

# *Cuba keeps its history alive*

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## **Arrival of the Freedom Caravan in Havana**

By Maria Josefina Arce

Cuba has memory and keeps its history alive. The Homeland is nourished by the thoughts and actions of men and women who fought to bequeath us the country we have today, sovereign and independent and working to forge a better future for its children.

January 8 is an important date for Cuba. On that day 63 years ago, the historic leader of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro, entered Havana at the head of his José Martí Column One of the Rebel Army.

The Caravan of Freedom had crossed the country from east to west. The jubilation of an entire people accompanied the rebels from their departure on January 2 from Santiago de Cuba until their triumphant entry into the Cuban capital.

Cubans expressed their support for the nascent revolution that had put an end to the bloody dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, which had plunged the nation into pain, poverty, hunger and ignorance, and to the domination of the United States, with large economic interests in our soil.

As every year until 2020, before the arrival of COVID 19, in this 2022 the Caravan of Freedom has also been edited, which as on that historic day in 1959 has traveled more than a thousand kilometers from Santiago de Cuba to Havana.

The new generations have once again played a leading role in this memorable event, in a new demonstration of their commitment to the Homeland and the Revolution. They are those who for decades have been at the forefront of important tasks in health, education, production, telecommunications and other actions.

Those new pines, as Cuba's National Hero José Martí called them, who in the face of the world health emergency caused by COVID 19 have been on the front line in hospitals, isolation centers, in community research and have not hesitated to offer their solidarity aid to other peoples.

From Columbia, Cuba's main military fortress until its conversion into a school in September 1959, Fidel Castro spoke to the sea of people gathered there. It was a decisive moment in our history, as the revolutionary leader described it. A new stage was opening, a new beginning for millions of Cubans. But as Fidel predicted it would not be easy, "perhaps in the future everything would be more difficult".

And we have indeed lived through difficult times. There have been constant aggressions from the United States ranging from sabotage, support for the mercenary invasion of Playa Giron in April 1961, campaigns to discredit the revolution and a criminal economic, commercial and financial blockade that is still in place.

But the new generations have once again reaffirmed that they can be counted on, that they are the future of Cuba, a nation that lives, resists and works to advance in its sustainable development.

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