

# *Socio-economic development initiative linked to Cuba's heritage at UNESCO*

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Paris, June 21 (RHC)-- The Cuban permanent mission before the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the French Company Malongo presented the Project 'Los caminos del café', a socio-economic development initiative, linked to Cuba's heritage.

The ceremony is in the framework of the Week of Latin America and the Caribbean at UNESCO.

Cuban ambassador Yahima Esquivel and Malongo Foundation executive Delphine Brudoux offered those present details of the Project, implemented with support from the Historian's Office in eastern Santiago de Cuba and the European Union.

The Cuban diplomat explained that the aim is to preserve architectural remains of coffee plantations in the Southeastern Cuban region --a cultural landscape illustrating colonial coffee production from the 19th to early 20th centuries.

The site was inscribed on the UNESCO world heritage sites List in 2000.

UNESCO said the remains of the 19th-century coffee plantations in the foothills of the Sierra Maestra are unique evidence of a pioneer form of agriculture in a difficult terrain. They throw considerable light on the economic, social, and technological history of the Caribbean and Latin American region.

The Cuban diplomat further explained that preservation works cover not only the architectural and archaeological material evidence of 171 old coffee plantations, but also the infrastructure for irrigation and water management, and the transportation network of mountain roads and bridges connecting the plantations internally and with coffee export points.

Launched a decade ago, the initiative 'Los caminos del café' is a multi-disciplinary action, involving, tourism, culture and agriculture, aimed at achieving sustainable development of local rural communities.

Brudoux spoke about the strong French presence in the Cuban eastern region, immigrants who settled there in the late 18th century and the early 1900th, after the Haitian Revolution.

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