

# *Díaz-Canel: Working with passion in 2023 to continue overcoming impossibilities*

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**Díaz-Canel meeting with the Council of Ministers. Photo: Estudios Revolución**

Havana, December 30 (RHC)-- The First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and President of the Republic, Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, called on the members of the Council of Ministers to work with passion and enthusiasm in 2023 to continue overcoming the impossible, during the last session of this year of the highest body of the Cuban government.

"It is time to concentrate on what is truly important, he said, "and for me what is truly important is to join efforts in the right direction, which is none other than that which will allow us to reverse the difficult economic situation the country is going through, even in conditions of an intensified blockade, and that this will help us to strengthen the certainty surrounding the Revolution, to continue consolidating the idea that the construction of socialism is the only viable alternative for the prosperity and development of our nation".

The day-to-day life of Cubans in 2022 has been very hard, he acknowledged, and it is the day-to-day life of a third year already, because we are living a complex situation since the second half of 2019. We have to focus on how we are going to urgently reverse the reality we are living, he stressed.

"We have to focus on what our people are waiting for, "it is what I believe we must defend, what we must devote ourselves to".

Díaz-Canel listed the issues that are in the demands of that people, among them, that the true reserves and potentialities that exist in our society are unleashed; that the productive forces are unleashed; that incentives are encouraged more and less obstacles and prohibitions that hinder development; that it is necessary and urgent to launch the socialist state enterprise, "a matter of life and death for us"; that agriculture responds to food production; and that we give better attention to people in vulnerable situations.

It is expected, he added, an effective confrontation to crime, corruption and illegalities; that we go against bureaucracy; that laws are respected; that everything we approve in the National Assembly is followed up; that respect, order and decency prevail; that consensus and participation of the people are taken into account in order to decide; that innovation is used; that there is a democratic exercise of popular power; that everybody is accountable; that young people do not abandon the country and do not stop participating in the Revolution.

"The only forces capable of facing and overcoming each of these challenges are those of us who are here," said the Head of State to the members of the Council of Ministers and the Secretariat of the Central Committee, as well as to the leaders of the mass organizations.

It is up to the Party not to be on the margins of society, to act with awareness of the need that exists and to be the most efficient catalyst in our transformation; to the Government, which is the most challenged of all to innovate and create; to the organs of the People's Power, in all its instances, which are summoned to make the definitive leap over their current limitations; to the legislators, key in the push to what we approve; and to the political and mass organizations to complete the circle of forces with higher citizen participation.

The Cuban President defined among the immediate tasks the strengthening of the country's defense; the deep reflections on the economic situation, deviations, mistakes, attitudes and solutions; food production, which is key for everything we want to do; foreign investment, which must have a particular check-up; the follow-up to the commitments of the last international tours that have been made, because there is a group of essential issues to advance more in the next year; the macroeconomic stabilization program; modernizing the banking system; attracting remittances; increasing tourism; confronting illegality and corruption and achieving an adequate control environment; eliminating inflation, illegal enrichment, and controlling prices; combating speculators; and stimulating people's participation in the search for solutions to the country's problems.

"We have to assume the challenge of overcoming the problems that the country is experiencing, we have to solve them ourselves, from our responsibilities, and with the participation of the people", said the President.

The responsibility is ours, he reiterated, one has to feel responsible for this, so that every minute we are thinking about how we are going to solve it. It has to be the meaning of our lives to contribute to the revolutionary transformation of the country.

Díaz-Canel considered before the Council of Ministers that it is necessary to deeply study the problems, analyze their contradictions, make comparative analyses, work with the criteria of the population and experts to propose solutions. Everything we do, he warned, has to have a Marxist, critical and anti-capitalist approach.

"We are being summoned by the challenge, the certainty that the creativity of the people is infinite, and that we did not get here by going backwards, we got here by ascending, because having endured all the hardships, the intensification of the blockade, the imperialist campaign in these three years, is a heroic deed. We have all arrived here ascending as revolutionaries, defending the Revolution, but we cannot stay there". The call is to work with passion and desire to continue overcoming the impossible, he reiterated.

## NATIONAL INDUSTRY MUST ACCOMPANY DEVELOPMENT

Multiple topics related to the economic and social reality of the nation were included in the agenda of this meeting of the Council of Ministers, led by Prime Minister Manuel Marrero Cruz, and as part of which the participants were updated on the implementation of the Industrial Development Policy.

The Minister of Industries, Eloy Álvarez Martínez, emphasized that the fundamental objective of this policy is to gradually transform and modernize the leading industries, prioritizing the products with the greatest impact on the strategic sectors, combining innovative development, import substitution and export-oriented development.

He explained that among the priorities have been defined, firstly, to strengthen the role of the Ministry in the policies of which it is the rector for industrial development, and secondly to evaluate its impact on the business system with the objective of satisfying the demands of the different sectors of the economy.

Among the main results obtained from the implementation of the precepts contained in the Policy, Mr. Álvarez Martínez highlighted the training of the members of the governing boards, officials and specialists of the business system served; the expansion of the graduate training program; the insertion of university students in the industry; the strengthening of productive linkages; a better use of the potential of science and innovation, as well as the transformation of the business system with a greater participation of foreign investment in the investment process.

The transformation that has been achieved in several industries is the main result of the application of this policy in the national territory. In this regard, Alvarez Martinez commented on the remodeling of the Mechanical Plant in Villa Clara, the modernization of Antillana de Acero, the increase of oxygen storage capacity by 280,000 cubic meters, the construction of the glass container factory in the Mariel Special Development Zone, the increase of capacity in the furniture industry, the technological reconversion in the polygraphic industry and others.

According to the assessments of the Minister of Industries, during the first year of implementation of the Industrial Development Policy "the main actions have been aimed at organizing and perfecting the work system, so as to strengthen the leading role of the Ministry and the transformation of the business system, seeking solutions to increase the impact of national production in meeting the demands of the economy".

We recognize, he said, that much remains to be done and the scenarios will continue to be complex, but we are convinced that these complexities constitute challenges and opportunities for the industry in terms of increasing sovereignty, import substitution and exports. "Towards that path will be directed the main actions in the next period," he ratified.

On these issues, Marrero Cruz stressed that if there is one thing we should all be very clear about, it is that "without industrial development the country will not develop". It is necessary to develop industry, he said, because only by increasing services and income we will not achieve the economic development we need.

Industry in Cuba, he pointed out, is based on essential principles defined by Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz and Ernesto Guevara, who outlined the country's industrial development strategy.

In view of the inevitable impact on Cuban industry of the intensification of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the US Government and the effects of the economic crisis caused by the pandemic, the Prime Minister said that it is essential to carry out more research and innovation, but above all to generalize the results achieved.

Industrial activity in general, he said, is essential for the economic and social development of the country, and has a direct impact on several sectors. "Industry has shown that it is capable of achieving great productions, with quality for the country," he said.

Sharing his reflections on this matter, the President of the Republic insisted on the need to advance in the recovery of Cuban industry, which has to "orient its productions fundamentally to the agricultural development of the country, that is, the production of tools, equipment and implements."

Likewise, he said, they should be directed to the development of tourism, as well as to the production of goods to increase the offers to the population and thus contribute to control the inflation that exists at this time and begin to supply the stores in national currency with productions coming from our industry.

#### POLICY OF CADRES, SUPPORT FOR A BETTER MANAGEMENT

"Many of the problems we have to face at present and many of the things that are not progressing depend to a great extent on the actions of the cadres", said the Prime Minister after the Minister of Higher Education, José Ramón Saborido Loidi, explained how much has been achieved and how much still needs to be consolidated in the preparation of the cadres and the reserves of the State and the Government.

Although significant progress has been made in the participation of the University in the design of the systems for the preparation and training of cadres with a five-year projection and the attention to cadres with training needs, the Minister of Higher Education pointed out aspects that must be strengthened in order to achieve an increasingly comprehensive preparation.

In this sense, he assured that the preparation of the cadres of the entrepreneurial system, in accordance with the level of transformation required in this field, as well as the integration of the managers of the new forms of non-State management in the training system of the organizations and the territories, are priorities.

Miguel Mario Cabrera Castellanos, head of the Directorate of State and Government Cadres, mentioned that the following lines of work have also been defined: to increase the training of cadres in issues related to local development; the training of entrepreneurs capable of managing companies under the current conditions; as well as the development of human capital, especially of young people, in accordance with the responsibilities they perform.

Regarding these issues, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party pointed out that the current requirements demand a greater and deeper preparation of cadres, which also takes into account the use of the Marxist method for the analysis of the issues and the approach to the transformations that need to be made in the economy.

In addition, he emphasized, it is necessary to provide them with a group of "knowledge on Political Sciences, which will allow them to approach from other perspectives issues and problems that we are experiencing in Cuba".

Specifically on issues associated with local development and territorial development strategies, the Head of State reflected that in order to "really unleash all the autonomy of the municipalities as a basic element to achieve the development of the country, it is necessary that the people there are prepared to assume the responsibilities that this autonomy gives them".

The country -he acknowledged- will not develop "only with national strategies, no matter how comprehensive they may be; the country will develop to the same extent that each municipality develops", and for that it is necessary to "prepare people and leaders in the territories".

#### EDUCATION: TRANQUILITY FOR THE CUBAN FAMILY

The members of the Council of Ministers approved the plans for the continuity of studies for ninth grade graduates towards professional technical education and pre-university, as well as for pre-university graduates who do not access Higher Education. The green light was also given to the Plan designed in the country for the entry to Higher Education of pre-university graduates and other prioritized sources.

In this regard, the Minister of Labor and Social Security, Marta Elena Feitó Cabrera, explained that the plan "guarantees a place towards professional technical education and pre-university for all ninth grade students and responds to the training needs of the qualified labor force in each of the territories".

The entrance to Higher Education, he emphasized, guarantees that all pre-university graduates have access to the different university centers. In spite of the challenges that exist today, with this plan the continuous cycle of the formation of our future professionals is achieved and the guarantee of access to education in our country is maintained, he pointed out.

Feitó Cabrera detailed that in relation to the continuity of study for ninth grade graduates, 107 178 places are planned, a figure higher than the previous year, with a growth in all provinces and the special municipality of Isla de la Juventud.

Regarding the plan for admission to Higher Education, he specified that the offer for the daytime course is 59,169 places, of which more than 10,000 are destined to Pedagogical Sciences and more than 25,000 to Medical Sciences.

She also pointed out that there will be places in engineering, bachelor's degrees and higher technicians in priority sectors such as the food program, construction, the chemical-pharmaceutical industry and tourism.

Later on, the Minister of Education, Ena Elsa Velázquez Cobiella, presented the main results of the pedagogical training at the Higher Secondary level, a strategy created in 2010 that currently has 29 pedagogical schools, in specialties such as early childhood education, technical-vocational and basic secondary education.

In these years, said the Minister, more than 43,000 students have graduated and it is very significant that 70% of the graduates of the first four graduations have completed their higher education studies. More than 30% of the staff of primary schools, special education and kindergartens were trained at the Pedagogical Schools.

The agenda of this meeting included the presentation of the report on the XIV National Audit of Internal Control and the presentation of the guidelines for the planning and execution of control actions in 2023. Both topics, evaluated as strategic by the members of the Council of Ministers, were in charge of the

Comptroller General of the Republic, Gladys Bejerano Portela.

Also during the day, the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers rendered an account of its management between meetings of the highest governing body.

## 2023 MUST BE A YEAR OF PROGRESS

Summarizing the meeting -which from the Palace of the Revolution linked by videoconference to the fifteen provinces and the special municipality of Isla de la Juventud- Prime Minister Manuel Marrero Cruz referred to a set of priorities that should focus the government's work in 2023, a year that also "looks complex".

We cannot only think, he said, of the multiple external limitations that impede the country's progress, but we must also be able to overcome our own inadequacies and the obstacles that are sometimes created in some places by not seeking alternatives to the lack of resources to solve the main problems that impact the nation today, which impact the people.

These are government issues and matters -he said- that it is up to the government to solve, and we cannot achieve this if we do not change everything that has proven not to work, as the Commander-in-Chief taught us so well.

What we can never change, he stressed, are the "founding principles of our Revolution, our social system, putting the human being before everything else". In 2023 we are going to perfect and continue strengthening the Revolution, he assured, but we have to change our minds and do things differently.

In this regard, he recalled the way in which the COVID-19 pandemic was successfully confronted by making greater use of science and innovation. This is a path, he emphasized, that we must follow in other spheres and sectors in order to achieve the take-off that the economy needs.

The reality -reiterated the Prime Minister- is that we "have to enter 2023 with a different way of thinking, with a different way of doing things, with a different way of acting; moving from the defensive to the offensive".

Regarding the work of businessmen, he called attention to the need to "not wait for decisions to come from above and develop actions to transform the country in a very short time".

As priorities for government work, Marrero Cruz emphasized, among other issues, the importance of better planning and organizing the work; that the meetings address the main issues affecting the development of the country and also the population; that the system for the management of the territories be improved; that the exporting agencies and companies act more aggressively to obtain income; that efficient productive systems be consolidated; that more goods be produced to offer to the population, and that effective measures be applied to contain inflation.

"The year 2023 has to be a year of reference and progress", he considered, in which socialist democracy, transparency, participation and popular control will continue to be strengthened. (Taken from the Presidency's website).

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