

For more transparency and inclusion at forum in Brussels

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Norma Goicochea, president of the Cuban United Nations Association (File image/RHC)

By Roberto Morejón

Latin America and the Caribbean - and Cuba in that region - have prepared to make substantial contributions to the European Union-CELAC summit meeting, scheduled for July 17-18 in Belgium.

As part of the work of the Cubans, attention was drawn to the alert about the possible exclusion of local civil society organizations to one of the forums contemplated in the meeting in Brussels.

The ACNU, Cuban Association of the United Nations and in its capacity as representative of the civil society organizations of the largest of the Antilles, rejected what it called the exclusion of participants.

To the panel named "civil society, youth and local authorities", convened by the European Union, Cuba

requested accreditations, but the answers are still awaited and the main speakers and the program are still unknown.

In addition to what Norma Goicochea, president of the ACNU, described as a lack of transparency in this area of exchange, the entity in charge of conceptualizing the event also stands out.

These are platforms of organizations dedicated to Development Policy issues, rather than EU structures.

Thus, judging by the little information available, the participation of Latin America and the Caribbean in the forum is expected to be lower than expected.

Since the meeting of foreign ministers in Buenos Aires in October 2022, when it was planned to resume meetings at the highest level between CELAC and the EU after the acute phase of the Covid-19 pandemic was over, it was expected that almost everything had been agreed upon for the meeting entitled "civil society, youth and local authorities".

This is not the case. Cubans expect the hosts to stick to what was agreed upon in the Argentine capital and not to include entities outside the UNCA.

The largest of the Antilles is also getting ready for civil society representatives to attend the Peoples' Summit.

Also scheduled to be held in Brussels, parallel to that of the presidents of CELAC, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, and the European Union, this convocation exhibits a participatory democratic nuance.

As an expression of plurality, a direct approach to the expectations, requirements and opinions of Latin America and the Caribbean is expected.

Those convened wish to discuss serious problems following the Covid-19 pandemic, the crisis with raw materials and global inflation after the conflict in Ukraine and the imposition of unilateral coercion by countries of the North.

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