

# *Cuban-Venezuelan cooperation prospers in defiance of US hostility against both nations!*

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Close to celebrating in 2020 two decades, the Integral Cooperation Agreement between Cuba and Venezuela stands against the unilateral, coercive measures unleashed by the United States Government against the two Latin American nations and is a firm mechanism of cooperation, solidarity, resistance, development and friendship between the two Latin American nations.

Many are the obstacles raised by the sanctions against Caracas and by the ironclad economic, commercial and financial blockade against Havana, as well as by the interference in such delicate fields as health and education, among others.

But Cubans and Venezuelans have decided to continue strengthening their cooperation agreements, which were born out of the strategic, humanistic vision of leaders Fidel Castro and Hugo Chavez.

In Havana, over the past few days, representatives of both nations examined the march of the Integral Cooperation Agreement and agreed on the goals during the coming years in order to strengthen even more the programs of social benefit and improvement.

As part of that strategic alliance, so far both countries have agreed on fourteen hundred cooperation projects, emphasizing on the fields of health, supply of medical drugs, advisory, the training of human resources in the fields of education, sports, education, culture and the production of material goods.

In the nineteen years of life of this cooperation program, over two hundred and twenty seven thousand Cuban experts have shared their knowledge and experiences with their Venezuelan counterparts, leading to dramatic improvements in the fields of health, education and culture.

In the field of health, cooperation has strengthened through a program inaugurated by President Chavez in 2003, known as Mision Barrio Adentro (Inside the Neighbourhood medical mission), which since its very beginnings inaugurated doctors offices even in the remotest communities of Venezuela. Not a single Venezuelan citizen lacked free, first class medical attention, including surgical and the rest of specialized services, all of it absolutely free!

The Barrio Adentro medical attention program has already completed over sixty two million medical examinations and over ninety seven thousand surgical operations.

Venezuela is also advancing in the program of attention to diabetic patients, using a wonder drug developed by Cuba, named Heberprot P, which is unique in the world, and has reduced to almost zero the number of amputations of lower limbs provoked by diabetes.

On the other hand, the Cuban educational method known as 'Yes, I can', has consolidated the process of social inclusion and the positive transformations in the Venezuelan social fabric, through the dramatic reduction of the very high illiteracy rate that prevailed in that South American country and which now has been reduced to almost nothing, with just 2.2 percent of illiteracy nation wide.

Culturally, Venezuela has taken giant steps forward, and the population enjoys today several areas of cultural expansion that have nothing to do with the previous prostitution and bondage that prevailed in that South American country.

On its part, Cuba joined the Energy Cooperation Project sponsored by Venezuela for the benefit of smaller Caribbean and other nations in this Hemisphere, which allows it to receive oil at preferential prices.

Cuba has remained as a steadfast friend and supporter of Venezuelan rights and has resisted very strong pressures to end its cooperation with that South American nation.

And this will continue to be the future, in defiance of all US plots, machinations, offenses and aggression.

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