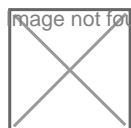


Putin congratulates Díaz-Canel on his election as the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba

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Putin congratulated his Cuban counterpart Miguel Diaz-Canel on his election as the first secretary of the PCC

Moscow, April 20 (RHC)-- Russian President Vladimir Putin congratulated his Cuban counterpart Miguel Diaz-Canel on his election as the first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC).

'Receive my sincere congratulations on the occasion of your election to the post of the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist

Party of Cuba,' the Russian head of state said in his message, Prensa Latina news agency reported.

Putin stressed that Diaz-Canel's election at the recently concluded 8th Congress of that organization is evidence of recognizing his merits before the Caribbean nation.

On Monday, a high representative of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (RFCP) commented that the new first secretary of the PCC would follow the course of the historic leader of the Revolution, Fidel Castro.

I believe that Miguel Diaz-Canel will not only follow the course of justice and freedom of Fidel Castro, but will be able to face the modern challenges of the global world, said Alexandr Yushchenko, spokesman for the chairman of the Central Committee of the RFCP, Guennadi Ziuganov.

Díaz-Canel replaced Army General Raúl Castro, who informed the Congress that his task at the head of the party organization concluded 'with the satisfaction of fulfilled duty and confidence in the future of the Homeland.'

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