

# *Cuban President meets with UNEAC Congress Organizing Committee members and intellectuals*

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Havana, June 23 (RHC) – Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel met with Cuban intellectuals before the beginning of the 9th Cuban Writers and Artists Association Congress set for June 28/30.

During the meeting, the President had a friendly exchange with members of the organizing committee, intellectuals and Culture Ministry officials where he highlighted the need for all sectors of Cuban society to join efforts with culture so that it can truly be participatory and integrating. Díaz-Canel said that it is essential for the Cuban Writers and Artists Association –UNEAC– to strengthen its role in society. He recalled the speech delivered by Cuban Revolution leader Fidel Castro in 1961, known as ‘Words to Intellectuals’, where Castro clearly outlined the essence of the Cuban Revolution’s cultural policy and the role of artists and intellectuals in society, a speech whose ideas, he said, are in effect at present.

'At a time where there are attempts to impose the pseudo-cultural patterns of capitalism and the traditional concepts of the media have changed, we have to strive for being more interactive and take advantage of all spaces that make that interactivity possible,' he noted. The Cuban President insisted on the need to increase the quality of everything the country does in order to stop emptiness and superficiality, uphold the nation's identity and historical memory and boost international cultural exchanges.

During the encounter, participants noted that the 9th UNEAC Congress has been preceded by a broad debate process, characterized by a steady dialogue with artists and intellectuals all over the country. UNEAC President and writer Miguel Barnet Lanza recognized the support that culture has had in the midst of so many complex tasks that the Cuban government and Communist Party is facing, as well as the support of Díaz-Canel throughout the whole process.

For his part, Culture Minister Alpidio Alonso emphasized the need to work to create audiences because, as he said, the work of cultural institutions doesn't wind up with the 'miss en scene', but is closely linked to the spiritual growth of the Cuban people and their capacity to critically appreciate artistic processes.

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