

# *Chávez: A true revolutionary*

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By María Josefina Arce

"Chávez is a true revolutionary, a deep thinker, sincere, courageous and tireless worker...", would say the historical leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro, about the late Venezuelan president, who would change the reality of his beloved Venezuela.

Eleven years have passed since the physical disappearance of Hugo Chávez, promoter of the Bolivarian Revolution that set in motion deep transformations in the South American nation in favor of all Venezuelans, without exclusions.

The most vulnerable sectors of society began to enjoy basic human rights that until then had been denied to them. Since Chavez became president in 1999, health and education, among other prerogatives, became available to all.

His social missions marked a before and after in the lives of many Venezuelan families. For the first time, health care would reach the most remote places in the country.

Barrio Adentro, which began in 2003 and has been supported by Cuba, guarantees the accessibility, universality and free medical services.

Millions of consultations have been provided through this social program, which has been expanded over time and today also includes attention to chronic diseases, surgical interventions and other medical treatments, as well as the construction of specialized health care centers.

Misión Robinson was also launched in 2003, bringing knowledge to every corner of Venezuela. Two years after its implementation, the South American country was declared by UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, as a "Territory Free of Illiteracy".

Another of the achievements of this initiative was the alphabetization of indigenous communities, one of the most abandoned sectors of the nation.

During Chávez's mandate, Venezuela also gained prominence in the international arena. The voice of Caracas began to be heard strongly in the different international tribunals in favor of the most humble.

The tireless revolutionary extended his generous hand to other peoples. He made solidarity and the struggle for Latin American and Caribbean unity two pillars of his daily actions.

Chávez left an indelible mark in his people and in the region. He was the architect of a true political and social revolution for the benefit of all Venezuelans, who today March 5th pay him a heartfelt and well-deserved homage, to which other peoples of the world join him, especially those of Our America.

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