

# *Angolan president awarded with Jose Marti Order*

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Havana, July 2 (RHC) The first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, Raúl Castro, presented Angolan president João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço Monday evening with the island's highest distinction, the Jose Marti Order. The decoration was vested upon the African dignitary in Havana, in the presence of Cuban president, Miguel Díaz-Canel.

The text, made known in a ceremony held at the Palace of the Revolution, stresses: "Cuba has been honored with your friendship since the difficult years of the war in Angola."

"We have received constant samples of your gratitude and affection towards our country and its historical leaders, something that will always appreciate," reads the document published by the presidency website.

The text adds that the indestructible and excellent relationship between Angola and Cuba constitutes a paradigm of fraternal and solidary ties between two sister nations united by historical bonds of friendship, affection and mutual respect, forged from the very beginning of the Cuban nation and in the heat of the fighting for the independence of Angola.

In expressing appreciation for the distinction, the Angolan leader highlighted the deep links of friendship, solidarity and cooperation between the two countries that were forged when the people of both nations shed their blood in defense of the human beings' noblest ideals: freedom and self-determination.

He added that "thanks to Cuba's heroic sacrifice, Southern Africa is a region of peace, democracy, development and social progress."

During the ceremony, the Angolan leader also conferred his country's highest decoration, the Agostinho Neto Order, to Army General Raul Castro, and Cuban president, Miguel Diaz Canel Bermudez.

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