

# *Díaz-Canel: Intellectuals and artists will always accompany the Revolution*

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Havana, July 1 (RHC)--Cuban president Miguel Díaz-Canel affirmed that the intellectuals and artists will always accompany the effort of the Cuban archipelago, that the Revolution put on the political map of the world, to continue being acknowledged also for its unique way of fighting through singing, dancing, laughing and winning.

Speaking at the closing ceremony of the 9th Congress of the National Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC) on Sunday, Díaz-Canel recalled the various actions undertaken by Fidel Castro to preserve culture, “which, as he said many times, is the first thing to be saved.”

Díaz-Canel stressed the importance of consciously reading his renown speech known as “Words to Intellectuals” for the principles it holds for Cuban cultural policy.

He also highlighted the universal impact of the Revolution that transformed a small and backward nation into an undisputed world power for its human and kind resources, despite the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United State

The Cuban president reiterated that there should be a coherent cultural presence in both, the private and state sectors, because both respond to the same cultural policy and must promote, defend and give space to those who make true art.

During his speech, the president criticized practices in the cultural sector that undermine the relationship between the artists and state institutions.

"Artists have a duty to pay their taxes, but they should not have to pay companies if they did nothing to get them contracts, or if they did not promote their work or provided them with legal protection," he said to a standing ovation of delegates.

He also censured the lack of promotion of the creative and high quality work of artist residing on the island, while the work of their peers residing abroad—who have equal talent and greater access to all kind of resources and markets, are promoted in Cuba.

In another part of his address, the president urged UNEAC to fight against cultural mercenaries, willing to lynch all those artists and creators on the island who support the Revolution through their artistic work.

"We are not going to limit creation, but the Revolution that has resisted and defended itself for 60 years, is not going to leave its institutional spaces in the hands of those who serve its enemy," he stressed.

The Cuban leader also regretted the lack of artistic critique in the national scene.

"I also see UNEAC struggling to rescue and raise the weight and role of cultural critique. The lack of serious and well-founded analyses on the real values of works and cultural spaces discourages creators and deprive the audiences, particularly the youngest, of guiding criteria to establish artistic hierarchies in time," he said

In closing his speech, which was interrupted by ovations several times, Miguel Diaz Canel congratulated the new leadership of the organization elected by Congress delegates, and had words of praise for outgoing president Miguel Barnet.

"We congratulate the new leadership, its president, Luis Morlote, with the certainty that they understand that their most important mission is to unleash an irreconcilable battle against the lack of culture and indecency, and in that struggle creators should be, as Fidel stressed in his "Words to intellectuals", more actors than spectators."

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