

# *Cuba and UNESCO for a better future*

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By María Josefina Arce

The relationship between Cuba and UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, dates back more than seven decades and recognizes the Caribbean nation's leadership in cooperation.

During all these years, both parties have supported each other in their respective plans to advance for the sake of the development and welfare of the peoples.

The UN agency has highlighted Cuba's active participation in South-South collaboration projects in fields such as health, education and agriculture and its contribution to the training of human resources in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Cuba has also provided essential support to UNESCO's efforts to eliminate illiteracy worldwide. Its "Yo sí puedo" method has been successfully employed in 30 countries to teach people to read and write.

Some eleven million people have been taught to read and write with this program, which received the King Sejong Prize awarded by the international organization in 2006.

Cuba has always shared its experiences in various fields, as now at the 41st General Conference of UNESCO, which is being held in Paris, where it presented the actions deployed to confront COVID 19 and the safe return to face-to-face teaching activities, after the immunization of students with its own vaccines.

The UN agency has also been at the side of our country in its development plans. In this context we have its support for the future realization in Havana of a school of the Management of Social Transformations Program, MOST, in order to increase scientific cooperation actions in the field of social sciences and in the context of post-pandemic recovery.

This initiative, created in 1994, promotes research in the social sciences and this is not the first time it has been carried out on Cuban soil. Cuba is part of the Intergovernmental Council for the Latin American and Caribbean region.

This program works with governments, social science communities and civil society actors to improve the connection between research and decision-making, an area in which the Caribbean nation has worked intensively in recent years.

Elba Rosa Pérez, head of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, highlighted the importance of Social Sciences as a tool for the design of more effective actions in aspects such as economic recovery, attention to the psychological aftermath of COVID-19 and the improvement of citizens' lives.

Since Cuba joined UNESCO in 1947, bilateral ties have been maintained uninterruptedly, and following the revolutionary triumph have been strengthened, with the implementation of joint projects for the advancement of both the Caribbean nation and other peoples.

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