies at ELAM, Latin American School of Medicine, an institution fruit of the thinking and political will of the historic leader of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro.

Serving their community and all Colombia is the desire of these young people who now see it materialize thanks to the contribution of the archipelago.

The president of the Comunes Party, Rodrigo Londoño, emphasized that despite the limitations imposed by the US blockade, Cuba is making a great effort to guarantee the training of these young people as doctors and to fulfill their commitment.

Colombian society has expressed its deep gratitude to the Caribbean nation, to its revolution and its people, whose responsible and serious commitment to peace brings hope to that deep Colombia, where the state has never reached.

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