

# *SICA and Cuba discuss Afro-descendant heritage in Panama*

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Panama City, May 2 (RHC)-- Representatives of the countries of the Central American Integration System -- SICA -- and the Cuban Ministry of Culture (Micultura) are meeting since Monday in Panama to reinforce plans to safeguard the living heritage of Afro-descendants in the region.

According to a press release from Micultura, the workshop "Capacity building of community leaders and public managers for the safeguarding of the Afro-descendant Intangible Cultural Heritage of the region and Cuba", will allow the exchange of best practices in this field.

The head of the ministry, Giselle Gonzalez, said that the five-day forum will enable the various stakeholders to understand that heritage is kept alive with different types of efforts, where public policy

allows the formation of constructive fabrics such as this one.

The meeting will also improve notions on the basic management of methodological tools for the elaboration of a national state of the art of actions for the safeguarding of the living Afro-descendant heritage.

Regarding this workshop, the coordinator of Cultural Management of the Central American Educational and Cultural Coordination, Abel Aronátegui, indicated that the program is part of the initiatives aimed at safeguarding the Afro-descendant living heritage of the region, which has seven manifestations inscribed in the UNESCO list of intangible heritage.

However, he pointed out that there are more intangible expressions recognized through the countries of the region themselves, where performing arts, dances and oral tradition, among other factors, are linked.

González said that safeguarding the music, dances, narratives and languages, handicraft techniques, the relationship with nature and the universe, and the traditional cuisine of each ethnic group is a common thread that keeps alive the spirit of the ancestors.

"In the Garifuna voices and dances, in the Congo culture, in the calypso, in the cassava and pan bon, in the bunde and bullerengue, in the braids and clothing that allow us to dance to the sound of the eternal drums, we are reminded of a sad past, but also of the resilience and indelible joy of those of us who carry the nation inside," he remarked.

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