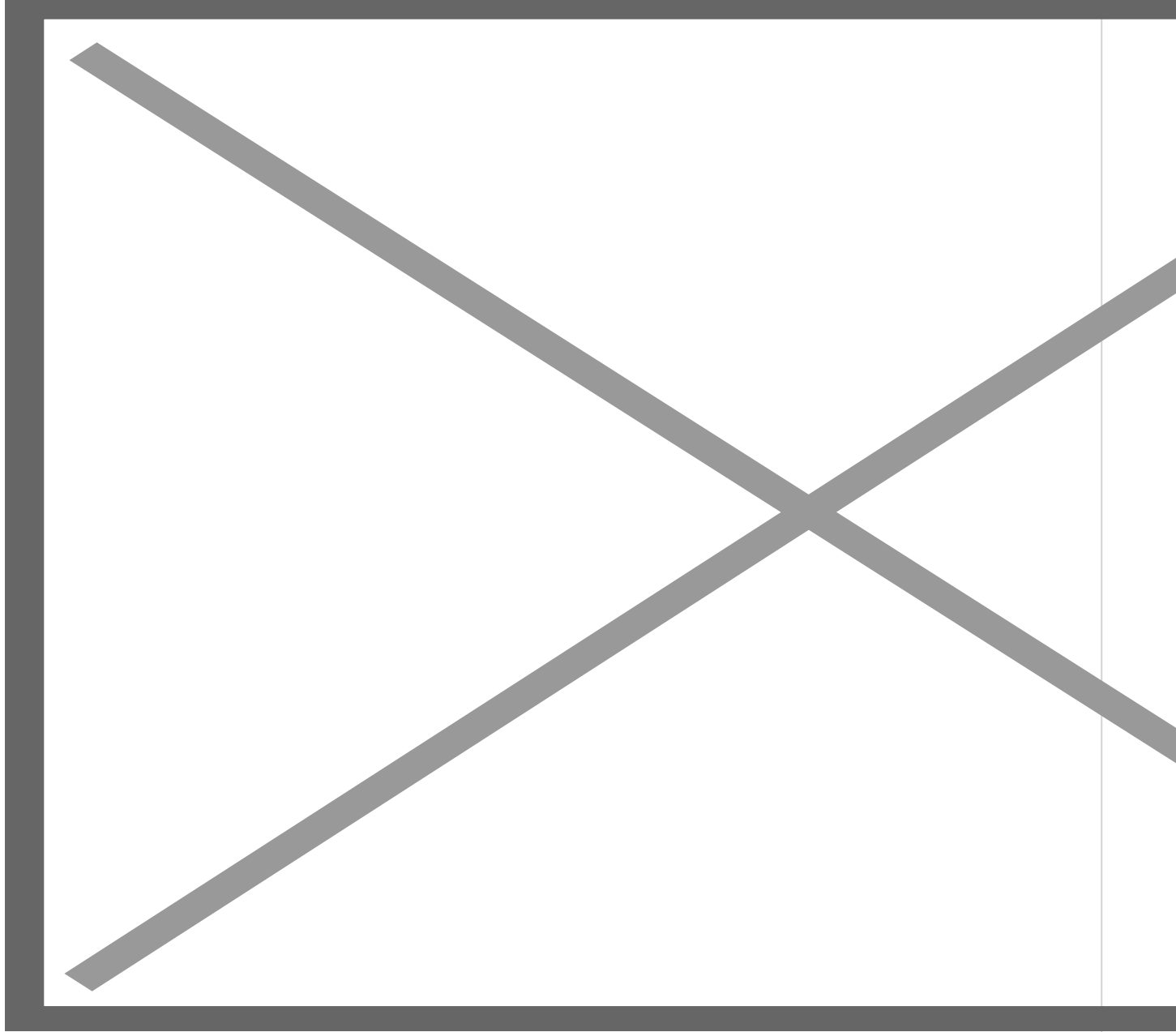


*Cubans pay tribute to Fidel
Castro and highlight Fidel's
boost to relations with China*

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Cuban Ambassador to China Alberto Blanco

Beijing, August 14 (RHC)-- Cubans from the diplomatic corps accredited in China today paid tribute to the thought of Fidel Castro and recalled his contribution to the ties between the island and the Asian giant.

Havana's ambassador here, Alberto Blanco, shared some anecdotes about personal meetings with the historic leader to show his constant concern for the welfare of the people and his knowledge on various issues of the Chinese national reality.

Blanco also underscored the Commander-in-Chief's ability to set ever higher, bolder and more timely goals.

He highlighted the leader's boost to relations with Beijing, his visits here in 1995 and 2003 which helped increase political trust between the two sides.

On September 2, 1960, in front of more than a million Cubans, Fidel Castro urged breaking relations with the Taiwan government to establish diplomatic ties with Mao Zedong's People's Republic of China.

Since then, bilateral ties have gradually increased to cover various sectors.

On the occasion of his 97th birthday, Chinese who studied in Cuba or knew about the island because of its resistance to the United States, remembered with admiration the historical leader of the Revolution.

Maria Chen, a Spanish student in the 1960s, told Prensa Latina the day before that Fidel is a unique national hero, much loved and respected by the Chinese people. For her part, Aurora Lin Hai, regretted not having met him personally when she lived as a diplomat in the Caribbean country and celebrated the leader's vision to strengthen ties between the two nations.

"Cuba was the first country in the Western Hemisphere to establish relations with China, Fidel and our Chairman Mao Zedong were great statesmen with a long-term vision on bilateral ties," she commented.

In addition, he stressed that many Chinese citizens know the figure of Fidel Castro and, above all, relate him to the island's ability to confront U.S. imperialism just 90 miles from its territory. (Source:PL)

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