

# *Cuba's first vice president highlights country's potential*

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Havana, May 18 (RHC)-- Salvador Valdés Mesa, vice-president of the Republic of Cuba, said during his visit to Cienfuegos that the island has high social standards and the life expectancy of developed countries, but needs an activation in the economic field.

Potentialities exist: high level of education, science, technique, universities, soils, preparation of man; therefore, they need to face the barriers that obstruct them, banish the justifications that prevent them, he said.

The Cuban leader made the comments as he visited the first cassava production plant in the country -- already in the completion phase and located in the Antonio Maceo credit and service cooperative of the Horquita Agricultural Company -- which he described as an example of a local solution.

This plant will produce two tons of the product daily, which can be used as a substitute for wheat flour.

Valdés Mesa called for allowing the discovery of this type of flour to the new generations, because in the territory it will not be possible to produce wheat; but yucca, a praiseworthy variant, will be produced.

In order to guarantee the raw material for this mini-industry, he called for "changing the strategy of planting the crop; above all, increasing it, because the daily amount of cassava needed for the plant is

considerable" (3.5 tons of cassava generate one gross ton of flour).

Together with Inés María Chapman, deputy prime minister; Félix Duartes Ortega, first secretary of the party in the province; Alexandre Corona Quintero, governor, and other leaders, Valdés Mesa also visited areas of the Paso Bonito-Cruces water transfer.

This hydraulic complex was conceived by Commander in Chief Fidel Castro in the 1970s to transfer water from the Escambray River to the Cruces Plain and to irrigate areas of sugar cane and pasture.

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