

# *Cuban president holds dialogue with social workers*

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Havana, May 11 (RHC) -- The President of the Republic, Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, held an emotional dialogue on Wednesday afternoon with more than 700 social workers from all over the country.

Very moving life stories, which speak of passion and dedication, of how much more can be done -and is done- in Cuba from social work, were shared in this, the second of these meetings taking place in the last eight months.

"You have a fundamental mission in society that no one else can fulfill", said the Head of State during the first minutes of the exchange, which lasted almost three hours, with the participation, via videoconference, of all the provinces and the special municipality of Isla de la Juventud.

Each of the interventions that followed were the best endorsement of that sentence. One after the other, personal and collective experiences were recounted, all united by the common feeling, as Mariela Álvarez, from Sancti Spíritus, said, that "social work is not a work center where we go to collect a salary, social work is a profession of dedication and love without limits".

Many of those present there have lived these experiences from both sides: once they were accompanied to overcome their problems by a social worker, and now they are the ones who accompany others on the way to do so.

Nairobi Oviedo from Havana is an example of this. A social worker for 22 years, grassroots delegate in her constituency and deputy to the National Assembly of People's Power, she was part of a long process of social transformation during her youth, which changed her life and today she is proud of having been helped by social workers when she needed it.

Wanting to change, he said, is the first step to achieve it. "If the person doesn't want to transform his or her life, we can't do it," she said.

As Letsy Montano, also from the capital, said, and several of her colleagues agreed with her: "No transformation is possible if it doesn't start with the desire of the person who wants to transform his or her life".

When we achieve this, she said, then our role of accompanying, of being at the side of those who need us, of really working, becomes more important.

## EIGHT MONTHS AND ITS RESULTS

The first of these meetings took place on September 14 last year. Almost eight months later, this Wednesday's meeting was also the scenario to follow up on what was done during that period, in order to respond to several of the concerns raised at that time.

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