

# *Martí as a guide*

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By María Josefina Arce

For the past 20 years, prominent political, intellectual, academic, religious and social activists have been meeting in Havana. They come from all continents to participate in the International Conference "For the Balance of the World", a space for dialogue and understanding for the good of humanity.

Next week, the fifth edition of this meeting will open its doors. It was originally planned for 2021, but due to the global situation of COVID 19 and the suggestion of many people wishing to participate, it was postponed for this year.

This forum of plural and multidisciplinary thought is convened by the José Martí Project for International Solidarity, created in 2003 at the First International Conference for the Balance of the World, on the 150th anniversary of the birth of Cuba's National Hero.

The closing ceremony of that first event was a transcendental event for a faithful follower of the apostle's ideas, the historic leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro, who affirmed that Martí is an exceptional example of a creator and humanist, worthy of being remembered throughout the centuries.

UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, has accompanied the Project, which is also supported by the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture and other organizations around the world.

Since its creation, it has developed an intense work to disseminate throughout the world the legacy of José Martí, the most universal of all Cubans and who, as Fidel rightly pointed out, was a "fervent lover of peace, union and harmony among men..."

Along this path, the Project has created Martí Chairs in Universities, published in different languages texts of the National Hero of Cuba and held seminars on Martí's ideology, so current in these times.

Renowned intellectuals have joined this initiative, whose World Council includes Nobel Peace Prize winner Adolfo Pérez Esquivel from Argentina, Brazilian theologian Frei Betto and former UNESCO Director General Federico Mayor Zaragoza, among other prestigious personalities.

The meeting, convened by the Project, seeks to stimulate solidarity, peace and reactivate the dialogue among civilizations, from the brilliant ideology of Martí, who always defended the poor of the earth and advocated for the unity of Our America.

In times of great complexity at international level, the anti-imperialist, humanist and pro-independence thought of José Martí is a guide to work together for a better world, of peace and fraternity, that is the purpose of the International Conference "For the balance of the world", which on this occasion will be the culmination of the Day in homage to the National Hero of Cuba, in his 170th birthday.

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