

# *ANNUAL SUMMARY OF NATIONAL NEWS*

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## **1- New legislature of the National Assembly of People's Power takes office. Miguel Díaz Canel re-elected as president**

On a historic date for Cubans, April 19, which marks the defeat of the mercenary invasion of Playa Girón in 1961, the Constitutive Session of the Tenth Legislature of the National Assembly of People's Power was held.

The Cuban parliament is made up of 470 deputies, elected in the national elections. Nearly 76% of the electoral roll went to the polls on March 26th to elect the members of the legislative body, whose composition includes nearly 56% of women and 19.79% of young people.

All sectors of society are represented in the Assembly, which in its constitutive session re-elected Miguel Díaz Canel as President of the Republic and Salvador Valdés Mesa as Vice President, for a new five-year term.

Esteban Lazo was also ratified as president of the National Assembly and the rest of the Council of State was elected.

## **2- Cuba commemorates 70 years since the assaults on the Moncada and Carlos Manuel de Céspedes Barracks**

Some 10 thousand residents of Santiago de Cuba, representing all the people, led by the leader of the Revolution, Army General Raúl Castro, and President Miguel Díaz Canel, participated in the Central Act for the 70th anniversary of the assaults on the Moncada Barracks in Santiago de Cuba and Carlos Manuel de Céspedes Barracks in Bayamo.

During his speech, Cuban President Miguel Díaz Canel asserted that as long as the United States persists in its attempts to suffocate us with its genocidal blockade, as long as we do not reach a level of prosperity worthy of every Cuban, we will have a Moncada to storm.

Together with Cubans in this important commemoration of July 26th, Day of National Rebellion, there were Brigades of Solidarity with Cuba, made up of activists from 26 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, North America and Europe.

## **3- Cuba assumes the pro tempore presidency of the Group of 77**

In January this past year, Cuba assumed for the first time the pro tempore presidency of the Group of 77, a high responsibility that it has carried out with seriousness and a strong commitment throughout the year.

At the head of this coordination mechanism, Cuba has defended the rights and aspirations of the South in the various international forums and has worked to promote cooperation, consensus and complementarity.

A transcendental moment of its presidency was the holding in Havana on September 15 and 16 of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the bloc, under the theme "Current Development Challenges: Role of Science, Technology and Innovation."

Also as part of its contribution to the search for solutions to the pressing problems of our peoples, it convened a Summit of the leaders of the bloc for December 2 in Dubai, in the context of the twenty-eighth Conference of the United Nations Framework Parties on Climate Change, which was held in the United Arab Emirates.

## **4- Cuba hosted the third cycle of peace talks between the Colombian government and the ELN**

Between May and June this past year, Havana was the venue for the third cycle of peace talks between the government of Colombian President Gustavo Petro and the ELN, National Liberation Army. Important

agreements were signed in the Cuban capital on the participation of Colombian society in peace building and a bilateral and national ceasefire.

The signing of the agreements was presided over by Petro and his Cuban counterpart, Miguel Díaz Canel. The solemn ceremony highlighted Cuba's support for peace in Colombia and rejected the inclusion of the Caribbean nation in the unilateral U.S. list of countries allegedly sponsoring terrorism.

## **5- International condemnation of the U.S. blockade against Cuba**

For the thirty-first time, the UN General Assembly condemned the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed for more than six decades by the United States against Cuba, which hinders the socio-economic development of the country and threatens the human rights of an entire people.

One hundred and eighty-seven nations voted in favor of the draft resolution presented by Cuba on the need to put an end to that hostile policy, which from March 2022 to February of this year caused losses of more than 4 billion 867 million dollars.

The United States, supported only by its unconditional partner, Israel, was once again isolated in its siege of the Cuban people. An isolation that was evidenced not only in the vote, but also in the great solidarity with Cuba expressed in the interventions of the representatives of nations from all over the world and regional organizations.

The repudiation of the genocidal blockade undoubtedly marked this year. Just 15 days after the historic vote at the UN, Brussels was the scene of an International Tribunal against the hostile measure, an initiative launched in July at the Peoples' Summit, held in parallel to the Summit of CELAC, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, and the European Union.

The Tribunal ruled that the economic siege violates international law, universal norms for peaceful coexistence and affects the living conditions of an entire people.

## **6- Fourth Conference "The Nation and Emigration"**

The Fourth Conference "The Nation and Emigration" was held for two days in Havana, with the participation of some 400 Cubans living abroad to continue advancing closer and more constructive ties with the land where they were born.

Respect for Cuba's sovereignty and independence is the basis of this dialogue, initiated in 1978 and promoted by the historic leader of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro.

Cuba is living today the best moment of relations with its nationals abroad, said the general director of Consular Affairs and Attention to Cubans Living Abroad, Ernesto Soberón.

Originally planned for 2020 and postponed due to the COVID19 pandemic, this new edition of the Conference "The Nation and Emigration", showed once again that a good part of the Cuban nationals are interested in a stable and fluid link with the Homeland and they also want to contribute to its socioeconomic development.

## **7- Intense diplomatic activity and consolidation of links with friendly countries**

In 2023, Cuba has had an outstanding participation in international events and strengthened ties with friendly nations in visits at the highest level. It is worth mentioning the participation of President Miguel Díaz Canel in the seventy-eighth session of the UN General Assembly and in the Climate Ambition Summit, in September in New York.

The Cuban president also attended the Third Summit between the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States and the European Union, held in Brussels. As part of his trip to Europe, he visited Portugal.

He also toured several African countries, including Angola, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa, where he attended the BRICS Summit.

In a tour of the Middle East, he attended the 28th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in the United Arab Emirates and made official visits to Qatar and Iran. In June, Iranian President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi had already visited Cuba, and important agreements had been signed.

During the year, Prime Minister Manuel Marrero attended the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council and the Third Eurasian Congress. He made visits to Russia, China and Belarus.

Vice President Salvador Valdés Mesa toured Africa, including Ghana, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Guinea Bissau.

## **8- Continued progress of Cuban biotechnology**

The year 2023 has been another year of proven advances in biotechnology in Cuba, even with the limitations imposed by the U.S. blockade. Throughout these twelve months, 104 clinical trials have been developed, related to cancer, COVID 19 and the area of infections, among others.

Of particular importance were the trials linked to the drug NeuralCIM for Alzheimer's disease and the vaccine candidate Quimi-Vio against pneumococcus in the pediatric population.

This year also saw the strengthening of alliances with other nations such as China, Brazil, Russia and Iran for the transfer of technology and the development of joint projects.

## **9- International recognition for Cuba**

For the sixth time, Cuba was elected to the Human Rights Council, a sign of the prestige achieved by the country in the work of this body.

Cuba was the nation with the highest number of votes in the region. A recognition of its significant advances in the enjoyment by all Cubans of the prerogatives of citizenship.

A distinction to the priority that the Cuban government gives to the development of education, science and culture was the election of Cuba as a member of UNESCO's Executive Board.

One hundred and fifty-eight countries voted in favor of Cuba's membership in the Council, of which it has already been a member on other occasions.

### **10- Cuba's unconditional solidarity with the Palestinian people**

A wave of solidarity with the Palestinians swept from one end of the island to the other. Organized by the UJC, Union of Young Communists, massive rallies were held in the main cities of the country against the genocide of the Palestinian people by the Zionist regime of Israel.

The march in Havana, the Cuban capital, was led by President Miguel Díaz Canel and other important officials of the Cuban government, which has always advocated a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on the creation of two states.

As another sign of support for the Palestinian people, President Díaz Canel held an emotional meeting with 144 young Palestinians studying medicine in our country, and reiterated that Palestine will always be able to count on Cuba.

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