

# *A boost to Cuba's ties with Middle Eastern countries*

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By María Josefina Arce

The United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Iran are the three nations included in the tour of the Middle East by Cuban President Miguel Díaz Canel, which, in addition to official working visits, includes his participation in the 28th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which begins on Thursday in Dubai.

His visit to the United Arab Emirates, the first by a Cuban head of state to that Arab nation, has been an opportunity to expand ties with great potential for cooperation in areas such as biotechnology, health, renewable energy sources and tourism.

Bilateral relations have experienced a constant rise, in which solidarity also occupies an essential place.

Cuban specialists collaborated with their colleagues in the United Arab Emirates in the fight against COVID 19, a work recognized by the authorities and people of that State.

With Qatar, likewise, we are united by the purpose of continuing to strengthen ties, which exhibit transcendental moments such as the visit in 2001 to that territory of the historic leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro Ruz (1926-2016).

Havana and Doha have signed important agreements in areas such as health, education, science, sports, trade, customs and investment, among others.

Brigades of the 'Henry Reeve' International Contingent of Doctors Specialized in Situations of Disasters and Serious Epidemics arrived in that nation of the Arabian Peninsula, in response to the world health emergency caused by COVID 19.

And as a proof of the close bilateral cooperation is the Cuban Hospital of Dukhan, inaugurated in 2012 and which guarantees excellent care to nearby populations and citizens from the rest of the country.

Iran is another of the nations to be visited by the Cuban president. There is a close friendship between Havana and Tehran, which was ratified during the official visit of Iranian President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi to the Greater Antilles last June.

The relations are also characterized by strategic cooperation in biotechnology and the pharmaceutical industry, with notable results during the COVID 19 pandemic.

The three countries, with which there is a fluid exchange at the highest level, have expressed their rejection of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed for more than six decades against the Cuban people.

The visit of the Cuban president to the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Iran will give a boost to ties characterized by friendship, respect, common points of view and the interest in working for the welfare of their citizens.

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