

Fidel Castro Sends Wreath to Gabo in Mexican Homage

Mexico, Apr 22 (Prensa Latina) The historic leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro, sent a wreath to the tribute in Mexico to Colombian writer Gabriel Garcia Marquez, to whom he had a strong and lasting friendship.

A white and yellow offering arrived in the Mexico City Palace of Fine Arts, with a dedication: To a Dear Friend.

On Monday, during a tribute dedicated to the 1982 Nobel Literature Prizewinner, a flower arrangement was received by the island's President Raul Castro, who recalled with that gesture that the author of One Hundreds Years of Solitude was a great friend of Cuba.

International media have stressed these days the author's strong friendship with the Caribbean nation, which goes back to the 60s of the last century, when he began to work as a journalist with the then newly created Prensa Latina agency.

As Fidel Castro has expressed, the relationship with the author of "Love in the Times of Cholera" was cultivated for many years, including the hundreds of pleasant conversations they had.

With those tributes, the Caribbean country joined to thousands of people who gathered in the Mexican cultural centre to pay the last respects to Garcia Marquez, who died in this capital on April 17 at the age of 87.

His remains were exposed in the facility's lobby for those who wished to pay him tribute, at a ceremony led by Mexico's President Enrique Peña Nieto, and Colombia's Juan Manuel Santos.

Cuba to Chair World Health Assembly for the First Time

HAVANA, Cuba, Apr 23 (acn) Cuba will chair, for the first time, the World Health Assembly, the 67th edition of which will be held on May 19-24 in Geneva, announced an official of the Cuban Public Health Ministry (MINSAP).

In a conversation with ACN, Doctor Antonio Gonzalez, head of the department of international organizations of the MINSAP, explained that Cuba was selected, to a large extent, due to the results and the great repercussion of health actions in the country and in other parts of the world.

Cuba has practically met all the Development Goals of the Millennium, since mortality rate in 2013 was 4.2 per every 1,000 live births, the lowest in the Americas, including those of Canada and the United States, as well as the mother mortality rate, 21 per every 100,000, which is among the lowest in Latin America, he underlined.

In addition, the AIDS epidemics, Tuberculosis (TB) and Malaria have been controlled, specified the expert, and highlighted that the first disease is not a health problem, as it happens in other nations, and that antiretroviral medicines are guaranteed to persons needing them.

With the vaccination campaigns carried out on the island we have eliminated other transmissible diseases, such as poliomyelitis, diphtheria, whooping cough, neonatal tetanus and rubella, by way of a vaccination scheme that protect children against 13 diseases, he stated.

Norwegian Activists Express Support for Cuban Sovereignty

HAVANA, Cuba, Apr 23 (acn) Supporting Cuba, its Revolution, and the right of the people to sovereignty will continue being the main task of the Norway-Cuba Friendship Association, Cubaforeningen, ratified on Tuesday in this capital Tejer Enger, president of that movement.

Terje, who is on a visit to Cuba on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the creation of the group, underlined in a press conference that one of its most important missions is the struggle for the release of the five Cuban antiterrorists unfairly condemned in the United States, two of which are already back on the island, after serving their sentences.

He argued that during the 3rd campaign "Five Days for the Five Cubans," to take place in Washington on June 4-11, the members of the Association will publish information on the case, to contribute to make it better known.

Another of the purposes of the Friendship Association is to fight misunderstandings and distortions spread in Norway about Cuba, said Norwegian trade union leader Benqt Gustav Ericsson, who praised the fact that the island has been able to maintain, for over 50 years, its foreign relations without foreign interference.

Cuban and European Union Experts Share Economic and Commercial Experience

HAVANA, Cuba, Apr 23 (acn) European Union and Cuban experts are exchanging their experiences on economic and commercial issues during a forum in Havana as part of bilateral collaboration actions opened in 2008.

The exchange program includes subjects, such as statistics, taxation management, local development, European Union commercial standards, international economic cooperation, food security and the environment, according to PL news agency.

European Union ambassador to Havana Herman Portocarrero said that the forum will support the ongoing update of Cuban economy. This is a learning process that helps the upcoming political dialog between Cuba and the European Union, he said.

Meanwhile, the director of commercial policy with Europe at the Foreign Trade and Investment Ministry, Raul Becerra, stressed collaboration with the European Union in food security, the environment, renewable energy, culture and the prevention of natural disasters.

Cuba Says US Obstacles on UN mission is Unacceptable

HAVANA, Cuba, Apr 23 (acn) Cuba demanded respect for international law in the face of hurdles that the United States could pose against the work of the United Nations by denying a visa to the new Iranian ambassador appointed to Washington.

Hindering the normal performance of diplomatic missions accredited at the United Nations is unacceptable, said legal councilor at the Cuban mission at the United Nations Tanieris Diegues during a meeting of a UN Committee addressing a complaint issued by Tehran following the denial by Washington of a visa for Hamid Aboutalebi.

The event affects the participation of the Iranian delegation and its performance at the United Nations, said the Cuban diplomat, who noted that Cuba, Belarus, Ecuador, the Democratic Republic of Korea and Russia expressed concern about the US decision.

Only the US representative Rosemary DiCarlo backed the measure taken by the White House alleging that Aboutalebi participated in the storming of the US embassy in Tehran in 1979.

The Iranian Charge d Affaires Gholamhossein Dehghani urged Washington to meet its obligations as host country of the United Nations and said that the US stance undermines the work of the world organization and multilateralism.

Kazakh FM Highlights Strength of Relations with Cuba

HAVANA, Cuba, Apr 22 (acn) The Kazakh Minister of Foreign Affairs, Erlan Idrissov, highlighted on Tuesday the good state of diplomatic and friendly bonds between his country and Cuba, on the occasion of Reforestation Day in Kazakhstan.

Idrissov and the officials of the Cuban diplomatic legation in Astana planted a young pine tree called the tree of Cuba, informed the Prensa Latina news agency.

It will grow high and strong like the friendship uniting our states and peoples, said the Kazakh Foreign Minister at the end of the day of voluntary work.

The island's ambassador to Kazakhstan, Carlos Valdes, expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to participate together with the Kazakh people in this day of peace and friendship, and underlined the importance of maintaining Astana, the country's capital, as a prosperous, clean and green city.

Cienfuegos the Cuban City That Celebrates 195 Years

Cienfuegos, Apr 22 (Prensa Latina) The south-central city of Cienfuegos celebrated today the 195 anniversary of its foundation in the ninth year of being declared World Heritage Site, category granted by UNESCO.

According to the tradition, a group of actors performed the founding act in the place where, under the shadow of a majagua tree, the French-born Spanish military Luis De Clouet officiated the opening ceremony on April 22, 1819.

The notes of Cienfuegos Anthem, written on the occasion of the centenary celebrations, set the martial tone of the event that opened Cienfuegos Culture Week, 250 kilometers southeast of the capital.

Architect Irán Millán, director of the Curator's Office of the City, gave Eduardo Coll, president of the Municipal Government, the memories of the restoration and conservation works of the historical center carried out during the last 12 months.

The condition of Distinguished Citizen to the baseball player Antonio Muñoz, former captain of the national team, and the Shield of the City to the teacher Félix Colina, were granted by the municipal government body in the ceremony.

In the facade of the Provincial Museum, former Spanish Casino (1984), the flag of the town and a fabric with the text of the foundation act of the colony Fernandina de Jagua were raised, original urban core that 10 years later adopted its current name.

The planting of a jagua tree, species that appears in the shield of the city, and a tribute to the founder in the tomb that holds his remains in the cemetery Tomás Acea (National Monument) completed the official acts.