

# *President Raúl Castro Meets with German Vice Chancellor*

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Havana, January 9 (RHC)-- Friday evening in Havana, Cuban President Raúl Castro met with Germany's Vice Chancellor and Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy Sigmar Gabriel, who has just concluded an official visit to Cuba.

During the meeting, the two dignitaries reviewed the state of bilateral ties, which they both described as very positive, describing as "excellent" the potential for a broadening of relations in several sectors.

Sigmar Gabriel was accompanied by German Ambassador to Cuba Thomas Karl Neisinger, and Eckhard Franz, head of the external economic policy division at the German Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy.

On the Cuban side, President Raúl Castro was accompanied by First Vice President Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez and Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez.

Prior to his meeting with President Raúl, the German official was received by First Vice President Miguel Díaz-Canel. During the exchange, they both renewed their

governments' commitment to continue working on strengthening bilateral relations, and increasing economic-commercial, cultural, scientific and educational ties.

Other activities of the German vice chancellor included talks with Cuban officials, among them Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez, who took the opportunity to thank German authorities for their long-standing rejection of the U.S. blockade policy towards Cuba, as well as their strong support for ongoing negotiations towards a political dialogue and a cooperation agreement between the European Union and Cuba.

The German vice chancellor and his delegation, made up of 60 executives representing some of the best known German companies around the world, also toured the Special Development Zone at Mariel, where the visitors expressed interest in the opportunities offered by the new Cuban foreign investment law.

During talks with Cuba's Minister for Energy and Mining Alfredo López, the two sides touched on issues like the development of renewable energy sources in Cuba and Germany's experiences, being a world leader in the field. They agreed to set up joint projects in sectors like oil and gas.

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