

# *Cuba and Laos, true bonds of friendship*

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**Cuba and Laos, true bonds of friendship**

By María Josefina Arce

Mutual trust, respect and a fluid dialogue at the highest levels characterize the relations between Cuba and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, which have just celebrated their 50th anniversary in diplomatic terms, and which both sides are interested in continuing to strengthen.

Since long before 1974, the two peoples have established true ties of friendship, which was evident during the recent visit to Laos by the President of the National Assembly of the People's Power of Cuba, Esteban Lazo.

The head of the Cuban Parliament fulfilled an intense agenda during his trip to the Asian country on the occasion of the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

Cooperation has always been a pillar of the relationship between the two peoples. In 1973, the first Cuban medical brigade arrived in the liberated Laotian territory of Huaphanh, a fact that the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Laos, Saulemxy Kommasith, described as a significant event.

In statements to the Prensa Latina news agency, he pointed out that since the establishment of diplomatic relations, solidarity cooperation has intensified and reached a high level.

In fact, both parties maintain a fruitful exchange in areas such as education, sports and health.

In the latter, the training of young Laotians in various professions on Cuban territory stands out.

The visit of Cuban Prime Minister Manuel Marrero to the Asian country in 2022, during which important agreements were signed in the fields of higher education, agriculture and health, gave a boost to bilateral relations.

On this occasion, Marrero announced the donation of half a million doses of COVID 19 vaccine to support the immunization of the population.

Another milestone in the relations was the trip of the Laotian President, Thongloun Sisoulth, to Cuba in September 2023 to participate in the summit of the Group of 77 and China, whose presidency pro tempore was held by the Greater of the Antilles.

Laos has always supported the Cuban people in their struggle against the blockade imposed by the United States for more than six decades, which has hindered the socio-economic progress of the archipelago.

Cuba attaches great importance to its historical ties of friendship with Laos, based on solidarity and the convergence of criteria in international affairs.

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