

*Cuba counts on the friendship of  
the Panamanian people*

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**Panamanian Foreign Affairs Minister Janaina Tewaney Mencomo**

By Roberto Morejón

A few days before the 7th summit meeting of CELAC, Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, the Panamanian Foreign Minister, Janaina Tewaney Mencomo, visited Cuba. In Buenos Aires, she appealed to unity and the search for opportunities in the new international architecture.

It was in this spirit that the visitor developed her agenda in Havana, where she spoke with President Miguel Díaz-Canel, who described the Minister's visit as very significant.

The Cuban President and Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez held meetings here with a very young and qualified woman, as she is a lawyer, consultant, analyst, academic and politician.

In what was the first visit of this level during the current government of Panama headed by President Laurentino Cortizo, Foreign Minister Tewaney Mencomo fostered ties with the historic center of Havana, Casa de las Americas and a relevant dance company.

However, an outstanding part of her agenda was devoted to the possibilities of increasing ties in sports, science, culture and trade.

Cuba and Panama already have 25 legally supported agreements and Panama seeks to place its products in the Caribbean.

In this direction, the presence in the Panamanian delegation of the Minister of Commerce and Industries, Federico Alfaro, who was open, according to the delegation, to achieve a balanced trade balance with Havana, was outstanding.

Weeks before the Chancellor's trip to this capital, the Panamanian Colon Free Zone and the Mariel Special Development Zone, west of Havana, had signed a promising cooperation agreement to benefit trade and investments.

The agreement was the result of a meeting held between executives of both parties at the 38th Havana Fair, where 15 Panamanian companies exhibited their products.

It can be seen how both countries approach positions in economic and commercial matters, without neglecting education, since a group of young people from the Canal nation are studying medicine in Cuba.

During the most acute stage of COVID-19, more than a hundred Cuban doctors attended to the Panamanians.

It is stimulating that in the midst of convulsive international circumstances and in the light of a rebirth of the integration movement in Latin America and the Caribbean, Cuba and Panama find channels for exchanges, for the good of both peoples.

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