

# *José Ramón Machado Ventura: Changes in Cuba Will Strengthen Socialism*

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Sancti Spiritus, July 26 (RHC)-- The Second Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba and Vice President, José Ramón Machado Ventura, says that the changes taking place in Cuba are designed to strengthen the island's socialist system.

Speaking at the main activity to commemorate the 63rd anniversary of the assault on the Moncada Garrison -- held in the central city of Sancti Spiritus -- the Cuban vice president called on the Cuban people to work hard to assure a future of sustained development.

Machado Ventura highlighted the achievements of workers in Sancti Spiritus, recalling the history of struggle in that central Cuban province.

Cuban President Raul Castro presided over the commemoration in Sancti Spiritus, which was attended by representatives of international solidarity organizations, including the U.S. Venceremos Brigade and caravanistas from Pastors for Peace, led by Gail Walker, the daughter of the late Reverend Lucius Walker.

In another part of his speech this morning in Santi Spiritus, José Ramón Machado Ventura called on Cubans to work efficiently and save energy, pointing to the need to update the economic and social model of the Cuban Revolution on the principles of democracy, with the active participation of the people in the process.

And the Cuban vice president, on behalf of all the Cuban people, expressed his congratulations to the historic leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro, who will soon celebrate his 90th birthday.

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