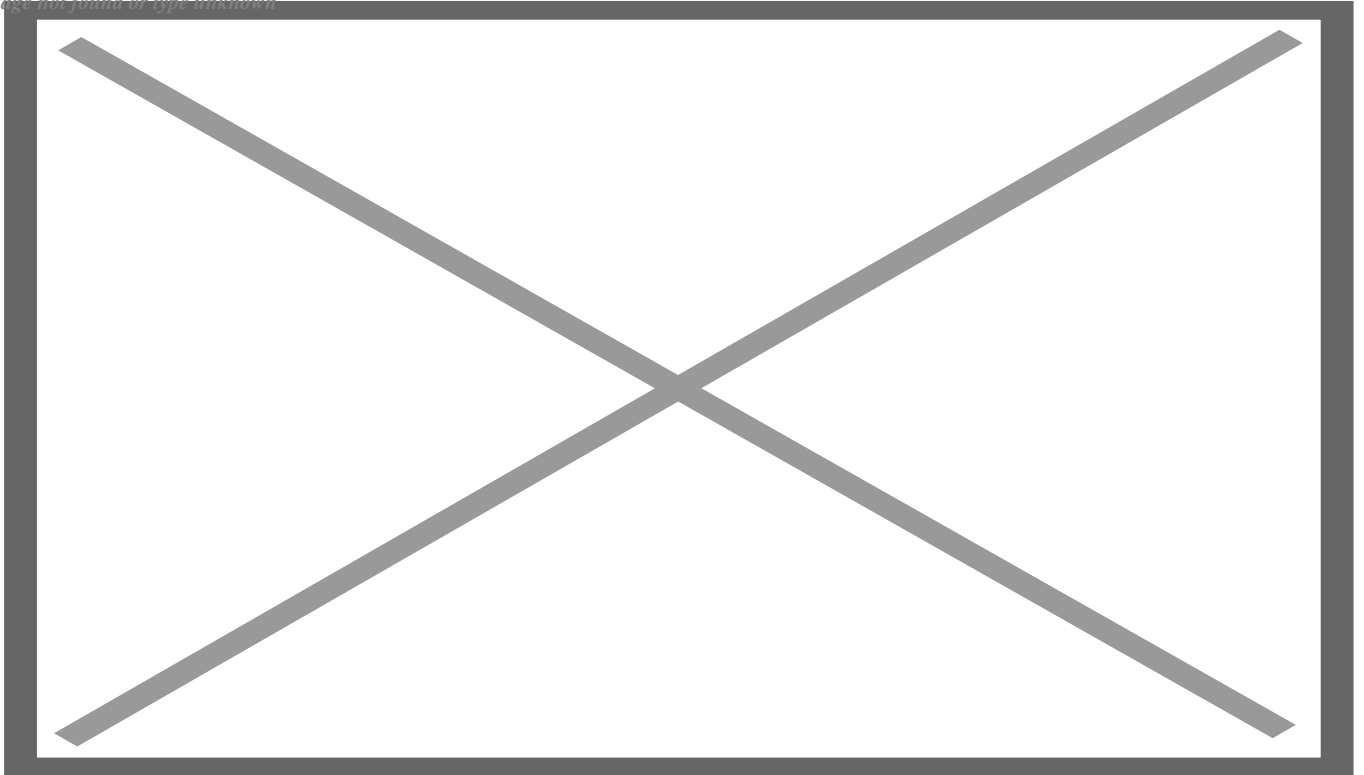


Cuban women prepare for their Congress

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By Maria Josefina Arce

Cuban women are preparing for the 11th Congress of their umbrella organisation, the FMC, which for more than 6 decades has represented the interests of this important segment of the population and supported their full integration into society.

Next month, in March, the Federation of Cuban Women will meet in the communities after debates, because, as its secretary general Teresa Amarelle Boué stated, everything that takes place at the Congress has to come from the neighbourhoods.

Since the meeting was convened in April last year, meetings have been held throughout the country to analyse the problems affecting this sector, how to improve the work of the organisation that represents them and the attention given to new members.

The event is expected to address issues of great socio-economic impact for the country, in which women play an essential role, such as food production, a government priority.

Although there has been an increase in migration from rural to urban areas in recent years, women continue to be a major force in the countryside. Cuban women are involved in agricultural, livestock, tobacco and forestry activities.

In addition, the authorities, in conjunction with international organisations and agencies, have set up projects to encourage the incorporation of women into productive tasks and their performance in administrative functions.

A topic of discussion at the conclave will also be the strategies to be developed to eradicate gender violence, a problem that the government has pointed out still persists in society. The country is working towards this goal, because as Cuban President Miguel Díaz Canel has said, the revolution as an act of social justice is incompatible with violence against women. It is therefore an issue under constant debate and evaluation by the authorities, ministries, state bodies and the FMC.

It was discussed at length at the Seventh Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party last December. In recent months, a great deal of work has been done to ensure a quality meeting, dominated by critical but also respectful debate, which will give rise to strategies that will enable further progress in the empowerment of women and the elimination of all manifestations of discrimination.

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