

# *Caribbean nations work to support each other*

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By Roberto Morejon

Cubans see CARICOM, the Caribbean Community, as an integration mechanism resistant to economic adversities, climate fickleness and natural disasters.

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the bloc founded by the Treaty of Chaguaramas, the largest of the Antilles stressed the importance of economic exchanges, as political ties are solid.

Cubans praise how the neighboring collectivity emerged with a preponderantly commercial vision until it evolved into a community design, in which they discuss the most pressing issues.

There are many issues of concern to the locals, such as the effects of climate change.

The Caribbean countries are also demanding reparations for the historical debt owed by the colonial powers for years of plundering, an endeavor to which Cuba has offered its support.

José Martí's homeland assists its neighbors in every possible way, especially in education and health, in the latter case with emphasis on sending doctors during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Cuba closely follows the agreements adopted at the Summits of Heads of State and Government with CARICOM, convened every three years in alternate venues.

In light of those meetings, a Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement was envisioned, which in 2017 included areas such as tourism services, transportation and construction, in addition to collaboration in human resources.

An expression of the efforts of Cuba and its neighbors to expand their ties is found in the EXPO-Caribe fairs, whose 2023 edition culminated recently in the eastern city of Santiago de Cuba.

The event exceeded participants' expectations, with more than 190 interviews between businesspeople in sectors of mutual interest, such as multideestination tourism, an area with enormous prospects.

EXPO-Caribbean highlighted the potential of the eastern part of this archipelago to strengthen ties with the region.

The Caribbean brothers, who in all the stands demand the end of the U.S. blockade of Cuba, have a similar vision to Havana that together they are stronger, as underlined the Minister of Trade, Industries and Business Development of Saint Lucia, Enma Hippolytte, a participant in EXPO-Caribe.

Still in search of establishing a maritime line that favors the exchange of goods, Cuba and CARICOM are working to increase collaboration.

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